

City of Clare
Previously Implemented Cooperation, Collaboration,
Consolidation and Process Improvement
Service Initiatives - As of January 2014

The City of Clare, being physically located within both Clare and Isabella Counties, provides a multitude of public services to the community that are coordinated and provided in concert with a variety of governmental, non-profit, agency, private and other entities in both counties. These cooperative, collaborative and consolidated services have been a part of the City of Clare's basic premise of serving the public in the most efficient manner possible likely all the way back to the incorporation of our municipality in 1897. Being a good neighbor and sharing resources in the more rural areas of the State of Michigan is simply a way of life.

Examples of the City of Clare's previously implemented cooperative, collaborative and consolidated services, the entities that we collaborate with and the estimated savings include:

- **Fire Protection** - The Clare Fire Department has provided fire protection services for the City of Clare, Grant Township, Sheridan Township, and portions of both Vernon Township and Wise Township for many, many years. The Clare Fire Department also has reciprocal mutual aid agreements with several other fire departments throughout our entire geographic area. It is difficult if not impossible to estimate the annual savings realized by the City of Clare and each of the communities served by the Clare Fire Department either directly or through mutual aid. However, it is abundantly clear that within a city with a population of just over 3,000 people it would not be possible to have such a well equipped fire department without the existing cooperative agreements. Actual savings on an annual basis for the City of Clare and for each of the townships who have partnered with the City is estimated to be well in excess of \$100,000 for each participating local unit of government.
- **Police Protection** - The Clare Police Department is deputized in both Clare County and Isabella County and assists both counties as well as the State Police as needed/required. The Clare Police Department also receives assistance as needed/requested from each of these law enforcement agencies. As with other emergency services it is difficult to estimate the savings achieved and instead it is important to focus on the improved responsiveness of the combined law enforcement network within our general geographic area achieved through our cooperative agreements. Actual savings to the City of Clare varies from year-to-year but conservatively would be in the tens of thousands.
- **Mechanical and Plumbing Permits/Inspections** - The City received approval from the State of Michigan in 2010 to begin issuing plumbing and mechanical permits, thereby streamlining the building permit issuance and inspection process and procedures for local residents, businesses and builders. To facilitate this service improvement the City of Clare entered into an intergovernmental agreement with Isabella County to perform the actual plumbing inspections and mechanical inspections thereby improving service to the local community, keeping costs low for both customers and the City of Clare and also providing additional service area for Isabella County which in today's economically challenged environment allows them to continue to provide local plumbing and mechanical inspection services. Actual savings is estimated to be in the thousands.

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Continued

- **Department of Public Works**

- On an ongoing basis the City of Clare provides storage space within its climate controlled salt storage facility for the Village of Farwell to store its winter road salt prior to its use each winter. Though there is no savings realized by the City of Clare the Village annually saves an estimated \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- The City of Clare on an ongoing, as needed basis works with the Village of Farwell, the City of Harrison and the City of Coleman in sharing services, equipment and staff. Actual savings is estimated to be anywhere from \$1,000 to well in excess of \$10,000 depending upon the assistance provided.
- In 2010 the City of Clare entered into an agreement of sharing services and equipment between the City of Clare's Department of Works and the Clare County Road Commission. The City for instance plows snow from roadways within a subdivision that is just outside of but contiguous to the City and the County has provided its heavy equipment which the City does not have and simply could not afford to work on projects within the City. Annually this cooperative agreement has saved each municipal entity thousands of dollars.
- The City of Clare also provides street sweeping services using our equipment four-times a year for the City of Harrison. Though no savings is realized by the City of Clare this service saves the City of Harrison considerable resources and allows the City of Clare to more fully utilize its equipment.

- **Water/Wastewater Services**

- The City of Clare's Water/Wastewater Treatment Department provides laboratory analysis services for several other municipalities in the Central Michigan area. This service saves the other municipalities hundreds of dollars each annually.
- The City of Clare's WWTP provides wastewater treatment for the State of Michigan's Mackie Rest Area. This service provides another customer for the City of Clare and relieves the State of building a sewage treatment facility.

- **Consolidated Election Services** - The City of Clare along with all other municipalities in the area participate in consolidated election administration, polling location, publication of required voter information and notification of upcoming elections each according to their respective polling locations. Annual savings is estimated to be \$100 to \$1,000.

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Continued

- **Broadband Communications**

- The City of Clare along with Clare County, the City of Harrison, the Village of Farwell, Surrey Township, the Pere Marquette District Library, the Harrison District Library and the Surrey Township Library initiated a project in 2009 and then subsequently entered into an agreement in 2010 to share the costs of high speed communications and leverage the use of technology in service to the residents of the entire county. This agreement is in cooperation with the Clare-Gladwin Regional Education Services District and beginning in 2011 also includes Arthur, Franklin, Freeman, Hamilton, Hayes and Sheridan Townships with several other townships considering joining. This initiative will have very far reaching, very beneficial effects throughout all participating governmental entities, for residents and the business community for years to come and in many ways that we cannot even conceive of at this time. Though this initiative is still relatively new we estimate conservatively that the realized cost savings for all entities to be well in excess of \$10,000 annually and will ultimately be substantially more as additional collaborative services are implemented through the use of the broadband communication network.
- In addition to the inter-governmental sharing of broadband communication systems all local units of government throughout the county are fostering the expansion of broadband Internet availability for the residents, businesses and property owners throughout the county. Being a rural community broadband Internet service has not been readily available in many areas of the county until this initiative began. Now, just three short years into the project, six townships have now made broadband Internet service available through a partnership with a local Internet Service Provider. The township provides access for the ISP to a township owned communications tower in exchange for free transport of the township's governmental communications needs back to an access point such as the one provided by the City of Clare at the top of our municipal water tower. Though savings is difficult to estimate and will only increase as additional townships throughout the county enter into this shared services agreement the City of Clare is providing a cost savings opportunity estimated to be in the hundreds of dollars for each township on an annual basis.

- **Cable Television Public, Educational and Government Access** - The City of Clare is a partner along with the Cities of Alma, Evart, Harrison, Ithaca, St. Louis, Mt. Pleasant, Charter Township of Union, Pine River and Arcada Townships and also the Villages of Breckenridge and Shepherd in the Mid Michigan Area Cable Consortium. This wide reaching cooperative provides Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) services throughout the Central Michigan region. Collectively we conservatively save thousands of dollars annually providing this informational service to the community.

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Continued

- **Library Services**

- The former Clare City Library was converted into a District Library several years ago to serve the residents of the City of Clare along with the Townships of Grant, Vernon and Wise. Concurrent with the forming of the District Library a new facility was constructed on property purchased and then donated by the City of Clare's Downtown Development Authority to the District Library. This property acquisition/donation included the demolition of the buildings previously located at the new site including the removal/remediation of contaminated soil found at the former industrial site.
- The City of Clare continues to provide personnel and payroll processing and related services for the District Library with savings for the library estimated to be between \$500 and \$1,000 annually.
- The City of Clare and the Pere Marquette District Library work together on countless programs and service offerings for the entire community. From recreational programs for the community to educational opportunities the staff of the City and the Library work together to minimize resource use while maximizing program availability and content for area residents.

- **Community Recreation** - The City of Clare has for over thirty years worked in cooperation with the Clare Public School system in meeting the recreational needs of the community through shared resources, programs and personnel. This has been a highly successful relationship allowing both entities to vastly expand the programs and services offered to the community. This sharing of resources includes facilities, parks, personnel, equipment and many other intangible resources such as communication and contacts. The annual estimated savings for the various programs and services offered by the City of Clare and the Clare Public School system is estimated to be well in excess of \$10,000.
- The City of Clare has also partnered with the Clare Public Schools for over a decade in providing each year a co-op training opportunity for high school seniors. City staff have also participated throughout the years in various educational programs with the Clare Public Schools, Mid Michigan Community College, Central Michigan University and other public education institutions in a variety of offerings such as co-op training opportunities, mock interviews, career day education, job shadowing, etc.
- The City of Clare is an active participant in the Isabella County Council of Governments whose articulated purpose is to foster "...cooperative efforts to resolve problems with maximum efficiency and to formulate policies and plans that benefit all."

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Continued

- The City of Clare activity participates in the Clare Public Schools Community Pride program each year along with dozens of businesses and community organizations. In addition to providing several volunteers for this community wide "spring cleaning" the City also provides support from our Department of Public Works, Police Department, and our Fire Department. Though cost savings is difficult to measure we consider this community program to be extremely valuable as it extends the commitment of various individuals and organizations throughout the community to maintain the physical attractiveness of our community.
- The City of Clare is also an active participant in various regional governmental and non-profit entities such as the Clare County Brownfield Authority; the Isabella County Council of Governments; Community Pathways Group; signatory of the Michigan Emergency Management Agreement; Clare County 911 Board; Small Business Initiative Council (SBIC); Middle Michigan Development Corporation; the MMDC Client Council; the MMDC Board of Directors; the Clare Local Development Finance Authority; and the Clare Downtown Development Authority program.
- **Urban Cooperation Agreements**
 - The City of Clare and Grant Township entered into an Urban Cooperation Agreement (UCA) a few years ago which provides an easy method for interested property owners to annex into the City of Clare from property within the UCA boundaries. Previous to the UCA the City of Clare and Grant Township had an annexation agreement that had been in place for over twenty years that also allowed for the annexation of property into the City of Clare.
 - The City of Clare and Vernon Township have for over twenty years had an annexation agreement in effect which allows property owners to annex their property into the City of Clare.

Both of these agreements have provided a convenient method for dozens of properties to voluntarily annex into the City of Clare from these two townships which thereby allows access to City municipal utility services.