



Metropolitan Mayors Caucus
2015 Update on the Service Delivery Task Force Pilot Study Project
On Shared Service Delivery and Service Consolidation
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In May of 2013 the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus released its report on insights and strategies to be considered when addressing shared services and local government consolidation initiatives. The Caucus launched five Pilot Studies to assist Member needs. The Pilot studies were centered on utilizing existing tools and the authority of the Illinois Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, and its power to improve the economics and level of operations of core local governmental services. The recommendations were based on the outcomes of five separate studies dealing with local government public safety services and included 15 units of local government. I am pleased to report that several of the recommendations presented have been implemented or are being considered within the Pilot Communities, and that new initiatives from other Caucus members have been launched consistent with the outcomes of the study. I believe this new activity is a result of the Caucus raising the level of conversation on the economic and operational benefits of service sharing. Here is a quick summary of progress since the 2013 report of the Service Delivery Task Force which was filed with the Caucus.

1. LaGrange, LaGrange Park, and Western Springs Fire and Police Study. The scope of this study was broad with several recommendations pointed to greater cooperative service delivery. The most significant work is the progress of the study

partners to plan and launch a consolidation of three separate dispatching facilities into one three community combined dispatch center serving both the Fire and Police Departments and providing for future growth. Their technical study has advanced to a point that the communities will be hiring a Dispatch Manager in June 2015 with the intent of going live with the regional dispatch center in January 2016. While the initial roll out of service is predicted to be revenue neutral, service improvements will be significant, and future capital expenditures will be much more affordable to the three communities when compared to the total costs of operating separate dispatch centers. The regional dispatch center will be located in LaGrange. In addition to dispatching, the three communities have adopted a plan to combine jail activities in LaGrange as well.

On the issue of fire apparatus recommendations, the three communities have reduced their combined fleet of three aerial fire trucks to two pieces of apparatus. LaGrange has been permitted under this plan to remove from service and sell their aerial apparatus and now relies on the two remaining units to cover all three Villages. The success of this program has launched an additional cooperative effort to upgrade one current ambulance to a contagious disease unit available for service in all three communities.

While shared police command was a recommendation of the pilot study it has yet to be implemented but is being discussed. From field supervision to the command officer level, some form of combined command structure is being actively discussed and will be analyzed more extensively once the regional dispatch center becomes operational.

2. Oak Lawn, Chicago Ridge, Alsip Fire Study. As with the La Grange study, a sharing of the aerial ladder apparatus has been launched between Oak Lawn and Chicago Ridge. Oak Lawn has been able to eliminate their ladder truck and has implemented a lower cost and more versatile "quint" apparatus for the benefit of both communities. More significantly Oak Lawn and Chicago Ridge by Agreement now share a Fire Chief. Chief Sheets from the Oak Lawn Fire Department now commands both Departments and has been able to implement a number of operational

improvements saving money for both communities and improving operational performance. This was an early recommendation of the pilot study.

While station reduction strategies between Oak Lawn and Alsip have not been implemented, automatic aid between these two Villages has been enhanced and can be described as robust.

3. West Dundee, East Dundee, Sleepy Hollow, and Carpentersville Police and Fire Study. Carpentersville, while not a pilot study community, has joined the fire shared service dialog which is led by West Dundee. They have brought the concept of shared fire field command responsibilities to the members and have developed a more formalized role for the Carpentersville Battalion Chief to deploy to the other communities in a field command role. In addition Automatic Aid Agreements have been expanded and enhanced including a new partner, the Barrington Countryside Fire Protection District, to existing emergency response protocols. Police consolidation has yet to take a foothold although a compelling economic argument had been presented in the study with respect to Sleepy Hollow being serviced by West Dundee.

4. North Shore Code Enforcement Study Including Wilmette, Winnetka, Northfield, and Glenview. The study recommendation of improving performance through employee sharing has taken the form of developing a contract services model with several of the study partners using the same contractor for service economies. While this has not produced large savings, it has lowered the worker cost structure and provides the Villages with greater flexibility to structure service costs to meet building activity demands. Fire Inspection services have been combined using an intergovernmental agreement. While this change is revenue neutral, the availability of inspectors has been greatly enhanced which is a significant benefit to business owners in the community. The combined talents also provide enhanced technical services as well through the use of a larger talented inspector pool.

In addition Northfield and Glenview have launched a fire deployment program which also eliminated one aerial piece of apparatus and developed an emergency response strategy based on location rather than municipal boundary. This has also spawned a service sharing of the Northfield certified fire engine mechanic to work on the shared aerial apparatus.

It is interesting also to report that a recently completed study in South Cook County built upon the shared code enforcement concept and is being adopted to retain a shared paralegal position for Richton Park, Park Forest, Chicago Heights, and South Chicago Heights. Current use of building department personnel has been inefficient in tracking ownership and support court efforts on foreclosure. It is planned that a shared paralegal position will greatly improve the efficiency and productivity of each building department in this study.

5. Other Related Initiatives of Caucus Members not Part of the Pilot Study. Caucus members on their own accord have launched important new service sharing initiatives. This was the original intended result of the MMC by rolling out the pilot studies to elevate the conversation of new opportunities for shared service relationships. The following three examples highlight the progress to date of other MMC members:

A. Northwest Lake County Water System Conversion to Lake Michigan Supply. Reducing groundwater depletion through supply conversion from groundwater to Lake Michigan water is a core environmental recommendation of Lake County water management policy. With the costs of water delivery infrastructure prohibitive for a single community in this region of the County, partnering in the planning, design, financing, and construction of water delivery infrastructure is essential for successful implementation. Six northwest Lake County water systems, four north and two west banded together to jointly plan, finance, and construct a new water system and join an existing water supplier with the capacity of producing Lake Michigan water in the quantity needed for the new communities. The joint cooperative effort is the difference between creating the infrastructure and walking away from the project.

B. North Cook County Water Supplier Options. Many communities are challenged by current water supplier pricing and have options by working together, to construct additional infrastructure to connect to a lower cost water supplier, potentially saving their water customers millions of dollars. Active planning by three North Cook County communities working together are revealing viable options to consider should an alternate water supplier be selected. Two of the study communities have no economic alternative but to work cooperatively in a similar fashion to that activity witnessed in NW Lake County.

C. Barrington Area Fire Service Planning. The Village of Barrington for several years was a contract service provider to the Barrington Countryside Fire Protection District. The District believed the Village was not allocating the resources needed to provide service to their 45 square mile service area and sought to remove itself from the service Agreement. The Village of Barrington is a more compact and smaller (5 square mile) service area and worked with the Fire District to meet their objective to become a free standing service area. The Village also used the opportunity to redesign its own fire service, which had the result of introducing an additional ambulance to the Village system, reducing the apparatus vehicle staffing, reduced response times, lowered its cost structure, and enhanced automatic aid agreements. The impact of the Villages actions also improved its ISO fire rating from a class four to a class two. Taking the opportunity to assess operational requirements during periods of change was also a strategy of the Pilot Community studies and achieved benefits and results for the Village and the Fire District.

While these three examples are indirect results of the actions of the Caucus, the strategies are consistent with the assumptions of the pilot studies and reflects well on the outcomes which can be achieved when cooperative service planning between jurisdictions are a key component of service planning.