



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING

**EVIP Cooperation, Collaboration and
Consolidation Plan**

The Charter Township of Lansing has a rich history of partnering with neighboring Communities. By our very nature and geography it has always been in our best interest to share services with all Local Governments in the Tri-County Region.

Today's Counties, Cities, Villages and Townships in Michigan face many economic challenges and Lansing Township along with many of our partners, are united in overcoming these challenges. Our citizens deserve to have a safe and secure quality of life at the lowest possible cost. With tax dollars at an all time low our residents will continue to receive the highest efficiencies of service through Local Government Partnerships.

Out of necessity these Partnerships have become more frequent in the past three decades and we will continue to create strategies and bridge positive relationships with those who surround us. We must not only market Lansing Township but the entire Region. In the past, potential barriers to collaboration such as turf wars, trust and loss of identity issues have divided us and although many of us have worked hard at quietly breaking down these barriers, we still have a ways to go.

It is incumbent upon us to continue to promote a regional image to all who are considering Lansing Township as a home or a place to do business and as our revenue base continues to be challenged, cooperation collaboration and functional (targeted) consolidation will become a necessary way of life. And as these concepts are launched and promoted, we will be forced to find mechanisms to achieve regional prosperity through THEM and not competition.

The following Consolidation of Services are goals that Lansing Township has achieved and accomplished:

ASSESSING OFFICE

The Charter Township of Lansing privatized its assessing function in 1982 and has contracted those services out to 4 different companies since that time. The Township Board decided the Township would be best served by an assessor who conducted a minimum 8 office hours per week plus a full time staff person who is available to assist the public on the telephone and on a walk-in basis. It is noted the full time staff person is shared by the assessor, supervisor and building department.

It is estimated the cost savings to the Township since 1982 is over \$1,500,000.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

After the retirement of the township's building official in 2007, the township chose to contract services for plan review, permitting, and inspections for building as well as for the sub-trades, mechanical, electrical and plumbing. It should be noted that prior to the retirement, our sub-trades were permitted and inspected by the Michigan Bureau of Construction Codes. In addition

to outsourcing the Township's permitting/inspection process, the board decided to hire a part-time ordinance enforcement officer. While it is difficult to measure a monetary savings because fees paid for services is dependent upon the amount of construction/permit fees received. The level of service, however, has increased with inspections for the sub-trades being timelier, number of inspectors servicing our agency and accessibility to all inspectors.

Our ordinance enforcement officer is tenacious with a higher ordinance compliance rate than our retired building inspector who split his duties between building inspections and ordinance enforcement.

REGIONALISM

In 1995, the Lansing Charter Township & Lansing Board of Water & Light helped found the Mid-Michigan Water Authority, a regional water supply coordinating entity formed solely to benefit its member communities.

Members of the Water Authority include Bath Charter Township, Delta Charter Township, Delhi Charter Township, Village of Dimondale, City of Grand Ledge, City of Lansing, Lansing Charter Township, Oneida Charter Township, Village of Webberville and Windsor Charter Township. The Water Authority's mission is to provide a cooperative forum for development of a regional water system for its member communities and to help them obtain safe, reliable and cost effective water resources.

MMWA Goals

The Authority's goals are:

- I. Assure availability of water, based on a projection of individual community needs, through the identification of resources and methods of supply, while protecting ground water;
- II. Provide a treated water supply and distribution system which will interface with local water system through the development and implementation of an engineered plan;
- III. Ensure compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and establish a forum for the coordination of treatment;
- IV. Assist in developing financing resources and exchanges of water between communities on a cost effective basis;
- V. Manage the regional water system development plan to respond to the changing needs of individual communities;
- VI. Provide information and education to local communities, state and federal officials and legislators, and K-12 systems using ongoing communications, public relations and by providing an open public forum;
- VII. Encourage maximum participation to achieve economies of scale and preservation of resources.

Fostering Regional Cooperation

In the late 1980's, several public water supplies in the Tri-County area were in the midst of evaluating construction or expansion of their water treatment facilities. One possible alternative

included purchasing bulk water from the BWL, where treatment capacity exceeded the system's projected needs. In 1988, a drought in the region accentuated the differences in capabilities between existing public water systems. The combined set of circumstances led to an open house at Michigan State University, where community representatives discussed the feasibility of a cooperative approach to providing public water supply throughout the region.

Our regional communities acknowledged their mutual dependence on the Saginaw aquifer. A model for cooperation on groundwater issues already existed between area communities in the form of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission Groundwater Management Board. In 1990, the BWL participated in a Water Regionalization Task Force along with representatives from other communities. With the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission as its fiscal agent the Task Force sought proposals to evaluate the legal, technical and economic feasibility of a regional approach to water supply development.

Final conclusion of the studies showed that there is great advantage in participating as part of a regional authority and although financial savings cannot be measured to any degree of certainty, the above assessment pales in comparison to the benefits of having a multi-jurisdictional group of governments harmoniously working together for a common cause.

BWL & WEST SIDE WATER

In March of 1995 Lansing's Board of Water and Light Partnered with Lansing Township's West Side Water Department, entering into a wholesale water purchase agreement.

West Side Water had difficulty meeting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rules on copper levels in the water. The Township evaluated three alternatives to enable the water system to meet the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

It was determined the most cost effective way was to purchase water from Lansing's Board of Water & Light.

Under the terms of the contract Lansing Township would buy softened, fluoridated water from BWL. The Township would also sell 2 million gallons a day of untreated water to the BWL, offsetting some of the capitol costs.

After 4 months of construction, an interconnecting water line was completed. Total cost savings can be proven but difficult to measure; however, there were many implied benefits resulting from this collaboration and geographic consolidation and a quid pro quo relationship was launched. Township users were pleased because they were able to benefit from the use of softened, fluoridated water and were able to save money by selling their water softeners, and no longer were responsible for purchasing salt. All of this was accomplished at a monthly cost savings to township users while it was also a benefit to the Board of Water and light because they were the recipients of two thousand new customers.

LANSING TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

- Member Western Metro Chiefs. (Formed in Spring 2009)
Joint training for mutual aid partners on the west side of Lansing. Training is scheduled on a quarterly basis.
Members:
Lansing Township
Delta Township
Windsor Township
Looking Glass
Grand Ledge
Potterville, Benton
- Capital Area Emergency Services Training Consortium. (2009)

Actively working with members of the consortium to help develop training topics that Lansing Community College can help facilitate. We currently have several in the works. Including LCC sharing their membership to National Fire Protection Association code subscription with the members, saving the Township an annual subscription fee of \$800.00
- Automatic fire response with Delta Township for all reported structure fires. (since late 1980s). The savings to both Departments is substantial, avoiding the cost of hiring new fire-fighters through attrition. Also, the benefits of two local government fire departments harmoniously working side by side for more than two decades is tantamount to cost savings.
- Joint purchase of fire investigation supplies and materials with the City of Lansing Fire Department. (resulting in savings of several hundred dollars)
- Signed mutual aid agreements with seven area fire departments. (fire and EMS response)
- Currently in the process of implementing the Ingham County Command Staff response team. The command team will be comprised of supervisory personnel from participating agencies that can respond to a large scale emergency to assist in the incident management team.(December 2011)
- Purchasing fuel from Waverly School district (fall 2011) Projected savings could be hundreds of dollars.
- Joint purchasing of new Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) with Meridian Township and Williamston which resulted in a savings of thousands of dollars. (October 2010)
- Adopt an Emergency Operations Plan for Lansing Township which supports the Ingham County Emergency Operations Plan. (2009)

Update of the Lansing Township Emergency Operations Plan, which supports the Ingham County Plan. (By the adoption of this plan the Township saves several thousand dollars by utilizing the Counties resources rather than funding its own emergency operations center and equipment.) (December 2011)

- Currently participating in a Shared Public Services Initiative study. (December 2011 through June 2012).

With the Cities of Lansing, East Lansing, Townships of Meridian, Delhi, and Delta we are currently developing a Shared Fire Services Study with the guidance of Plante Moran to determine and explore a wide range of service sharing options from collaboration to different types of consolidation of fire services. The overarching objectives of this consortium of Fire departments and Communities are many; but not the least of which will focus on response times by qualified Fire Personnel, to maintain or improve service levels by maximizing resources and to potentially realize both short and long-term cost savings. Hopefully, we will receive the results of the study by the middle of 2012, and commence finding ways to implement these results to a satisfactory and positive conclusion.