

City of Charlevoix  
2014 Cooperation, Collaboration and  
Consolidation of Services Plan  
Category 2 of the State of Michigan  
Economic Vitality Incentive Program



In an unique public/private cooperative effort, the City of Charlevoix, Charlevoix Township and St. Mary's Cement Company are collaborating on the construction of the Lake to Lake Multi-Use Trail

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

As part of the state government requirements to improve intergovernmental cooperation throughout state and local governments, the City of Charlevoix has developed this report to our residents. Charlevoix's Collaboration/Cooperation/Consolidation Plan provides an in-depth look at areas of Charlevoix's government that have the potential for intergovernmental cooperative efforts.

The City of Charlevoix has a long and successful history of collaborating and cooperating with its neighboring communities. In many cases, municipal services would not be possible without collaborating with our neighbors. In other cases, the level of service that we can provide through collaboration is much greater than if we had provided the service for just our residents. In some collaborative/cooperative efforts, the benefits of collaboration are more through coordinated efforts that enhance the service for each community than simply cost savings for the community. Please keep in mind that the cost savings by collaborative effort is difficult to estimate. In many instances there is not a numerical value that can be placed on the cooperative efforts. The calculation of the cost savings often depends on the perspective of the entity making the estimate and the set of assumptions about the level of service to be provided. Finally, not all collaborative efforts are undertaken for cost saving reasons. Sometimes a collaborative effort is just good public policy and prudent to undertake.

As demonstrated in this report, the City of Charlevoix has a long and successful track record with collaborating and cooperating with outside agencies. City officials continually strive to improve services or reduce costs via cooperation or consolidation efforts. The City of Charlevoix is committed to continue working with its neighboring municipalities on existing and potential collaborative efforts. It is important to note some of the ideas are simply conceptual at this point; there may be unknown factors that might make the idea uneconomical or unlikely. The Plan will be made available at City Hall and posted on the City's website.

## **1. Consolidate Fire Chief and Police Chief positions into a Public Safety Director Position**

In mid-2014, the City's Fire Chief will be retiring. Based upon a Public Safety Study completed by Dr. Lynn Harvey, the City will consolidate two department head positions, Fire Chief/Police Chief into a Director of Public Safety.

**Implementation Timeline-** Completed by September of 2014

**Jurisdictions Involved-** City of Charlevoix

**Potential Savings Amount-** Substantial savings if completed, potentially \$50,000-\$75,000. Reduces personnel costs by reducing the number of department heads by one.

**Other Consolidation Benefits-** Cost savings, better communication between police and fire/ems departments.

## **2. Complete Construction with Charlevoix Township in the Development of the Lake to Lake Multi-Use Trail**

The City and Charlevoix Township will complete construction of the Lake to Lake Multi-Use Trail located in both the township and the city. The trail would connect Lake Charlevoix and Lake Michigan at Fisherman's Island State Park. The trail will use an abandoned rail bed dedicated to Charlevoix Township by St. Mary's Cement Company. A connection to the City's trail system allowing for linkage to the Little Traverse Wheel Way would be included in the initiative. Costs savings using grant dollars are in the \$285,000 range.

**Implementation Timeline-** Construction drawings and bidding completed by Spring. Construction commences in Spring, 2014 and completed 6-8 weeks after start of construction.

**Jurisdictions Involved-** City of Charlevoix and Charlevoix Townships

**Potential Savings Amount** - Grant of \$285,000 would not have been possible without partnership between City and Charlevoix Township. Substantial savings if completed.

**Other Consolidation Benefits-** More efficient service delivery, taxpayer savings with MDOT grant, offering a new alternate transportation option, positive public relations through collaborative efforts.

**Barriers-** Include development and execution of cost sharing agreements, easement issues and a multitude of studies needed to complete the project. Because there is federal grant dollars involved the City and Township had to commission environmental and archeological studies.

### **3. Partner with Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council on Storm Water Pollution Study**

Recently, the City of Charlevoix was awarded a Charlevoix County Community Foundation (CCCF) grant to study sources of non-point pollution associated with storm water runoff. The City will partner with Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council to complete the pollution study.

**Implementation Timeline-** Project will commence in Spring/Early Summer completing storm water pollution study by end of summer 2014.

**Jurisdictions Involved-** City of Charlevoix, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, CCCF

**Potential Savings Amount** - Difficult to determine. Invaluable benefits in preserving and protecting high water quality of lakes and rivers. Positive public relations by partnering with a local environmental group.

**Other Consolidation Benefits-** Preservation/protection of water quality; proactive approach to identifying potential pollution sources; community education.

### **4. Explore the Development of a Downtown WIFI Network with DDA, City and Chamber of Commerce**

In an effort to promote more comprehensive WIFI coverage in the downtown area, the City, DDA and Chamber of Commerce will jointly fund and commission a WIFI feasibility study. The study will address various technical and legal issues with implementation of such a plan and look at overall sustainability and funding for such a community amenity.

**Implementation Timeline-** Phase I fully funded in January, 2014. Completion of Phase I study to be completed in mid-March, 2014. Seeking approval from respective boards in January of 2014 for funding Phase I of the study. Phases II and III will be approved at a later date dependent upon overall results of Phase I.

**Jurisdictions Involved-** City of Charlevoix, Charlevoix DDA, Charlevoix Chamber of Commerce

**Potential Savings Amount-** Difficult to quantify. If implemented, downtown WIFI could be a strong attraction for visitors. This could also reduce local internet costs for downtown businesses.

**Other Consolidation Benefits-** Unique private/public partnership, comprehensive WIFI coverage in downtown area, unique attraction for visitors.

## **5. Implement on-line registration for City Recreation programs**

The City's Recreation Department spends innumerable hours in registering recreation program participants through paper registration forms. The City can use cloud-based registration programs by having all participants access on-line registration forms on the City's website.

**Implementation Timeline-** Entire transition to on-line registration started in January of 2014. Should be completed by September, 2014.

**Jurisdictions Involved-** City of Charlevoix

**Potential Savings Amount** - Creates a more efficient registration method saving Recreation Director hours of her time in data input.

**Other Consolidation Benefits-** Quicker, more customer service oriented approach.

## **6. Create a Shared Landing Page for DDA and Chamber of Commerce**

The City of Charlevoix's DDA and the Charlevoix Chamber of Commerce are proposing to create a "joint landing page" for both the DDA's and Chamber's websites. The project would benefit both organizations while sharing development costs and annual maintenance costs.

**Implementation Timeline-** Project initiated in January, 2014. Should be ready for public viewing by summer, 2014.

**Jurisdictions Involved-** City of Charlevoix's DDA, Charlevoix Chamber of Commerce

**Potential Savings Amount** - \$5,000 cost savings to the DDA to not design a new website. Annually, \$1,000 in savings by sharing annual maintenance and upkeep costs.

**Other Consolidation Benefits-** Better public access to both websites, more customer service oriented approach.

## 2013 EVIP Category 2 Status Update

### **1. Commission a Feasibility Study for Fire Department Consolidation**

Status-Dropped

No interest from Charlevoix Township to commission a study to look into consolidation of City and Township fire departments.

### **2. Pursue Funding for Mt McSuaba Ski Area**

Status-Dropped

City has approach townships many times to see if they are interested in contributing monies to offset costs of running the ski hill. No motivation from townships to assist City financially.

### **3. Complete Construction with Charlevoix Township in the Development of the Lake to Lake Multi-Use Trail**

Status- Much progress. Trail project will be constructed in July, 2014, completed in September of 2014

Barriers included development and execution of cost sharing agreements, easement issues and a multitude of studies needed to complete the project. Because there is federal grant dollars involved the City and Township had to commission environmental and archeological studies.

### **4. Successfully Complete First Year of Joint Collaboration on Assessing Services**

Status-Successful!

This has been a great collaboration between Boyne City, East Jordan and City of Charlevoix. We have one assessor that works for all three municipalities, saving each community thousands of dollars each year. No real barriers were encountered.

### **5. Partner with Charlevoix School District in Leasing Excess Capacity Fiber Optic Cable to Merit Network, Inc. or other interested Parties**

Status-Successful!

The City and School District has leased excess fiber to various companies realizing some small revenue amounts.

Barriers include technical and legal issues with public entities involved in leasing fiber to private companies. School District and City hired a consultant to assist in negotiations and drafting agreements.

### **2012 EVIP Category 2 Status Update**

#### **1. Region-Wide Fire/EMS Authority**

Status-Dropped

There is no interest from township officials to commission a feasibility study.

#### **2. Form a Recreation Authority**

Status- Dropped

City has approach townships many times to see if they are interested in forming a region-wide Recreation Authority. No interest and they do not feel that a millage increase is prudent in challenging economic times.

#### **3. Partner with Charlevoix Township in the Development of Lake to Lake Multi-Use Trail**

Status- Much progress. Trail project will be constructed in July, 2014, completed in September of 2014

#### **4. Partner with Charlevoix Middle School for a Safer Pedestrian Crossing of Bridge Street. Work with MDOT on a Safer Crossing of U.S. 31 near the Municipal Golf Course.**

Status Middle School-Dropped

Middle School closed last year. All middle school students now attend the high school. No longer a safety issue.

#### **5. Initiate Development of Joint Purchase Agreements with other Townships or Municipalities**

Status- Efforts ongoing. We partnered with Boyne City and East Jordan in April 2013 on hiring contractor for street pavement markings.

#### **6. Partner with the Cities of Harbor Springs and Petoskey for Emergency Backup of Software, Hardware and Data Storage**

Status: We have not been successful in our efforts as there are compatibility issues with software. We do not believe this is feasible at this time. Proposal is dropped.

## **7. Consider Renting City Equipment to Adjoining Municipalities and Townships**

Status- Efforts are ongoing and fruitful. In summer of 2013, City rented a beach groomer to Boyne City and private associations realizing additional revenues.

## **8. Consider Sharing Ownership of a Combined Cycle Gas Plant**

Status-Through a collaborative effort with many other municipalities and MPPA, the City has purchased electricity from a methane generation power plant. Purchases are ongoing and occur throughout the year.