



Creating Collaborative Communities: Fire Service

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Welcome to *Creating Collaborative Communities: Fire Service*, the first workshop in our Creating Collaborative Communities Series, which was launched by the Michigan Suburbs Alliance in response to the serious financial crisis cities across Michigan are facing.

The Problem

The struggling state economy, recent cuts in revenue sharing, and the drastic rise in insurance and pension costs are severely limiting city budgets across the state. Combined with the unintended interaction between Proposal A and the Headlee Amendment, which limits tax revenue growth rates below inflation, cities are working with significantly less money and without a way to raise additional funds. More and more frequently, municipal leaders face the choice of cutting basic public services or fiscal insolvency.

The Solution

Resource sharing and municipal cooperation give struggling cities a third option. Cities may be able to improve public services and save money by sharing costs, equipment, knowledge and manpower with other cities. Through collaborative partnerships, cities can maximize the efficiency of their limited resources and continue to provide residents quality services.

Our Response

To develop our resource sharing program, we enlisted the help of a steering committee comprising city managers, mayors, council members, human resource and finance directors, fire and police chiefs, union leaders, and university professors who provided a wealth of examples, research, and information from years of practical experience. From their guidance, we developed the Creating Collaborative Communities Series, half-day workshops that address service areas identified by our committee as optimum opportunities for collaboration.

Fire Service

Timely and efficient fire service is at the heart of what citizens expect from their city government. The idea of cutting back on manpower, equipment, or training is disturbing to citizens and city officials alike, but with fire service funding requiring a large portion of municipal budgets, it is one of the first areas administrators look to when revenue dwindles. Because fire departments have a long tradition of cooperation (few fire departments do not have some type of mutual aid agreement with neighboring communities) and because fire service is so vital to citizens, it is an optimum area to collaborate.

The Binder

This binder is a collaboration how-to manual that contains all the information from today's workshop as well as additional research, examples, and resources. Should you attend other workshops in the series, additional information easily can be added to your binder.

The Michigan Suburbs Alliance is a resource for cities throughout Southeast Michigan regarding many issues including resource sharing. If we can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you, and enjoy the workshop,

Conan Smith
Executive Director
Michigan Suburbs Alliance

👉 The Michigan Suburbs Alliance would like to thank to today's speakers:

Tom Barwin – City Manager, City of Ferndale
Jim Dulzo – Managing Editor of Publishing, Michigan Land Use Institute
Chief Ben Foronato – Fire Chief, City of Roseville
Commissioner Wes Prater – Commissioner, Washtenaw County
Richard Reaume – Supervisor, Plymouth Township
Dr. Eric Scorsone – Extension Specialist, Michigan State University
Gary Sharp – Engineer/Paramedic, Independence Township and Union Steward, IAFF Local #2629
Tony VanDerworp – Director of Planning and Environment, Washtenaw County
Jerry Williams – Firefighter and Union President, City of Inkster

Thank you for taking time to share your knowledge with us!

👉 Also, we extend our appreciation to members of the fire steering subcommittee for their assistance over the last few months:

Dr. Jered Carr – Associate Professor, Wayne State University
Chief Pete Healy – Fire Chief, City of Southfield
Chief Ben Foronato – Fire Chief, City of Roseville
Councilwoman Victoria Granger – Councilmember, City of Grosse Pointe Woods
Bill Johnstone – Former Director of Human Resources, City of Ypsilanti
Mike Makowski – Director of Public Safety, City of Grosse Pointe Woods
Pete Provenzano – Assistant City Manager, City of Roseville
Dr. Eric Scorsone – Extension Specialist, Michigan State University
Mark Snider – Firefighters Union President, City of Hamtramck
Steve Truman – City Manager, City of Roseville
Maulshree Upadhyaya – Visiting Senior Research Specialist, Michigan State University
Jerry Williams – Firefighter and Union President, City of Inkster

Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to impart your wisdom and help guide our research. We could not have done this without you!

👉 The Michigan Suburbs Alliance would also like to thank the sponsors of our resource sharing program:

Michigan Economic Development Corporation
Michigan State Housing Development Authority
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

Thank you for your visionary support of this program and of cities in Southeast Michigan.

👉 Finally, thank you to the charter members of the Michigan Suburbs Alliance:

Allen Park	Hamtramck	Roseville
Center Line	Hazel Park	Southfield
Dearborn	Huntington Woods	Southgate
Dearborn Heights	Lincoln Park	Taylor
Eastpointe	Melvindale	Warren
Ferndale	Monroe	Wayne
Grosse Pointe Woods	Pleasant Ridge	Ypsilanti
Harper Woods	River Rouge	

Thank you for your continued support of the Michigan Suburbs Alliance; we look forward to assisting you in your collaborative endeavors!

Internal Considerations

There are many reasons to initiate a collaborative effort. A city may want to improve service to its residents or decrease insurance costs to its businesses. Often, a crisis such as a millage failure catapults a city toward fire service collaboration. However, the present financial health of many Southeast Michigan cities qualifies as reason enough to pursue collaboration.

This section describes the preliminary steps a city should take when beginning a cooperative initiative. During any step that requires a meeting, consider including a neutral third party facilitator; local universities can be a good source for such mediators. To ensure success, it is important to move through the each of the following steps deliberately, being sure not to rush ahead without proper planning and support. The entire process, from inception to execution, may take months or years. Remember that all the effort and work you do upfront will save you time, money and grief in the end.

The following steps should be taken within a single community prior to initiating a collaborative partnership. We recommend you abstain from including any potential partners until you have completed the internal preparations.

Investigate Your Motivations

Identify . . .

- The issue(s) you plan to address
- Why you are considering collaboration
- What you hope to achieve through collaboration; your goals and objectives
- Your ideal result of collaboration

Develop a Cooperative Spirit

Be . . .

- Inclusive
- Honest
- Transparent throughout the process
- Open-minded
- Willing to cede power

Identify a Leader

Who is . . .

- Knowledgeable about the community and issues
- Politically and socially capable of bringing stakeholders to the table
- A risk taker
- Of a cooperative spirit as defined above

Identify Stakeholders & Interest Groups

Consider . . .

- Unions & Department Employees
- Citizen Groups & Residents
- Chambers of Commerce & Local Businesses
- City Staff & Elected Officials
- Media

Gather all stakeholders to record and discuss each stakeholder group's respective . . .

- Goals
- Objectives
- Wants
- Needs
- Problems
- Concerns

Meet Regularly

- Assemble stakeholders often to maintain focus on collective goals and to ensure all parties are invested in the success of the collaborative initiative

Explore the Fire Service Solutions

- Identify opportunities for generating additional revenue
 - o Cost Recovery
 - Consider . . .
 - Billing for services such as third alarms or ambulance runs – at least the portion that the resident’s insurance covers
 - Billing through a private company like AccuMed in order to maximize the amount of collected fees
 - Absorbing contaminated liquids at scenes; insurance companies may pay departments hundreds of dollars to do so
 - o Grants
 - May be used to finance infrastructure such as aerial towers to relieve the strain on city budgets
 - Applying as part of a consortium may increase a city’s chance of receiving grant monies
 - Cities with grant writers may be willing to train a staff member in your city
 - Cities may share grant writers to save money
- Research internal and external collaborative options
 - o Identify all options
 - Many are listed in the following chapter, “Continuum of Collaboration”
 - o Investigate the right collaboration structure for your community. Address the questions . . .
 - What does legislation permit?
 - How much control does your community need?
 - What is politically palatable in your community and the communities with whom you intend to collaborate?
 - What is the current capacity of your city’s fire department and the departments with whom you intend to collaborate?
 - How do you expect to finance the collaborative effort?
 - o Identify potential partner communities
 - Only one partner community is needed; you can always build from there
 - o Contact potential partner cities to invite them to complete the intern preparation process

External Considerations

Once all the communities that plan to collaborate complete the internal preparation stage, the team may continue together by completing the following steps. External preparation involves many steps similar to those taken within each individual community, such as building trust among stakeholders and agreeing on desired outcomes. Although it can be time-consuming or tedious, completing each step is crucial for a successful collaborative partnership.

Build Trust

- Provide opportunities, such as community meals and festivals, for residents and city staff to develop relationships with partner communities' residents and city staff
- Assemble a group of dedicated individuals from each municipality to meet often and openly, making sure to include representation from each stakeholder group

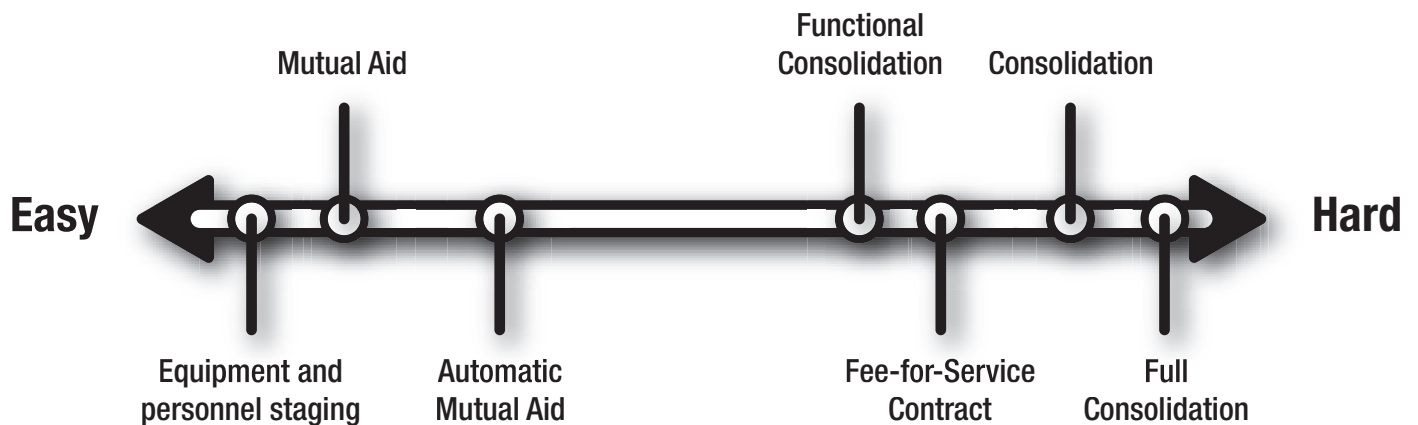
Explore the Options

- Determine shared goals
- Review options that were identified internally with partners
 - Determine the most immediately achievable option
 - Consider starting with this easiest form of collaboration in order to build confidence amongst collaborating cities. Early success will encourage more challenging collaborations and build credibility with residents and the media.
- For example, consider beginning by purchasing equipment with one or more communities. This type of initiative may be comparatively easy because it is not extremely politically charged.
 - Consider the need for a professional study
- It is very possible that this is an unnecessary expense
 - Work toward achieving short-term goals, but avoid losing sight of long-term goals which may be more difficult to achieve

Continuum of Collaboration

The Continuum of Collaboration is the range of options for cooperative efforts. On one end of the scale are less complex projects that do not typically encounter significant challenges – they do not pose threats to turf or control; they do not demand long-standing trust; they fit within existing budgets. On the opposite end are intense and multifaceted collaborations that may involve departmental mergers – they demand high levels of trust and are often precipitated by emergency situations. Most of all, they demand strong and visionary leadership. In between is a wide range of alternatives, neither very simple nor overly complicated.

Moving along the Continuum of Collaboration is easiest if taken one step at a time. Use less complex forms of collaboration to establish the trust, respect and confidence necessary to move to more intense projects.



On the following pages you will find fact sheets describing various forms of collaboration, always moving from the easier to the tougher challenges. Find the right place to start for your community, and good luck on your efforts to improve intergovernmental cooperation.

Fire Service Continuum

There are many options for providing fire service cooperatively, all of which differ in complexity and intensity. The Continuum of Collaboration is the range of options from easier, more informal mutual aid agreements to full-fledged mergers. This section describes each option to assist cities as they navigate through the Continuum of Collaboration. The chapter concludes with a short discussion regarding public safety as an option for collaboration within your own city, which can achieve many of the same goals as an external collaboration.

When beginning to explore cooperative initiatives, it is important to research each option carefully in order to ensure that the type of collaboration you choose to pursue is the best option for all communities involved.

External Collaborations

Equipment and Personnel Staging

- In the event that the resources in one jurisdiction are responding to an event, equipment and personnel from surrounding jurisdictions move to a location that allows coverage of the remaining jurisdictional area

Mutual Aid

- Partner departments assist one another, without charge, on a temporary basis when a department requests help
- Usually not formally documented
- Often a product of historical convenience
- Advantages
 - Expedient
 - Politically palatable
 - No obligations
- Disadvantage
 - Because payment is not exchanged for these services and because one community may use its mutual aid agreement more than its partner, this type of collaboration may result in inequities in cost allocation

Automatic Mutual Aid

- Aid rendered automatically by the dispatcher, without a specific request from the department needing assistance
- Usually more formal than mutual aid
- May require the exchange of payment for services
- Advantages
 - Expedient
 - Politically palatable
 - Reassures firefighters and residents that there will be enough manpower to address more challenging incidents
- Disadvantage
 - Obligatory

Functional Consolidation

- Each department operates independently and remains legally separate, but some functions work as a coordinated unit. Functions may include . . .
 - Hiring
 - Cities may benefit from building partnerships with community colleges to recruit fire fighters
 - Western Wayne County has a list of firefighters for hiring purposes; no city has its own list
 - Training
 - Consider creating a uniform list for hiring recommendations and uniform testing/training, either countywide or region-wide

cont. >

- o Joint Purchasing
 - Consider purchasing equipment of the same brand, either countywide or region-wide, in order to facilitate compatibility and exchange
 - Consider asking a vendor to finance a collaborative effort in return for the increased business
- o Central Dispatch
 - Consider centralizing dispatch operations in one center
 - Guarantees dedicated, trained dispatch
 - May improve a coordinated regional response to emergencies

Fee-for-Service Contract

- One municipality “sells” service to another at an agreed upon rate and for a defined period of time
- Advantages
 - o Familiar
 - o Purchaser can avoid start-up costs of providing services
 - o Provider can defray existing expenses
 - o Easily modifiable
- Disadvantages
 - o Purchaser can feel lack of control over services received
 - o May be difficult to agree on appropriate charges for services
 - o Provider risks exit of purchaser after increasing capacity

Consolidation

- Each city’s department may be legally separate and provide revenue from different sources, but they operate as one department

Full Consolidation

- Multiple departments merge into one entity
- Municipalities agree to shared ownership and control of the program
 - o Control primarily stays with governing bodies
 - o Ownership of assets/liabilities remains with governing bodies

Internal Collaborations

Public Safety

- Combines fire and police services to provide both from one department
- Requires cross-training of staff
- Works well when a city has strong mutual aid pact with others
- A city’s run volume plays a large role in determining whether or not merging into a public safety department makes sense for a community. Usually a low run volume is more conducive to the public safety structure.
- The transition can be slow and smooth, eliminating positions only through attrition

***For additional advantages and disadvantage of collaboration, see sections “Potential Advantages” and “Potential Disadvantages.” These lists are especially relevant for the consolidation and full consolidation options.*

Michigan Laws

Michigan law provides many provisions promoting local government collaboration and there is very likely a tool that will enable you to make any program work. One challenge is that these laws are not codified as tools for collaboration, but scattered throughout many chapters of Michigan law. Below you will find a compilation of some of the most common provisions. You can read the full text of any of these laws online at the State of Michigan's legislative web site: www.legislature.michigan.gov.

Constitutional Provisions

Article 3 § 5: Provides that any governmental authority or any combination thereof may enter into agreements for the performance, financing or execution of their respective functions, with any one or more of the other states, the United States, the Dominion of Canada or any political subdivision thereof unless otherwise provided in the constitution.

Article 7 § 27: Gives the legislature the power to directly create metropolitan authorities with powers, duties and jurisdictions that legislature shall provide. The authorities may be authorized to perform multipurpose functions rather than a single function.

Article 7 § 28: Authorizes two or more counties, townships, cities, villages or districts, or any combination thereof, to cooperate in the execution administration of any of the functions or powers "which each would have the power to perform separately."

Legislative Provisions

PA 33 of 1951: POLICE AND FIRE PROTECTION (41.801 - 41.813) Allows cooperation between townships; between townships, villages and cities under 15,000 for the purchase of equipment and the provision of police and fire services; authorizes the creation of special assessment districts, the creation of administrative boards and the charging and collection of fees for such services.

PA 35 of 1951: INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONTRACTS BETWEEN MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (124.1 - 124.13) Authorizes counties, townships, cities, villages and other governmental units to enter into contracts for the "ownership, operation or performance, jointly or by any one or more on behalf of all, of any property, facility or service which each would have the power to own, operate or perform separately." Also authorizes such governmental units to form group self-insurance pools to provide casualty insurance; property insurance; automobile insurance including motor vehicle liability, surety and fidelity insurance; umbrella and excess insurance and coverage for hospital, medical, surgical or dental benefits to the employees of member municipalities.

PA 222 of 2003: JOINT MUNICIPAL PLANNING ACT (MCL 125.131 – 125.143) Allows two or more units of government to consolidate their planning commissions for a specific purpose. Specifically, the law permits governments that operate under differing planning or zoning enabling statutes (for example townships and cities) to adopt a single governing law and create a planning commission that has authority over a particular geographic area.

PA 200 of 1957: INTERMUNICIPALITY COMMITTEES (123.631 - 123.637) Permits two or more municipalities to form a committee for "studying area governmental problems of mutual interest and concern."

PA 217 of 1957: INTERCOUNTY COMMITTEES (123.641 - 123.645) Permits two or more counties to form a committee for "studying area governmental problems of mutual interest and concern."

PA 8 1967: INTERGOVERNMENTAL TRANSFERS OF FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (124.531 - 124.536) Authorizes two or more political subdivisions to enter into a contract providing for the transfer of functions or responsibilities to one another or any combination thereof. Specifies items for inclusion in function transfer agreements and the manner of adoption; also allows the establishment of a separate administrative body to supervise the execution of the agreement.

PA 57 of 1988: EMERGENCY SERVICES TO MUNICIPALITIES (124.601 - 124.614) Allows cities, villages and townships to incorporate an authority for the purpose of providing police, fire or emergency services. The jurisdiction of the authority must include the entire geographic area of all incorporating municipalities. The authority may levy property taxes for funds to carry out its objectives.

PA 292 of 1989: METROPOLITAN COUNCILS ACT (124.651 - 124.729) Authorizes local government units to create metropolitan councils and sets forth powers and duties of such councils; authorizes councils to levy tax.

Attorney General Opinion

The following excerpt was taken from Michigan State Attorney General Mike Cox's opinion number 7177 regarding the Police and Fire Civil Service Act stipulations for laying off and hiring full-time firefighters. It notes that local units of government can lay off full time firefighters without having to first lay off volunteer, paid-on-call, or part-paid firefighters with less seniority, so long as no collective bargaining agreement exists providing otherwise. This allows local governments more flexibility not only in the hiring and layoff process, but also in their budgeting.

Section 14(2) of Act 78 was amended so that the prescribed layoff procedure would no longer apply to "paid members" but would apply to full-time paid members of police or fire departments:

If, for reasons of economy, it shall be deemed necessary by any city, village or municipality to reduce the number of full-time paid members of any fire or police department, the municipality shall follow the following procedure: Removals shall be accomplished by suspending in numerical order, commencing with the last employee appointed to the fire or police department, all recent appointees to the fire or police department until the reductions are made. However, if the fire or police department increases in numbers to the strength existing before the reductions were made, the firefighters or police officers suspended last under this act shall be reinstated before any new appointments to the fire or police department are made. [MCL 38.514(2)]

A municipality to which the Police and Fire Civil Service Act . . . applies is required to follow that act when hiring full-time paid members of its fire department only and not for volunteer, paid-on-call or part-paid firefighters.

Financing

Although initiating collaborative efforts can be expensive, it is important to allocate at least a small amount of resources to the project in order to indicate your commitment to the initiative. Once you have generated these startup funds, foundation grants may be available to supplement your resources. Also, when pursuing a functional consolidation for joint purchasing, consider asking a vendor to finance the collaborative effort in return for the increased business.

Once you have secured funds to pursue a collaborative partnership, you must investigate the various ways in which fire service collaborations can be financed. Below you will find a list of possibilities.

General Fund Revenues

The city's primary operating fund accounts for all financial resources of the general government except those required to be accounted for in another fund (e.g. major streets fund, sanitation fund)

- Used to finance services that are made available to all community residents
- With stressed budgets, many local governments are seeking alternatives to funding collaborative fire service efforts with general funds

Advantages to General Fund Revenues

- o Generally the primary funding source for independent municipal fire departments
- o Familiar and easy to use
- o Does not require a citizen vote

Disadvantage to General Fund Revenues

- o These funds are dependent on external factors, including state government decisions and the economy

Special Extra Voted Millage

A millage that the citizens of the municipality have to approve through a ballot measure

- Commonly used to support local services and expand service delivery
- Revenue use is restricted for a specific activity

Advantage to Special Extra Voted Millage

- o Revenue stream is dedicated to support the specific service

Disadvantages to Special Extra Voted Millage

- o Inequities may develop since the value of property and the demand or use of fire service is not equated
- o Reliant on citizen approval

Special Assessment

Cities with populations of less than 15,000 are authorized to create special assessment districts for fire protection. Special assessment districts, which include all lands and premises benefiting from the improvement, may be formed when the beneficiaries of a service are clearly identifiable, the premise being that the general revenue of a governmental unit should not be used to finance improvements that do not benefit the entire community.

- All local units of government in Michigan are authorized to levy special assessments. The Home Rule Cities Act provides authority to impose special assessments with no specific stipulations regarding the assessment levy.
- Special assessment levies are not property taxes, however, property value, front footage or land area may be used as the base for which the levy is assessed. The measure to be used to apportion assessments is not specified in authorizing legislation; however, the measure selected is to bear some relationship to the benefit received from the public improvement.
- The special assessment is generally calculated by dividing the cost of the public improvement by the base upon which those costs will be apportioned, resulting in a rate expressed in mills.

cont. >

- An administrative board provides oversight, yet each local unit maintains legislative control. PA 365 of 1982 dictates the size of the board, appointment procedures and terms of appointment.
- Special assessments are spread and become due and collected at the same time as other municipal taxes.

Advantages to creating special assessment districts

- o Millages can be levied to generate revenue
- o Property normally exempt from the general ad valorem property tax such as property used for religious, charitable, educational or scientific purposes and public service business property is not exempt.
- o Legislation authorizing special assessments does not usually specify a maximum rate or a restriction on the duration of the levies. Local units of government are, therefore, granted unlimited open-ended revenue-raising authority to finance most public improvements.

Disadvantages to creating special assessment districts

- o May only be used by cities of 15,000 or less
- o Personal property is exempt
- o In some instances, voter approval is required or the question may be put to the voters through petition referendum. Initiative or referendum petitions may be signed only by property owners in the district.

Authority

A body corporate that comprises two or more cities, villages or townships and includes the entire land area of all participating municipalities. This entity has all the rights of a municipality.

- Steps to create a fire authority: City council must...
 1. Pass a resolution of intent
 2. Appoint a study committee
 3. Vote on the articles of incorporation (charter)
- The authority's governing board should have an odd number of members, each with staggered terms.

Advantages to an Authority

- o Does not require a citizen vote to create an authority
- o Requires clear and concise operating procedures
- o Such institutionalization can provide validity
- o Functions to remove daily politics from the program and dissolve feelings of threatened turf
- o Provides the power to finance the authority through the levy of property taxes
- o Provides the power to bond to finance capital projects
 - May be most useful in cases where large capital investments are required to develop the necessary infrastructure for the delivery of services

Disadvantages to an Authority

- o Voter approval is required to levy property taxes
- o Legislative bodies may perceive the authority as diminishing their legislative oversight

Capital Bonding

A form of debt used to raise funds in public capital markets and through private placements to institutional investors in which a three-way legal arrangement exists between the borrower, the bondholders (the suppliers of capital), and a trust company.

- The trust company represents the bondholders to ensure that the borrower complies with the terms of the contract
- Since these bonds are not subject to federal income taxes, they supply low-interest debt

Advantages to Capital Bonding

- o Raises a significant amount of revenue
- o Does not require a large upfront payment
- o A form of low-interest debt

cont. >

Disadvantages to Capital Bonding

- o Can sometimes require a citizen vote
- o Depends on the bond ratings of the city

User Fees

A supplement revenue stream that charges the direct recipient for services rendered

- Only ~70-75% of fees are collected. Results are contingent upon how detailed the records are of the scene and how quickly the individual is billed

Advantages to User Fees

- o May eliminate the problem of benefits not accruing to those paying for the service
- o Helps to regulate demand for the service
- o May be used in addition to another financing method such as general fund revenues or extra-voted millages

Disadvantages to User Fees

- o Increase administrative costs due to collection, monitoring and accounting
- o Inequity in access
- o Uncertainty of revenue
- o As one's income goes down, the percentage of one's income paid to the user fee increases
- o City councils tend to resist these fees.

Third party payments

A supplement revenue stream that functions as a user fee, but charges a third party (e.g. and insurance company) rather than the recipient of the service.

- Home owners and auto insurance policies often contain provisions for reimbursing policy holders for costs incurred in ambulance transport and fire suppression calls
- Collection rate on third party payments average ~50-60%
- If a unit determines residents or users of emergency services are going to be billed for emergency response, an informational campaign is needed to inform citizens of the new strategy. Residents may have to check with their insurance carriers to see if such coverage is provided or if a rider can be purchased

Advantages to Third Party Payments

- o Does not charge citizens for a service they believe to be covered by taxes

Disadvantages to Third Party Payments

- o Extra work is required to collect the additional funds
- o Money collected is strictly supplemental, it cannot fund a project alone

Cost Allocation

Establishing cost allocation is generally the source of disagreement, and changes in allocation strategies may result in even more tension. When beginning a cooperative effort, be sure to plan how cost allocation will be updated.

When determining the total cost of the service, include both fixed and variable costs. Fixed costs include the costs of vehicles, buildings and communications equipment. Variable costs are items such as wages and benefits, operating costs and depreciation of equipment, firefighting gear, insurance, utilities, gasoline and repairs to equipment and accounting or bookkeeping services. Communities are often suspicious that other municipalities may pay for non-fire service costs with fire money and may not accept that fixed capital costs need to be included.

The allocation of costs becomes complicated when factors such as population, tax base wealth, fiscal capacity and service demand vary between participating units. Units that are similar in size and demographic composition will face fewer problems regarding equity than communities with less in common.

Given that they are farther from the fire station, some buyers may argue that citizens in outlying areas suffer higher costs because response times are longer. However, this does not mean that fire protection has less value to the residents; property owners are aware of the risks involved in locating residences some distance from fire stations. The costs of providing fire protection to outlying areas increase due to wear and tear on equipment as well as increased personnel costs.

Whether a community is actually buying ownership of capital purchases such as fire trucks is dependent upon the language in the intergovernmental agreement. Clarify whether communities are buying the service rendered by the capital purchases or purchasing a portion of ownership of the equipment. If a producer of fire service is including depreciation costs in the charge to the buyer, then the buying community is not buying ownership of the equipment.

Types of Allocation Methods

Annual Subscription Fee

The buyer makes a predetermined payment to the seller and receives fire protection for the entire year with no specified number of runs or consumption levels.

Advantage

- Reduces budget uncertainty because the seller is assured of a given revenue contribution and the buyer has set costs

Disadvantage

- May saddle the buyer or seller with costs not accounted for by the pricing scheme

Run Charge

Divide the total cost of fire protection by the total number of runs for the previous year to establish a cost per run to be charged for future runs. The method can be strengthened by adding a “stand-by” service charge, similar to a “readiness to serve” charge assessed by sewer/water producers, which may be deposited in a capital equipment or replacement fund.

Advantage

- Simple to implement and collect

Disadvantages

- Treats every fire run as being equal in terms of cost
- Uncertainty
 - o If few fire runs are encountered in any given year, the producer of the service bears a larger share of the costs.
 - o A buyer may find that costs are high due to a large number of runs for automobile or trash fires.
 - o Seller may bear fixed costs

cont. >

Subscription Fee + Run Charge

The subscription fee is the access fee for the right of the buyer to purchase service from the seller; it offsets capital costs. The fire run charge covers variable costs. Using the subscription fee and the run charge together reduces the run charge while ensuring that the seller receives a base amount of revenue.

Advantages

- Less budget uncertainty than using a run charge alone
- Provides flexibility for high-run vs. low-run years

Disadvantages

- Maintains some budget uncertainty
- Assumes that all fire runs consume the same amount of fire suppression resources

Percentage Share Based on Usage

Calculate the total number of fire personnel hours for one community as a percent of all the communities' fire personnel hours from the previous year and for the past three to four years to determine a rolling average.

Advantage

- May more accurately reflect the cost of fire service. For example, long runs to outlying areas may have greater personnel costs than short runs because they require more of firefighters' time. Under this method, that cost is accounted for. Similarly, trash fires may require fewer personnel and therefore "cost" less than five-alarm. This method ensures that communities that experience less costly fires pay a smaller fee.

Disadvantages

- Accuracy is dependent upon the notion that personnel hours reflect costs correctly
- Relies on accurate cost and personnel hours records
- Does not factor in an equitable share of fixed costs

State Equalized Value Share

This method is especially popular in communities that levy a special millage for fire protection. The charge is the equivalent millage levy on the SEV of the area of the community.

Advantage

- Reduces budget uncertainty

Disadvantages

- Seller may pay for a portion of the fire costs for the buyer or vice-versa
- Assumes that the demand for service is a function of the value of the property

Weighted Formula

This method is based on population, state equalized value and historical usage. Include population for the added risk of exposure and the demand for fire services. As population increases, the incidence of fires generally increases. SEV represents the value of property to be protected; the more valuable the property, the more willing the owner should be to pay for fire protection. If property record cards are computerized, an actual determination of the SEV of building structures can be determined and an agreed upon percentage of open space value added to determine the SEV of the area to be serviced. A percentage of the open space SEV should be included to reflect the potential occurrence of grass and timber fires. Use a three-year rolling average to determine historical usage. The weights assigned to each indicator should be negotiated among partners.

cont. >

Cost Allocation Steps:

1. Identify appropriate weights for each indicator.
2. Determine the values of each indicator for one community.
3. Multiply each indicator's value by its respective weight to determine that indicator's portion of the community's cost share.
4. Add all indicator values together.
5. This final value is the community's percentage share of the cost.
6. Repeat this process for each community.

Advantages

- More accurately reflects the benefits and costs of fire protection
- Minimizes cross-subsidization
- Adjusts annually
- Reduces uncertainty

Disadvantages

- Requires heavy negotiation due to the complexity of the formula
- May be the most difficult to implement

Weighing the Pros & Cons

Although not all the possibilities listed below will apply to every collaboration, it is important to be aware of all of the potential advantages and disadvantages. When determining whether or not to enter into a cooperative fire service agreement, consider the following:

Potential Advantages

Cost savings should not be expected early in a collaborative partnership. Instead, monetary savings should be seen as a long-term benefit to collaboration. Upfront costs for studies and transaction costs often overshadow any initial cost savings. However, countless non-monetary benefits are more immediate . . .

Service

- Increases manpower to improve fire safety for citizens and firefighters
- Provides firefighters breaks during fires
- Improves employee performance and increases employee morale by aligning the staffing model with demands for service, modifying the organizational structure and clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Coordinates training and communication across a larger area to provide a more unified effort during incidents
- More efficiently uses personnel and their talents
- Better utilizes staff's talents through staff specialization
- Facilitates more appropriate use of mutual aid agreements
- Provides greater staff flexibility
- Decreases response times
- Provides better results during the insipient stage, when firefighters can still make a difference
- Enhances career opportunities to staff
- Facilitates compliance with MIOSHA requirements
- Facilitates collaborative and centralized dispatch
- Improves quantity and quality of services including those of special operation teams and inspectors
- Reduces duplication of services
- Allows departments to utilize resources that otherwise may not be available

Finance

- Spreads financing responsibility and risk
- Reduces equipment replacement costs through volume purchasing and, initially, an abundance of apparatus
- Eliminates duplication of high capital, equipment and personnel costs
- Reduces taxes by financing services with a larger tax base
- Reduces costs – including those for capital improvements, administration and hiring – to each community through economies of scale
- Decreases paid overtime for firefighters
- Reduces insurance costs by sharing expensive, insured equipment
- Preserves a city's tax base by preserving more homes, many of which would not be rebuilt

Community Relations

- Facilitates the exchange of expertise and creativity
- Creates a strong front for responding to external challenges
- Meets the expectation of citizens that governments should work together
- Improves relations with neighboring communities
- Shows taxpayers that you are using their tax dollars wisely
- Fosters appreciation of work being done by the communities to improve fire service
- Improves equity of access to services
- Expands the sense of community
- Reduces problems of jurisdictional boundaries
- Fosters an environment for future joint ventures
- Improves insurance ratings which lowers consumers' insurance premiums
- Attracts businesses and furthers economic development with low insurance costs
- Eventually increases the demand for firefighters with an increase in population

Potential Disadvantages

- Loss of legislative authority
- Tiered labor contracts
- Loss of promotional opportunities
- Loss of jobs
- Difficulty in getting out of the consolidation once in it
- Transaction costs
- Increased response times for those in proximity to a closed station
- May ruin an attempt to make a department more diverse

Successful Examples

Law Enforcement Fiber Project/Paperless Reports 2001

Lead Organization: Monroe County

Main Partners: Monroe County Intermediate School District (MCISD) and the townships of Monroe, Bedford, Erie, LaSalle, Raisinville, and Ida

Type of Collaboration: Functional Consolidation

Project Summary:

The team facilitated the extension of Monroe County's local area network (LAN) to station law enforcement personnel closer to the communities in which they served, rather than in the central Sheriff's Office. As a result of the project, the Bedford District Substation was fully integrated into the Monroe County network and is now able to perform as a self-sustaining law enforcement source to the citizens of Bedford Township and the surrounding areas. Additionally, connectivity for the substation and the electronic transfer of information makes law enforcement more readily available to the community and decreases time spent traveling.

As part of these collaborative efforts, the Monroe County Intermediate School District gained access to the county's T-1 connection. This enabled the MCISD to electronically exchange, with the Michigan State Police, fingerprints and criminal history information on potential employees. It is the first school district in Michigan to electronically submit prospective employee information to the State Police. As a result of the project, MCISD will be able to reduce the time it takes for background checks from three months to one month.

Contact:

David Thompson
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Monroe County Sheriff's Office
125 E. Second Street
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Regional Alliance for Firefighter Training

Lead Organization: City of Farmington Hills

Main Partners: Metropolitan Affairs Coalition, Transportation Emergency Rescue Committee of the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

Type of Consolidation: Functional Consolidation

Project Summary:

The Regional Alliance for Firefighter Training (RAFT) is a partnership of Southeast Michigan fire departments and community colleges dedicated to ensuring that firefighters are highly trained professionals. The organization promotes teamwork and collaboration with the goal of achieving the highest quality training programs at the lowest cost.

RAFT identifies opportunities for improving firefighter training within the region, encouraging implementation of coordinated efforts and serving as a leader and advocate for high quality firefighter training. As part of training activities, RAFT's Regional Extrication Learning Symposium and Team Challenge offers a unique opportunity to capitalize on leading-edge technology. Participating firefighters learn state-of-the-art rescue skills. The event encourages networking and shared learning by assembling the area's vast engineering, medical and rescue resources. The project team avoided cost to government entities by securing the cooperation of Ford Motor Company. Ford generously donated \$1 million worth of late-model vehicles to give fire-rescue personnel vital, first-hand experience in automobile crash condition.

Contact:

Richard Marinucci
Fire Chief
City of Farmington Hills
(248) 426-4400



CWW Firefighter Testing Program

Lead Organization: Conference of Western Wayne

Main Partners: Cities of Belleville, Dearborn, Dearborn Hts, Garden City, Inkster, Livonia, Northville, Plymouth, Romulus, Wayne, Westland and Townships of Canton, Huron, Northville, Plymouth, Redford, Sumpter and Van Buren

Year Project Started: 1996

Type of Consolidation: Functional Consolidation

Project Summary:

In 1996, CWW community fire chiefs and personnel managers asked the CWW to create a single test to prequalify firefighters for service in any of the CWW communities. Now upon passing the CWW written and physical agility tests, a candidate is pre-qualified for positions in any of the participating communities. The uniform test avoids costly and time-consuming duplication of service and provides communities with a pool of applicants who have already met basic standards. Testing takes place at Schoolcraft College 11 times a year. Since 1996, over 1,000 applicants have taken the two tests. Many communities outside the CWW area have also participated in the program in the years they have been recruiting. These include the City of Taylor, Ann Arbor, Southgate and Jackson, Brighton Area Fire Department, Waterford Township and Commerce Township.

Contact:

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Conference of Western Wayne
39293 Plymouth Road, #101
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Enhancement of Fire and EMS Protection: West Bloomfield Fire Department

Lead Organization: West Bloomfield Fire Department

Main Partners: Tri-City Fire Board

Year Project Started: 2003

Type of Collaboration: Consolidation

Project Summary:

The assumption of fire and EMS protection for the TriCities of Keego Harbor, Orchard Lake and Sylvan Lake, by the West Bloomfield Fire department benefited all communities involved. The Tri-Cities were able to upgrade their fire department from a paid-on-call, basic life support agency to a full-time, advanced life support system at an affordable cost. West Bloomfield was able to reduce response times to the north-east portion of the township years ahead of schedule, without incurring the costs of building a station and purchasing the apparatus and furnishings.

Contact:

Ray Riggs
Assistant Fire Chief
West Bloomfield Fire Department
PO Box 250130
West Bloomfield, Michigan 48325

Fire Department Merger

Lead Organization: Plymouth Township

Main Partners: City of Plymouth

Year Project Started: 1995

Type of Collaboration: Full Consolidation

Project Summary:

In 1995, the fire departments in the City of Plymouth and Plymouth Township merged into a single joint department. The intention of the merger was to provide better services at less cost or the same joint cost, or the same service at a lower cost. The intergovernmental agreement provided for the city to contract with the township for fire service, with the township having 75% and the city 24% equity ownership. Operating costs were based on SEV (33%), population (33%), and run/use (33%), with the city's share never being less than 25%. A special agreement provided for city firefighters to be hired at existing seniority levels. The merger has resulted in \$6 million in projected savings over the 10-year contract, increased accessibility to all areas of the city, reduced response time to the township's western side, increased safety and better firefighter performance.

Contact:

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42350 Ann Arbor Road
Plymouth, Michigan 48170
(734) 354-3840

Joint Public Safety Dispatch Service

Lead Organization: City of Northville

Main Partners: Northville Charter Township, City of Northville

Year Project Started: 2004

Type of Collaboration: Functional Consolidation

Project Summary:

Provided improved public safety service for both Northville communities with cost savings for the city and efficiency for the township.

Contact:

James Petres
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City of Northville
215 W. Main Street
Northville, Michigan 48167
(248) 449-9922

Howell Area Fire Authority

Lead Organization: City of Howell

Main Partners: Townships of Genoa, Howell, Marion, Oceola, and Cohoctah

Year Project Started: 2002

Type of Collaboration: Full Consolidation

Project Summary:

Prior to the Fire Authority being formed, the City of Howell covered 51% of the operating budget and the townships shared 49%. Seventy percent (70%) of the runs were in the township. After five years of discussions, the fire authority was formed with a millage being passed in 2003. The fire department is now 100% funded by the millage and not from general funds. All units of government have equal ownership. We currently have ongoing discussions to merge the Howell and Brighton area departments into one authority.

Contact:

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Negaunee Regional Dispatch

Lead Organization: Michigan Department of State Police (MSP)

Main Partners: Luce, Mackinac, Marquette, Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, Ontonagon, Schoolcraft, and Gogegic Counties

Year Project Started: 1995

Type of Collaboration: Functional Consolidation

Project Summary:

The Negaunee Regional Dispatch is a partnership formed by the MSP and partner counties to provide enhanced 911 dispatching services from Negaunee Regional Dispatch. The collaboration has resulted in huge cost savings for partner counties along with financial benefit for Department of State Police. Central control improves delivery of public safety by police, fire and EMS across the Upper Peninsula. Currently, each participating county has one representative on the board. Other counties in the UP have indicated that they may be interested in joining this successful collaborative.

Contact:

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Saginaw County 9-1-1 Interlocal Agreement

Lead Organization: Saginaw County 9-1-1 Authority Board

Main Partners: All police and fire departments within Saginaw County

Year Project Started: 1992

Type of Collaboration: Functional Consolidation

Project Summary:

Prior to 1992, each municipality in Saginaw County contributed to the operation of a Saginaw County Central Dispatch. With voter approval of a telephone surcharge, a 911 Authority Board for all Saginaw County was created. This not only saved money for the municipalities, but allowed an independent authority to oversee dispatching of public safety agencies without involvement of political jurisdictions. This was accomplished by the creation of a 13-member Authority Board representing the municipalities and an actively involved 11-member Operations Committee representing the user (police, fire and medical). In 2004, the organization handled 400,000 calls. The Operations Committee is now working toward upgrading our current radio equipment onto the State of Michigan (MPSCS) radio system. We feel Saginaw County 9-1-1 Authority Board is a true authority that has saved municipalities money and continues a vital service to the residents of Saginaw County.

Contact:

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Shared Information Network Consortium

Lead Organization: Brownstown Police Department

Main Partners: Trenton PD, Riverview PD, Flat Rock PD, Grosse Ile PD, Rockwood PD, Gibraltar PD

Year Project Started: 1999

Type of Collaboration: Functional Consolidation

Project Summary:

The project has enhanced law enforcement by providing a medium for various agencies to share data to assist in the apprehension and prosecution of criminals. The project also enables members to share resources by pooling funds, enabling them to purchase equipment and technology they normally would not be able to utilize.

Contact:

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Brownstown Police Department
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Brownstown, Michigan 48183
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Unsuccessful Example

Downriver Mutual Aid: Fire Service Consolidation Committee

Lead Organization: Downriver Community Conference

Partner Organizations: Downriver Communities

Types of Collaboration Explored: Functional consolidation, consolidation and full consolidation

Project Summary:

History: Although each department functions as an independent unit, all participating communities were and are part of the Downriver Mutual Aid group.

Project Structure: Nine subcommittees were organized to review the various elements of the fire service and to recommend ways to enhance those elements.

- Subcommittees included: legal authority, administration and organization, budget and finance, fire suppression, emergency medical services, dispatch and communications, training, fire prevention and special operations
- Because subcommittees were not required to coordinate their reports, inconsistencies exist in their conclusions

Subcommittee Findings:

- 1) Dispatch and Communications
 - Most 9-1-1 calls are received at the respective city's police department and then are transferred to the fire department
 - Fire departments can handle the one call, but, when two or more calls come in at once, the dispatch duties are ceded to the police dispatch.
 - Problems with the current system:
 - o Separate and more powerful radios can transmit over messages, which blocks out the message and makes repetition necessary
 - o One must wait for an opening to use the airwaves when others are already using it
 - o Limited transmission ability of mobiles
 - o Radio interferences in certain areas due to geography or building
 - o Many apparatus and portables are unable to contact one another due to lack of transmission strength
 - o Radio traffic from other bases sometimes reaches our area and causes wasted air time
 - o No standardization of channel numbers
 - o Nonprofessional and inadequately trained dispatchers
- 2) Training
 - Exploring the creation of a centralized EMS/Fire Training Academy, the following benefits were identified:
 - o Centralized and standardized EMS and fire service training
 - o Strengthened peer rapport within and among departments
 - o Utilized as a central fire station and/or a evacuation shelter
 - o Cost savings by training locally
 - o Ability to contract with other departments to provide training for a fee
 - o Because training at the central station would take place while firefighters are on duty, it would eliminate the need to pay overtime for firefighters working in place of those who are training
 - Staffing requirements of the training academy:
 - o Academy Training Coordinator (full time)
 - o EMS Coordinator (full time)
 - o Fire Suppression Coordinator (full time)
 - o EMS Instructors (two, part time)
 - o Fire Suppression Instructors (two, part time)
 - Location: Downriver Community Conference Center – grant money is available for needed renovations, has an additional seven acres that could accommodate a training tower, driving area, tank trucks, etc.
- 3) Fire Prevention (Fire Education, Building Inspections, Code Enforcement, Plan Review, Fire Investigation)
 - Conclusions:
 - o Currently severely undermanned: inspections required annually are done every two or three years, fire and life safety programs are not reaching school children or seniors sufficiently, firefighters require further training for investigating fires, plan reviews for new or remodeled construction are delayed or not done at all
 - o Conflicting regulations with various degrees of enforcement, discrepancies in user fees for inspections and plan reviews

- Recommendations:
 - o A universal fire code should be adopted throughout the area
 - o A universal license and fee structure should be set
 - o Computers with a centralized database should consolidate records to help with investigations
 - o Either consolidate some or all departments or have each department address its own inefficiencies
 - o With consolidation, divide the Fire Prevention Bureau into four divisions: investigation, inspection, education and plan review. Each division will need its own director and individual inspectors; all directors would report to the Chief Fire Marshal who would be responsible for the budget and act as administrator for the general program. Adequate clerical staff for recordkeeping and correspondence would also be needed. Each division could be subdivided as follows:
 - Investigation: Vehicle, canine unit, residential, commercial, industrial
 - Inspection: Schools, commercial, industrial, residential, certificate of occupancy, hazardous materials
 - Education: Businesses, organizations, schools, seniors, public relations
 - Plan Review: Licensing/fees, residential, industrial, commercial

Funding Ideas:

- State and federal grants
- Corporate and business grants from major entities in the Downriver area
- Added fee collection for specialized services including
 - o Storing, using or shipping Extremely Hazardous Substances, as defined by the EPA, or 10,000 pounds of any hazardous material.
 - o Inspecting underground storage tanks
 - o Inspecting excavation sites including tunneling operations to check for possible collapse zones
- User fees for use of personnel, vehicles and equipment
- If fire stations close, the money from the sale of the stations could be used to build the new station.

Overall Conclusion: Reorganization in some final form will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the fire service among participating cities.

Barriers to Collaboration

This section lists a number of common obstacles to a successful cooperative initiative. Awareness of these common issues, proper preparation, and adherence to the Elements for Success (found on the following segment) are essential to avoiding and/or overcoming these issues.

- Turf battles
- Fear of losing control
- Resistance to change
- Autonomy issues: loss of identity
- Residents concern that they may “lose” their fire department
- Concern for the quality or quantity of service
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of leadership
- Uncertainty regarding how to begin pursuing collaboration
- Startup costs
- Labor contracts: manpower guarantees, rank differentials, pay rates and pensions
- Concern that there will be an increased workload
- Fear that the department will get too big
- Hidden secrets regarding the true state of one’s city and/or fire department
- Past disputes
- Hidden agendas
- Unclear motives
- Distrust
- Lack of shared vision
- Lack of incentives
- Unequal partners
- Differing taxing authority and limitations amongst partner communities
- Difficulty determining the cost of the service and a method to allocate the cost
- Difficulty financing the collaboration
- Gain is too far out in time; may not occur during the current political term of office
- Elections
- Win-lose attitudes, competition
- Disagreements within the fire governance committee
- Uncertainty of the sustainability of the joint agreement
- Difficulty exiting the agreement once in it

Elements for Success

Collaboration is never an easy process; however there are numerous steps you can take to help ensure success. Below is a list of suggested principals that will help to keep your collaboration on the right track. Refer back to this list to ensure you are including all elements as you move forward toward collaboration. Also, keep in mind that in order for any collaboration to succeed, participants must exhibit patience, perseverance and willingness to compromise.

Administrative

- Complete all steps described in the second section, Preplanning
- Deal directly with problems
- Agree to keep talking, no matter what
- Abstain from discussing or considering the consolidation of municipalities, annexation, dissolution or any other kind of land or tax seizure, especially when townships are involved in the process
- Address the following issues before agreeing to collaborate:
 - Liability
 - Insurance
 - Hiring
 - Training
 - Prioritization of service provision
 - Changed circumstances
 - Asset division
- Develop a clear rationale for why a particular cost allocation method was selected
- Prepare for changes due to elections in both the planning and implementation stages
- Work to keep everything nonpartisan
- Confront race issues immediately and openly

Written Agreements

- Include the following. . .
 - Legal basis for the contractual relationship
 - Method of cost sharing
 - Who or what will be the fiduciary
 - Quality and quantity of service to be provided
 - Time period during which the collaboration will take place
 - Process for adding new partners
 - Exit clauses and early termination procedures
 - Evaluation and reporting procedures
- Review the terms and conditions of the agreement on a regular basis

Oversight Board

- Establish a statutory administrative board to oversee the fire service collaboration
 - May be required under some authorizing statues but, in other cases, one may need to be appointed
 - May use PA 7, 1967 for enabling legislation
 - Some groups form more than one board:
 - Oversight board made up of elected officials from each participating entity
 - Technical board, with one representative from each entity that oversees the day-to-day running of the program. Technical boards and authorities are often one and the same, and are usually the entity responsible for responding to public questions and concerns.
- Although the composition of the board and its responsibilities is subject to negotiation in most cases, boards that contain equal representation from participating entities perform better than boards that have unequal representation. The tendency exists in negotiating agreements that if one unit pays proportionally more of the costs, it receives additional representation or votes. Agreements structured in such a way tend to be short lived since the unit with fewer votes perceives that they are “steam rolled” in the voting process.
- Legislative bodies must empower their representatives to act on their behalf

> cont.

- Reports frequently to respective participating legislative bodies to ensure constant communication and to alert the legislative bodies of potential problems
- Provides a forum for problem resolution other than existing councils or board
- Holds regular, public meetings
- Ensure that the legislative bodies do not constantly countermand recommendations developed by the oversight board

Public Relations

- Key Messages
 - Do not disguise an effort to reduce the workforce as an effort to collaborate or determine cost saving as your primary motivation for collaboration
 - Be clear that the purpose of collaboration is not to eliminate firefighters
 - Use numbers and statistics to show the improvement in services and the safety
 - Once a fire collaboration is successfully implemented, market the initiative as a competitive edge in the region
 - Agree not to criticize partner cities and departments in public
 - In addition to improved services and cost savings, frame the issue in terms of economic development and prosperity
- Community Engagement
 - Hold special public meetings to describe the problem, potential solutions
 - Invite citizens to attend visioning session to determine their hopes and goals for the community
 - Provide a number of opportunities for stakeholders, especially citizens, to voice their concerns
 - Build a supportive coalition including representatives from all stakeholder groups
 - Follow through with initiatives in order to maintain credibility with the public and to pave the way for another collaboration in the future
- Media Relations
 - Build credibility with the press
 - Select one person from the committee to be responsible for communicating with the media
 - Include the local press as part of the process to keep the issue in the public eye
 - Have an invitational relationship with the media
 - Have a kick off event for both the media and general public
 - Pursue citizen awareness through any means available including community newsletters
 - Immediately address rumors through the local media
 - Notify the entire committee of questions being asked by the media and the answers given
 - Follow through with collaborative efforts to win the attention and support of both the media and the general public

Resource Guide

SEMCOG

<http://www.semco.org>

- *Making Joint Public Services Work in the 21st Century Intergovernmental Cooperation: Case Studies in Southeast Michigan* – www.semco.org/Products/pdfs/intergovcasestudies.pdf
- *Making Joint Public Services Work in the 21st Century/Financing Joint Public Ventures: Alternatives and Consequences* – www.semco.org/cgi-bin/products/pdfs/CostAllocation2003.pdf
- *Making Joint Public Services Work in the 21st Century/ Intergovernmental Cooperation: Strategies for Overcoming Political Barriers* – www.semco.org/products/pdfs/politicalbarriers2003.pdf
- *Making Joint Public Services Work in the 21st Century/Intergovernmental Collaboration: A Background Paper* – www.semco.org/Products/pdfs/intergovbackground.pdf
- *Award Winning Joint Projects 2002* – www.semco.org/products/pdfs/JPSawards2002.pdf
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- *Award Winning Joint Projects 2000* – www.semco.org/cgi-bin/products/publications.cfm
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- Joint Public Services database – www.semco.org/Services/JPS/database.htm

Michigan State University

<http://www.msu.edu>

- *Buying and Selling Fire Protection* – www.web1.msue.msu.edu/slg/materials/harveypaper4.pdf

Centers for Regional Excellence Program

www.michigan.gov/cre

- *A Brief Primer on Regional Collaboration* – www.michigan.gov/cre/0,1607,7-115--125792--,00.html

Citizens Research Council of Michigan

<http://www.crcmich.org>

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 **Notes**