

Village of Dexter

Cooperation, Collaboration, and Consolidation Plan

January 30, 2014

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 February 1, 2014 as a requirement to obtain Economic Vitality Incentive Program funds. The plan should include an update on the status of the proposals that were in the previous year's plan and one or more proposals to increase the existing level of cooperation, collaboration and consolidation.

The plan will be available to the public via the Village website.

Ongoing cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation examples:

Police Services

The Village of Dexter is in year three of a four year contract with the Washtenaw County Sheriff Office for the provision of police service. The Townships of Webster and Dexter also contract with the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office 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. The Village provides a substation for the deputies that work in this collaboration. 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 continues to be 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. The Village provides a building that is used by the department. 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

The Village continues to participate in a regional economic development effort to promote the natural features of our area. Involved in the "Big 400" initiative, as partners to the Village, are the City of Chelsea, Chelsea Chamber of Commerce, Waterloo Recreation Area, Pinckney Recreation Area and the Ann Arbor Convention and Visitor's Bureau. This Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Commission recently presented the "Partner in Conservation" Award to the Big 400.

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 continues to be a member of Western Washtenaw Area Value Express (WAVE). The contracts with WAVE for the door-to-door and commuter services are renewed by Council on an annual basis. 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 (CAPT/DART).

Regional Transit

The Village participated in an attempt to form a regional transit authority in Washtenaw County. The initial attempts to form the authority were unsuccessful. As a core urban community the Village has continued to talk with the City of Ann Arbor and the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority to generate ideas for cost effective methods to increase transit opportunities for our residents.

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 continues to utilize 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.

Trail Development

The Village has been working with the Washtenaw County Road Commission, Washtenaw County Parks and Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority to develop the Border to Border Trail through the Village. The trail from Dexter Village to Hudson Mills Metropark was completed in fall 2013. The Village continues to work with Washtenaw County Parks and the Michigan Department of Transportation to complete the final 300 feet of path that connects Dexter Huron Metropark to the Village of Dexter. The path is now expected to be under construction in 2014. Coordination with MDOT is necessary due to the path's proposed location inside railroad right of way.

Connectivity

The Village partnered with the Washtenaw County Road Commission to place a sidewalk in Road Commission right-of-way to connect the Cedars of Dexter subdivision to the Village's sidewalk/trail network. The Road Commission provided design and construction engineering services at a flat rate and completed the necessary traffic signal work, while the Village paid for construction.

Procurement

The Village participates in the Michigan Intergovernmental Trade Network, which is a collaboration amongst municipalities that provides a centralized network to release bids. MITN provides a bid library that allows participating communities to access sample bids and bid results. The Village also participates with MiDeal, which is a State of Michigan procurement program that allows municipalities to utilize State of Michigan acquired bid prices.

Water/Sewer Service

The Village provides water and sewer service to locations outside the jurisdiction through 425 Agreements with surrounding Townships. Water and sewer services are provided to Dexter High School through a 425 Agreement with Scio Township. These services are also provided to several businesses through a 425 Agreement with Webster Township.

Update on efforts mentioned last year:

Fire Protection

The Townships of Dexter, Scio and Webster along with the Village have been meeting since September 2009 to discuss joining together to form a larger regional fire department. This effort would 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. The draft inter-local agreement was distributed to each municipality in August 2012 and is currently being reviewed. Both Scio Township and the Village of Dexter have voted to enter into the agreement.

Barriers to Implementation – No action on the agreement has been taken by Dexter Township or Webster Township.

Connectivity

The Village partnered 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. An administrator for this program was hired in July 2012 through a grant from the Chelsea Area Wellness Foundation. A draft Safe Routes to School plan document is expected to be completed in February 2013.

Update – The Village received a Safe Routes to School Grant in October 2013. Construction on the project will occur in 2014.

Barriers to implementation – None to date

Assessing Services

The Village initiated the process for incorporation as a Home Rule City in July 2006. Our petition has been found legally sufficient by the State Boundary Commission and the Director of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. A referendum election to determine whether the process should move forward is scheduled for May 2013. 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.

Update – The Village residents voted to continue the process of Cityhood in May 2013. Village residents elected a 9 member Charter Commission in November 2013. The Charter Commission is currently meeting weekly to draft a charter for consideration.

Barriers to implementation – Awaiting results of November 2014 election to determine whether the community accepts the draft City Charter and becomes a City.

Stormwater Study

Village Council discussed submitting for an S2 Grant to fund a stormwater study in January 2013. The purpose of the study is to inventory the Village's stormwater assets and create a document that can be used as a guide as infrastructure improvements are made in the Village. The Village would like to partner with Dexter Community Schools to complete the stormwater investigation on school property along with the rest of the Village. Dexter Community Schools owns a considerable amount of land, so this partnership is important to ensure that the study is complete. We hope to apply for the grant when the applications are available in summer 2013.

Update – The Village's Storm water, Asset Management & Wastewater (SAW) Grant application was submitted on December 2, 2013.

Barriers to Implementation – This project will not be implemented unless funding is receiving from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality SAW Grant.

New collaboration:

The Village has collaborated in many areas of local government. We will continue to collaborate and cooperate because we understand the value of doing so in so many areas. It is becoming increasingly difficult to identify new areas for collaboration. While our opportunities for new collaboration are becoming fewer and fewer, our list of actual collaboration gets longer each year. We have two new collaborations to report this year, however, as it becomes more and more difficult to identify areas to collaborate, we would hope that the State of Michigan would consider that fact in evaluating whether or not we meet the official requirements for receiving EVIP funds.

Regional Broadband

The Village of Dexter is involved with a regional effort to provide enhanced, reliable broadband service to the residents of Washtenaw County. The effort is focused on providing services to those in the rural areas who do not have service, however there could be benefit to the Village by increasing competition for service in our area.

Timeline – Committee is awaiting results of a survey of the Townships and will meet every other month in 2014. The group first started meeting in January 2014.

SPARK Business Retention

The Village is working with Washtenaw County Economic Development Group SPARK to hold quarterly business retention meetings. The first meeting will be held on January 24, 2014. The benefit of this program is to improve the Village's relationship with businesses to help retain them in the community. Finding out about the challenges businesses are facing through networking events like this allows the Village to either assist them or find them the resources they need to assist them. This is also an opportunity for networking between the business owners.