

Evaluation of Potential Government Structures

Analysis of Operational and Fiscal Impacts

April, 2011

Prepared for:
Town and Village of Ossining

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INTRODUCTION

The Center for Governmental Research Inc. (CGR) is pleased to respond to the Town and Village of Ossining's Request for Proposal (RFP) for a study designed to review current municipal services and governance structures, and determine the most appropriate, responsive and cost-effective legal municipal structure to serve and service the community.

Under the New York State Local Government Efficiency (LGE) grant program, the municipalities have jointly initiated a process to *carefully examine current governmental structures and analyze the relative advantages of different forms of government and methods of providing essential services.*

The current effort builds on a strong history of inter-municipal collaboration in the community, including recent studies of functional consolidation of police and highway/public works services; a plan to consolidate municipal courts; and a series of existing inter-municipal agreements (IMAs). The demonstrated willingness of Ossining's municipalities to work together toward better, more efficient and effective outcomes for residents represents a strong foundation for the proposed study of municipal services and governmental structures.

The RFP identifies three key analytical objectives for this study, each examining a different form of government and/or service delivery:

1. The study will review the legal, financial and operational impact of creating a coterminous town/village;
2. The study will review the legal, financial and operational impact of furthering shared/collaborative services in the community; and
3. The study will review the legal, financial and operational impact of any other possible government structure(s) permissible by law.

This proposal outlines a study process that would be completed within the RFP and study grant's anticipated eight-to-nine month timeframe. Our approach breaks down the project tasks in ways that incorporate the substantive objectives identified in the RFP, as well as optimize efforts on community engagement and education.

As with any dissolution, shared service and/or governance feasibility study with which CGR has been involved, our proposed approach for the Ossining community is predicated on two fundamental objectives, as discussed below.

Objective, Fact-Based Collection and Review of Data

We firmly believe that an objective collection of basic data and facts is essential to building a shared information foundation for *any* examination of dissolution, governance and/or service options. To meet this goal, CGR's deeply experienced staff team will spend substantial time on-site meeting with key stakeholders, interviewing officials and department heads, and gathering a significant amount of data regarding each municipality's budget, operations and governing structures.

Facilitate an Active Public Engagement Strategy and Two-Way Flow of Information

We also firmly believe that, irrespective of the end result, any examination of governance and service issues must encourage an active, transparent and open flow of information between the review committee and the larger community. That includes *both* community report-outs to residents *and* regular, accessible means for the public to engage with, inform and be informed by the study process. CGR has developed a long-standing reputation as a leader in managing the public information process of such studies, facilitating public engagement as part of our work on municipal governance and services. We look forward to putting that experience into practice in your community.

PART A: PROJECT SCOPE AND WORK PLAN

Our extensive experience working with communities and their local governments to examine options around governance and the delivery of municipal services validates that, in order to be effective, such initiatives must be predicated on meeting two fundamental objectives:

- *An objective, fact-based collection of relevant data and information (both quantitative and qualitative) about how the local governments operate, govern, fund the cost of services and meet the needs of their community, and*
- *Communicating regularly and openly with the public in a way that educates, informs and encourages active feedback from residents and other stakeholder groups.*

In order to most effectively meet these fundamental objectives *and* the primary substantive goals of the effort, we propose dividing the project into the following phases. Our detailed work plan is provided below. The final work plan is subject to revisions based upon the initial kickoff meeting with the Steering Committee and other revisions that are required and approved by CGR and the Steering Committee as the project progresses.

The scope and methodology are predicated on the assumption that the project team will have full access to financial and governance information and operational records for both communities, and that the Steering Committee will assist in identifying relevant records and critical staff/stakeholders to be interviewed, and providing both general context and regular feedback throughout the project.

The methodology is described below in a series of distinct phases, for ease of understanding and to give a better sense of project “flow.” In reality, however, certain phases will necessarily overlap as the project progresses. At minimum, the community engagement efforts referenced in Phase 1a will commence at the very start of the project, and be sustained throughout the engagement.

Phase 1: Project Initiation

CGR’s project team will meet with the Steering Committee as soon as possible following the receipt of a signed contract. As the RFP indicates, this project initiation meeting would be held jointly with the two municipal boards.

At this kickoff meeting, CGR will:

- Overview the goals and objectives of the study;
- Review the scope of the project;
- Clarify the role of the Steering Committee;
- Agree on a protocol for conveying information to the Steering Committee and the public, and identify the individual who will act as liaison to CGR and officials in the Town and Village;
- Work with the Steering Committee to identify key governmental staff, officials and stakeholders who should be interviewed as part of the Baseline Review;
- Discuss the Steering Committee's public engagement strategy, including the use of a project website (created, administered and updated by CGR's project team) to readily convey information to the community and key stakeholders, as well as to solicit public feedback on the process;
- Identify data and information resources required by the project team in the immediate term; and
- Review the project timetable.

Subsequent to this meeting, CGR will develop and submit a final project work plan and timetable/flowchart to the Steering Committee and, subject to its signoff, will post the work plan and project timetable/flowchart to the website to facilitate the community's understanding.

Note: In conjunction with the project initiation meeting, CGR expects to initiate on-site interviews to begin the data collection phase (discussed in more detail below).

PUBLIC MEETING #1:

Consistent with the goal of informing the public, CGR's project team recommends the project initiation meeting be an open public session, for the purposes of informing the community about the study and its objectives.

Phase 1a: Initiation of Community Education Efforts (Website)

CGR is committed to ensuring that the larger community has ready access to information regarding this study of governance alternatives. To facilitate community education efforts, immediately upon project inception, CGR will develop a comprehensive project website and advertise it via Steering Committee press release to all local media outlets. The website approach has proven a powerful resource and significant benefit in many of CGR's recent service/governance study efforts. By way of example, the websites established for our recent studies of governance issues generated nearly 12,000 "hits" and 4,400 report downloads *just in the month of February 2011*.

Phase 2: Baseline Review of Current Operations and Finances

CGR's experience with similar studies suggests that a comprehensive, objective knowledge base of information is *essential* to any study of alternative forms of governance and/or service delivery structures. As such, a baseline review of current operations and finances is a critical first step in the study process.

As soon as practicable after the project initiation meeting, CGR's project team will begin the process of completing primary data collection. The project team will make on-site visits to the Town and Village of Ossining, as well as the Village of Briarcliff, to interview a series of key operations staff and stakeholders; tour operational sites; review budget, personnel and other operating records; identify existing cooperative arrangements (formal and informal) between and among the partners; and collect electronic and/or hard paper copies of key documents – budgets, lists of laws and ordinances, union contracts (if applicable), other agreements, existing fixed asset inventory lists and audited financial statements, at minimum. This hands-on approach will enable the project team and Steering Committee to develop a shared, comprehensive and objective understanding of current operations and governance issues. The entire base of objective information about "what exists" will be summarized in an initial report to the Steering Committee (referred to as the *Baseline Report*). The report will serve as a *shared information base* for the analysis of potential government structures, and will provide an essential *fact-based framework for identifying options and assessing their impact*.

Data elements in the report will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A listing of all current municipal services delivered to the community by the Town of Ossining, Village of Ossining and Village of Briarcliff;
- Summaries of key operational considerations for each municipal service, including any differences in type/level of service provided by the municipalities to different parts of the community;
- A breakdown of all municipal staff allocations, by key functional area;
- A documentation of all municipal costs, by key functional area;
- A listing of all municipal assets (capital and property); and
- A listing of all municipal liabilities and indebtedness.

Note: Prior to compiling data for the baseline review, the project team will review all relevant studies and reports on services/government in the community, particularly those most recently produced by ICMA, the State Office of Court Administration and Pace University. To the extent that relevant data and information can be gleaned from those reports, the project team will update it to reflect the current budget year and utilize it in the Baseline Report.

PUBLIC MEETING #2:

CGR would present at a second public meeting upon completion of the Baseline Report, in order to update the community on the study's progress and share key foundational information about "what exists" in terms of governance and municipal services in the community.

Phase 3: Analysis of the Feasibility and Impact of a Coterminous Town/Village Structure

Using the data and information compiled in Phase 2 and presented in the Baseline Report, the project team will commence a study of the feasibility and impact of establishing a coterminous town/village governance structure for the Ossining community. Regarding impacts of such a structure, the analysis will contemplate *both* operational and financial impacts – *i.e.* ensuring that the resultant structure maintains sufficient capacity to deliver essential municipal services, and translating the cost/savings into actual taxpayer impact.

In developing and analyzing the coterminous model, the project team will examine the following, at minimum:

- The territorial boundaries of the proposed new municipal entity, including its structure and relationship relative to the portion of the Village of Briarcliff that is within the Town of Ossining;
- The manner and means by which the resultant municipality would be furnished with essential municipal services and governance;
- The process for handling assets, liabilities and indebtedness (bonded and otherwise) for the impacted municipal entities;
- How to approach the transfer, reallocation and/or elimination of certain public employee positions in the context of a) maintaining sufficient capacity to deliver municipal services, while b) establishing a municipal service deliver structure that optimizes efficiency and cost-savings to taxpayers;
- The impact such a governance model would have on existing formal inter-municipal agreements (IMAs) between the Town and Village, as well as with any other municipal entity;
- A fiscal analysis of the effect creating the proposed coterminous entity would have on taxpayers; and
- The timetable and process for implementing the new municipal entity.

The analysis of feasibility and impacts of a coterminous town/village structure will be documented in a *Coterminous Options Feasibility Report* to the Steering Committee.

Phase 4: Developing the Coterminous Plan

The RFP envisions the Steering Committee “using the information developed in the coterminous study (to) develop a best-case Municipal Plan.” CGR’s project team will work with the Steering Committee to craft this plan, facilitating a selection from among the alternatives presented in the *Coterminous Options Feasibility Report*. CGR anticipates this facilitation and decision-making process to span several meetings of the Steering Committee. The project team will compile the Steering Committee’s recommendations into a *Coterminous Implementation Plan*.

Phase 5: Review of Other Structural Options

Although analyzing the feasibility and impacts of a coterminous structure is a central objective of this engagement, there may well be alternative ways to accomplish the objectives of lower costs and reduced tax burden through other means. In this phase, CGR's project team will review alternatives – those referenced in the RFP and others, as applicable – that may produce similar outcomes. This review builds on the baseline and coterminous analyses, and seeks to identify alternative means of realizing operational/financial efficiencies in the event the current municipalities remain separate, independent units.

In particular, the project team will analyze the potential to achieve operational and cost/savings efficiencies through the further use of shared services between the Town and Village of Ossining (and, potentially, the Village of Briarcliff); functionally consolidating specific departments and municipal service delivery structures between/among municipalities; and identifying opportunities to reduce or eliminate certain services. In each case, the project team will complete a high-level consideration of cost, tax and operational impacts of the possible options.

The project team will compile the review of these alternative structural options as an addendum to the *Coterminous Plan* developed in Phase 4.

PUBLIC MEETING #3:

CGR would present at a third public meeting upon completion of the analysis of both feasibility/impact of coterminous options and other structural options, in order to update the community on the study's progress and review the potential operational and financial impacts of the options.

Reports

As noted above, CGR would provide a baseline review, followed by a coterminous options feasibility report (including the review of other structural options) for the Steering Committee. In each instance, the project team will deliver report materials to the Steering Committee for review and comment before finalizing the document. It is expected the Steering Committee will offer review within two weeks of delivery of draft materials, in order to remain on the project timeframe. Upon approval of the Steering Committee, reports would be uploaded to the project website for community access in advance of each public meeting. Ensuring that the public has access to report materials far enough in

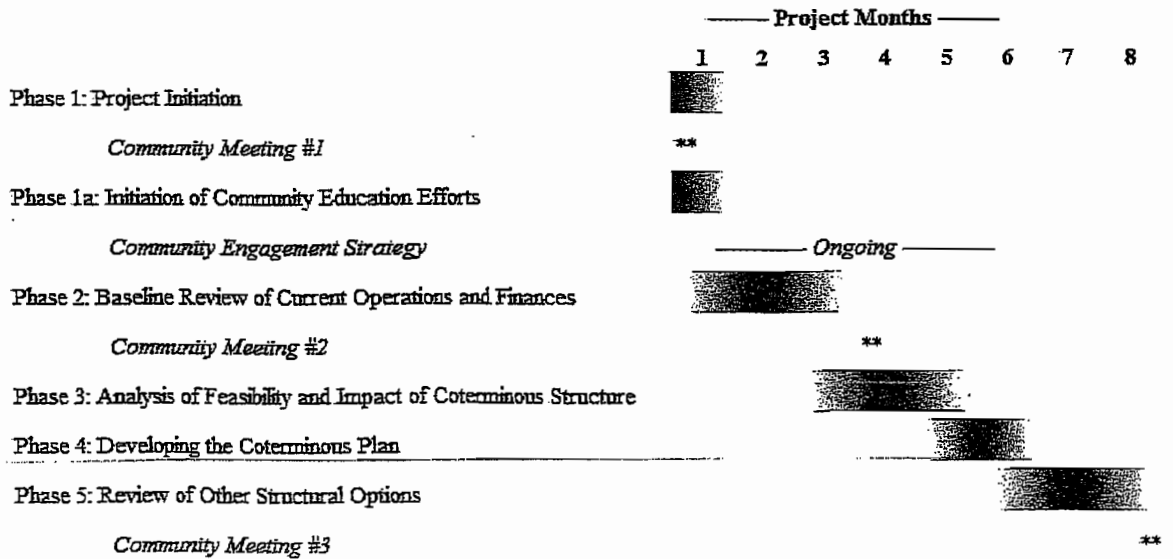
advance of public meetings will help to facilitate community education/engagement and more productive forums.

Meetings

In addition to the specific public forums identified in the above proposal, CGR anticipates the project team will participate in certain Steering Committee meetings throughout the project. It is our expectation that these meetings will be scheduled as needed throughout the project, coinciding with key project milestones and deliverables. Our budget has been developed assuming three in-person meetings with the Steering Committee during the course of the project (including the project initiation meeting). To the extent additional meetings are needed, CGR will work with the Steering Committee to complete them through the use of technology, such as conference calls or videoconferencing.

Project Timeline

CGR is prepared to work closely with the Steering Committee to complete this project within the eight-to-nine month timeframe envisioned in the RFP. Meeting that objective, however, is predicated on the project team having ready access to data, information and stakeholders/interviewees immediately upon starting the project. To the extent that such access is delayed, it will impact the project timeline. The following project schedule shows how CGR plans to carry out the tasks described above. Phases 1 and 1a will be completed within the first two weeks following contract execution. Phase 2 will be completed across months 1-3. Phase 3 will be completed across months 3-5. Phase 4 will be completed across months 5-6. Phase 5 will be completed across months 6-8.



We encourage you to see the full complement of our work on issues related to municipal governance and shared services by visiting our website at <http://www.cgr.org>.

Since 2006, CGR has completed consolidation/dissolution, municipal service and governance projects with the following communities and under the auspices of the State of New York's Local Government Efficiency grant program (and prior to that, the State's Shared Municipal Service Incentive grant program). Projects are listed alphabetically. CGR was the principal/prime firm on all of these engagements. A significant number of these engagements specifically addressed alternative governance structures and feasibility issues of the sort envisioned by the proposed study; those projects are noted in *italics*.

- Addison (Steuben County)
Analysis of shared service opportunities (incl. Village, Town, School District)
- *Albion (Orleans County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility and shared service opportunities
- *Allegany (Cattaraugus County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility and shared service opportunities
- *Altmar (Oswego County) – in process*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- Aurora (Erie County)
Analysis of shared service opportunities in the area of highway services
- *Batavia (Genesee County)*
Analysis of consolidation feasibility
- Broome County
Analysis of shared service opportunities in the area of code enforcement
- *Candor (Tioga County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- *Chaumont (Jefferson County) – in process*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- *Cobleskill (Schoharie County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility and shared service opportunities
- *Corinth (Saratoga County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility and shared service opportunities
- *Dansville (Livingston County)*
Analysis of dissolution and coterminous options feasibility

- East Syracuse (Onondaga County) – *in process*
Analysis of functional service consolidation opportunities
- *Edwards (St. Lawrence County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- Greenburgh (Westchester County)
Analysis of shared/consolidated police services
- Herkimer County
Analysis of shared service opportunities in the area of highway services
- Holley/Murray (Orleans County)
Analysis of shared service opportunities in the area of highway services
- *Hudson Falls (Washington County) – in process*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility and shared service opportunities
- *Johnson City (Broome County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- Lake Placid (Essex County)
Analysis of shared service opportunities
- Lyons (Wayne County)
Analysis of shared service opportunities
- *Medina (Orleans County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility and shared service opportunities
- *North Collins (Erie County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- North Hempstead (Nassau County)
Analysis of shared service opportunities in the area of ambulance services
- *Painted Post (Steuben County) – in process*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility and shared service opportunities
- *Perrysburg (Cattaraugus County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- *Port Henry (Essex County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- *Potsdam (St. Lawrence County) – in process*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- *Ridgeway/Shelby (Orleans County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility and shared service opportunities

- Schoharie County – *in process*
Analysis of shared services opportunities in the area of highway services
- *Seneca Falls (Seneca County) – two studies*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- *Speculator (Hamilton County)*
Analysis of dissolution feasibility
- Sullivan (Sullivan County)
Analysis of shared service opportunities in the area of school-based business operations
- Tonawanda (Erie County)
Analysis of shared service and facility opportunities (incl. City and School District)
- West Carthage (Jefferson County)
Analysis of shared services in the area of police services
- Yates (Yates County)
Analysis of shared services in the area of police and court services

CGR was also engaged by the State's Commission on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness in 2008 to complete a three-community study of potential governance/service opportunities. That work spanned Cortland (Cortland County), Norwich (Chenango County) and Oneonta (Otsego County).

CGR's unique understanding of governance and service issues and their impact on the dissolution/consolidation discussion has also resulted in our recent engagement by two New Jersey communities. In 2008, CGR was engaged by Chester, New Jersey to explore the feasibility of alternative governance models; in 2010, we were engaged by Princeton, New Jersey to staff a high-profile examination of possible service and administrative consolidation in that community.

Project References – Selected Samples

Dansville, NY Coterminous/Dissolution Feasibility

In the fall of 2009, the Village of Dansville and Town of North Dansville jointly initiated an exploration of options for cutting taxes through possible local government restructuring. Utilizing a Local Government Efficiency grant from New York State, the Village and Town appointed a Steering Committee and engaged CGR to facilitate a process of informing the municipal boards and public regarding potential options. CGR examined several options for lowering taxes, and based on its analysis the Steering Committee concluded that few presented large enough tax decreases to justify potential changes and/or loss in service, since only a few services remain unconsolidated at the present time. With these factors in mind and the understanding that elected leaders were being asked to “do something” by residents in the community, the Steering Committee ultimately determined that pursuing a viable model for full consolidation of the two municipalities would provide the best option for change that would most benefit the entire community.

The screenshot shows the website for Dansville, NY, with the title "Evaluating Options for the Future". The navigation menu includes HOME, CALENDAR, DOCUMENTS, PRESS RELEASES, and FAQ. The "What's New" section lists several reports:

- Executive Summary – Final Recommendation of Committee
- Consolidation Options and Impacts Report – September, 2010
- Baseline Report – Village of Dansville and Town of North Dansville
- Dansville Study Committee Survey Results

Below the reports are buttons for "EMAIL STUDY TEAM" and "SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS". The "ABOUT THE STUDY" section is organized into three columns:

The Plan	Study Team	Timetable
The Village and Town boards have received a recommendation from the Dissolution/Coterminous Study Committee to pursue the creation of a	The study report was developed by a ten-member Village/Town Study Committee with assistance from the Center for Governmental Research	The study committee worked for ten months to compile information and make some determinations on options available to the community. The committee

After ten months of review, based on CGR’s analysis the Committee recommended that the Village and Town jointly pursue the development of a city charter that would result in full consolidation of the two municipalities. Several considerations influenced the final vote in favor of pursuing city status. Among the primary factors, city status allowed the community

to reduce two layers of government into one. Second, city status is a form of consolidation that would make the community eligible for the State’s Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM) program, as well as potentially higher per capita amounts of State aid. Third, the shift to city status would be made *jointly* by Town and Village voters, which would allow the entire community to participate in the process (as opposed to village dissolution, which gives the decisional responsibility only to village voters). Further, city status was the only option that would allow town-outside-village residents to not experience tax increases (and

potentially see tax reductions). City status would also allow the community to maintain service/tax zones in a way that current village and town service differentials were preserved.

For additional information and representative documents, see the comprehensive website developed by CGR to assist public communications on this project (a screen-shot is shown above):

<http://www.cgr.org/dansville>.

Contract Amount: \$48,800

Reference:

Keith Petti, Village Administrator
Village of Dansville
14 Clara Barton Street
Dansville, NY 14437
Email: mrpetti@dansvilleny.org
Phone: (585) 335-5330

City and Town of Batavia, NY Consolidation

The City and Town of Batavia, located in Genesee County, New York, successfully applied for a state grant to study consolidation, acknowledging that their existing governmental structure generated considerable overlap and duplication in the delivery of municipal services.

In 2008, the municipalities appointed a City-Town Consolidation Study Committee and engaged CGR to conduct the analysis and manage public communications of study information.

After initial work on the project, CGR recommended the Committee move from a "study" to developing a "plan" for consolidation. The Committee supported CGR's recommendation, and the City Council and Town endorsed their decision. Based on CGR's review of existing operations and its financial and operational analysis

of potential options, a tiered service delivery framework was developed that preserved existing service levels while capitalizing on available efficiencies. Most importantly, CGR's analysis led to the creation of a

batavia consolidation plan

HOME ABOUT THE STUDY CALENDAR DOCUMENTS PRESS RELEASES FAQ LINKS

What's New
 Updated 7/30/2009

- Plan for Consolidating the City & Town of Batavia in One Government
- Final Committee Recommendations to Board of Council 7/29/09
- Consolidation Plan Presentation 7/29/09

EMAIL STUDY TEAM SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS FEEDBACK FORM!

ABOUT THE STUDY

The Plan	Study Team	Funding
Greater Batavia NY includes the City and the Town of Batavia. The City and Town were awarded a NYS grant, appointed a Study Committee and that committee recently presented a plan to create one unified government.	The consolidation plan was developed by a seven -member City/Town Consolidation Study Committee with assistance from the Center for Governmental Research (CGR), a nonprofit consulting organization with	This website was developed with funds provided by the New York State Department of State under the Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant program. Today these grants are known as Local Government Efficiency Grants.

fiscal structure that would minimize cost shifts across the two municipalities while retaining services at pre-consolidation levels.

For additional information and representative documents, see the comprehensive website developed by CGR to assist public communications on this project (a screen-shot is shown above): <http://www.cgr.org/bataviaconsolidationplan>.

Contract Amount: \$92,800

Reference:

Jason Molino, City Administrator
City of Batavia
One Batavia City Centre, Batavia, NY 14020
Email: jmolino@batavianewyork.com
Phone: (585) 345-6330

Seneca Falls, NY Dissolution

The history-rich community of Seneca Falls engaged CGR in 2008 to assess ways to achieve a major goal: reduce the cost of government to help stimulate economic growth in the community. CGR found that consolidating the governments would offer potential for major savings for

village taxpayers. Subsequently CGR was engaged to serve as consultant to a village dissolution study committee. The committee's final report, delivered to the Village in late 2009, presented a dissolution plan, alternatives to dissolution, and a full review of financial and service impacts. In March 2010, voters in the Village, which has a population of about 6,700, voted 1,198 to 1,112 in favor of dissolution.

The screenshot shows the website for Seneca Falls, NY Dissolution. The header includes navigation links: HOME, ABOUT THE STUDY, CALENDAR, DOCUMENTS, PRESS RELEASES, and FAQ. Below the navigation is a large image of a village scene. To the right of the image are buttons for 'EMAIL STUDY TEAM', 'SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS', 'WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR', and 'MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN'. Below the image is a section titled 'ABOUT THE STUDY' with three columns: 'The Plan', 'Study Team', and 'Timetable'.

The Plan	Study Team	Timetable
The Board of Trustees for the Village of Seneca Falls, NY, voted to initiate a dissolution process in the fall of 2008. A dissolution study committee prepared a dissolution plan during calendar year 2009 and delivered it to the Village Board.	The dissolution plan (and potential alternatives to dissolution) was developed by a nine-member Village/Town Dissolution Study Committee with assistance from the Center for Governmental Research (CGR), a	in a vote held on March 16, 2010, residents of the Village of Seneca Falls voted to dissolve the Village of Seneca Falls. The final vote tally including the absentee ballots was 1,198 to 1,112 (52% to 48%). The village will be officially

When dissolution takes effect at the end of 2011, Seneca Falls will be the largest village in the State of New York to have dissolved and

merged with its surrounding town. For additional information and representative documents, see the comprehensive website developed by CGR to assist public communications on this project (a screen-shot is shown above): <http://www.cgr.org/senecafalls>.

Contract Amount: \$50,375

Reference:

Connie Sowards, Village Administrator
Village of Seneca Falls
60 State Street, Seneca Falls, NY 13148
Email: vsfadmin@rochester.rr.com
Phone: (315) 568-8107

Princeton, NJ Consolidation and Shared Services

In 2009, officials in Princeton Borough and Princeton Township, a community of 31,000 residents located 50 miles southwest of New York City in Mercer County, New Jersey, initiated an effort to explore the potential benefits of consolidating into a single municipality and, short of full consolidation, further sharing services in police and public works. Following a public hearing in December 2009, the governing bodies of the Borough and Township received approval from the State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' Local Finance Board to create a Consolidation Study Commission and establish a process for a study of consolidation and shared services. The Commission, comprised of both Township and Borough representatives, is tasked with studying the feasibility and potential benefits of consolidating the municipalities into a

single governmental unit, as well as identifying additional shared service opportunities in police and public works.

Consolidation & Shared Services Study
Township & Borough of Princeton

Home | About the Study | Commission Meetings | Documents | Press Releases | Media | Public Engagement | Links

What's New

- Next Commission Meeting – Weds, April 13th, 7 pm, Township Municipal Complex, 400 Witherspoon Street, Community Room
- Community Outreach Meetings
- BASELINE REPORT: Municipal Services and Financial Overview
- Project Flowchart and Timeline

EMAIL STUDY TEAM | SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS

ABOUT THE STUDY

The Plan | The Commission | Feedback

Under authority provided by New Jersey | The consolidation and shared services | The Commission encourages public

In late 2010, the Commission engaged CGR to examine the full range of government services and administration of both municipalities; prepare a draft consolidation implementation plan for the dissolution of both municipalities and creation of a single merged entity in their place; prepare implementation plans for shared police services and shared public works, that could be

implemented in the absence of full municipal consolidation; and advise the Commission regarding the benefits and disadvantages of each plan.

For additional information and representative documents, see the comprehensive website developed by CGR to assist public communications on this project (a screen-shot is shown above):

<http://www.cgr.org/princeton>.

Contract Amount: \$76,000

Reference:

Anton Lahnston, Chairman
Princeton Consolidation/Shared Services Study Commission
400 Witherspoon Street, Princeton, NJ 08540
Email: antonlahnston@aol.com
Phone: (609) 306-8595

Medina, NY Dissolution Feasibility Study

The Towns of Ridgeway and Shelby encompass a 97-square mile area in the southwestern corner of Orleans County, New York. The Village of Medina is a 3.3-square mile area contained wholly within and divided nearly equally between Ridgeway and Shelby — which creates a complex municipal structure. About 11,700 residents live in the Towns, with 52 percent of the population residing inside the Village boundaries.

Last year, the Village successfully applied to the Local Government Efficiency grant program for a high priority planning grant to conduct a dissolution feasibility study in cooperation with the Towns. The Village

Medina, Ridgeway & Shelby
Shared Services, Town Merger & Village Dissolution Study

HOME ABOUT THE STUDY CALENDAR DOCUMENTS PRESS RELEASES FAQ

Why a Feasibility Study?

Located in Orleans County, the Towns of Ridgeway and Shelby each incorporate a portion of the Village of Medina. The 3 municipalities successfully applied for NYS Local Government Efficiency grants to assess viable options for streamlining government. The 2010 study will give residents information on options for the future for providing local government services.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION 10-15-10 WHAT EXISTS REPORT EMAIL STUDY TEAM SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS

wants to explore whether dissolving the Village could result in increased efficiency and cost savings and also assess other viable options for streamlining government. Separately, the Towns successfully applied for an LGE grant to conduct a merger feasibility study in cooperation with the Village. The Towns want to present residents with information on merging the two Towns — with or without dissolving the Village — and also assess other viable service delivery options.

In 2010 the municipalities engaged CGR to conduct a project combining the objectives of both grants into one study. The study includes opportunities for public engagement. The anticipated completion date for the study is June 2011. For additional information and representative documents, see the comprehensive website developed by CGR to assist public communications on this project (a screen-shot is shown above): <http://www.cgr.org/medina-ridgeway-shelby>.

Contract Amount: \$48,800

Reference:

Adam Tabelaski, Mayor
Village of Medina
600 Main Street, Medina, NY 14103
Email: mayor@villagemedina.org
Phone: (585) 590-0107

Merle Draper, Supervisor
Town of Shelby
462 Salt Works Road, Medina, NY 14103
Email: skipdraper@verizon.net
Phone: (585) 798-7055

PART C: KEY PERSONNEL

This project will be directed by Dr. Joseph Stefko, Director of Public Finance at CGR, who brings extensive experience leading and informing engagements on shared services, consolidation/dissolution and municipal governance. Dr. Stefko has directed and/or provided primary support to a significant number of such studies, ranging from issue-specific examinations of municipal tax assessment, public safety and facility options, to wholesale municipal consolidation and dissolution efforts involving the merger of service delivery systems and implementation of new governance structures. Dr. Stefko will be involved in every aspect of this study, including the collection and analysis of data; development and analysis of options; and management of public communication/outreach efforts.

Jaime Saunders, a Senior Associate at CGR, will also play a key role in the project. Ms. Saunders brings extensive experience in local government management and organizational studies, and has served as a principal researcher on projects across the state funded under the SMSI/LGE program.

Ana Liss, a Research Associate at CGR, will play a key role in the project. Ms. Liss brings experience working on projects to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of public institutions.

CGR also intends to utilize the expertise of John Fry, Principal and Chief Executive of Fry Consulting Services, on a subcontracted basis. In the past two years, Mr. Fry has been involved with CGR consolidation and shared service projects in Princeton, New Jersey; Chester, New Jersey; and Addison (Steuben County), New York. A former municipal administrator, Mr. Fry brings more than ten years experience implementing management and operational improvements with local governments and seven years experience working on improving government services. His current work focuses on performance measurement, and implementing metrics to track how well government meets its objectives. Mr. Fry is Director of the Shared Services Institute at Rutgers University in New Jersey, and recently directed five projects for the New Jersey Local Unit Alignment, Reorganization and Consolidation Commission, providing the Commission a framework of the existing knowledge on consolidation, shared services and alternative mechanisms for municipal service delivery.

Brief biographies are provided for each key staff member below.

Joseph Stefko, Ph.D.

Staffing Plan/Key Project Roles: Direct all research and analysis, serve as primary liaison to Steering Committee, manage all public presentations

Joseph Stefko, Ph.D. is Director of Public Finance at the Center for Governmental Research (CGR), working with clients on issues related to budgeting, fiscal impact and government management, including shared services and consolidation. He has extensive experience addressing municipal fiscal distress; analyzing local government finances and services; and assessing the impact of state policies on municipalities. His work focuses on projecting budgetary needs and quantifying the cost of government, as well as on working with municipalities to identify opportunities for efficiencies and determining their financial capacity for absorbing current and future cost obligations. In addition, Dr. Stefko oversees CGR's cutting edge, web-based Govistics™ tool (www.govistics.com), which allows rapid access to information on government spending by individual state and local governments across the U.S.

Dr. Stefko rejoined CGR in March 2008 after spending nearly five years with the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority (BFSA), the New York State agency responsible for controlling and monitoring the financial condition of the City of Buffalo, its dependent school district and other critical city agencies with total annual spending of more than \$1 billion. He served as both Principal Analyst and Deputy Director of BFSA before being named Acting Executive Director in 2007. Under BFSA's guidance, the City of Buffalo generated more than \$230 million in budgetary savings; experienced a four-fold increase in fund balance; and earned multiple credit rating upgrades from Wall Street.

While at BFSA, Dr. Stefko helped direct all policy analysis, research and budget review of the city and school district and developed recommendations for board action on major fiscal items, including the annual budget / financial plan and collective bargaining agreements. He played a primary role in briefing the agency's board on issues related to the financial status of the city, and policy items with real or potential fiscal impacts. As Acting Executive Director, he served as the authority's chief of staff.

Dr. Stefko worked for CGR twice earlier in his career. From 1998 to 2000, he was a Research Associate in the organization's Economic Analysis practice, and from 2002 to 2003 he served as a Senior Research Associate within the Government Management Services area.

Dr. Stefko holds B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University at Buffalo (SUNY), where he has taught Political Science and Urban and

Regional Planning as an adjunct faculty member. He also serves in the Department of Public Administration at SUNY Brockport as an adjunct faculty member.

Since 2008, Dr. Stefko has directed seventeen projects dealing with the issues of municipal service delivery, shared services, consolidation and/or cost of government.

Jaime Saunders, M.P.A.

Staffing Plan/Key Project Roles: Manage data collection, analysis of fiscal and operational impacts, participate in public education/outreach strategy

Senior Associate Jaime Saunders is the principal researcher for the Village of Candor Dissolution Study and Plan, the Village of Potsdam Dissolution Study and Plan, and has played key roles in a range of projects to identify local government shared service and cost-savings opportunities. Ms. Saunders joined CGR in 2008 with more than 10 years experience in nonprofit management, program development and evaluation, organizational development, and community relations. Prior to joining CGR she was principal of a consulting firm that provided contract services in the areas of organizational development and marketing and was Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of Operations for a Feeding America food bank serving 550 human service agencies in a 10-county region in upstate New York. Ms. Saunders holds a B.A. in Business Administration and Sociology from Whittier College and a M.A. in Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

Ana Liss, M.P.A.

Staffing Plan/Key Project Roles: Participate in data collection, analysis of fiscal and operational impacts

Research Associate Ana Liss joined CGR in 2011 after working in several capacities with the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania's Fels Institute of Government. Ms. Liss' work has focused on researching governance models, inter-municipal collaboration and enhancing regional economic competitiveness.

John Fry, M.P.A.

Staffing Plan/Key Project Roles: Participate in data collection, analysis of fiscal and operational impacts, participate in public education/outreach strategy

John C. Fry has pursued a career interest in using information to support rational decision-making in local government for over twenty years. As both a practitioner and consultant, he has implemented management tools and procedures to promote increased efficiency and effectiveness in local government. He has directed diverse projects enhancing performance in New York City agencies responsible for street cleanliness, parks and playgrounds, school building maintenance, child welfare, and health care.

For the last fifteen years, his focus has been on municipalities, their governance and services. Currently, he is the Director of the Shared Services Institute at Rutgers University. Mr. Fry directed five projects for the New Jersey Local Unit Alignment, Reorganization, and Consolidation Commission (LUARCC), which provided the Commission a framework of the existing knowledge on consolidation, shared services, and alternative mechanisms for municipal service delivery.

He has also served a member of the consulting team for the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) on two projects: the Chester Borough and Chester Township (NJ) consolidation study, and the shared services study of facilities utilization among the Village, Town and School District in Addison, New York.

Mr. Fry has co-authored several municipal-related works, including the final report to the New Jersey Division of Local Government Services summarizing more than 25 case studies of shared services; "How to Reduce the Costs of Services" in the June 2010 issue of *New Jersey Municipalities*, the magazine of the New Jersey League of Municipalities; "Shared Services and Municipal Consolidation: Pursuing Careful Assumptions and Grounded Studies" in the *Friends of Local Government Series* of the New Jersey League of Municipalities; and *Municipal Consolidation and Shared Services – A Critical Analysis*, a forthcoming book to be published by the Public Technology Institute.

As a Borough Administrator in New Jersey, he maintained existing collaborative efforts with neighboring governments and implemented additional cost savings and service quality improvements through new agreements.

Mr. Fry earned the MPA degree from the School of Public Affairs and Administration at Rutgers University and a B.A. in Sociology (emphasis in mathematical social science) from Dartmouth College. Recognizing his work, Mr. Fry was previously selected as the Outstanding New Professional by the New Jersey Municipal Managers Association.

PROPOSED BUDGET

CGR offers to provide the consulting services described in this proposal for an all-inclusive fixed fee of \$53,100. This all-inclusive fee (covering all consultant fees, travel and miscellaneous expenses) assumes that the Town/Village will pay all costs for legal advertisements and public mailings and notices (as necessary), and will arrange for public meeting spaces. This offer is based upon CGR starting the project in June/July timeframe of 2011. CGR reserves the right to negotiate a different fee and/or timeframe should the Steering Committee request work not anticipated in our proposal, or if the Work Program and/or budget contained in the final LGE agreement between the Town and New York State contains work or project components not identified in or consistent with this proposal.

Our proposed budget assumes CGR participation in a meeting with the Steering Committee approximately every 8 weeks throughout the project.

This proposal and budget offer are valid for a period of one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the date of submission.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

CGR hereby affirms that it – and its employees and any subconsultants – will not seek to participate in this project, either directly or indirectly, except in accordance with the definitive terms of the Request for Proposal or those which may be sequel to it.

STATEMENT ON REQUISITE COVERAGES

CGR has current and up to date insurance coverage for professional liability as a part of a Commercial Package and Umbrella Policy underwritten by Harleysville Insurance Company. In addition, CGR holds Executive Liability policies covering Directors and Officers and Employment Practices with the Traveler's Insurance Company, and a Network Security / Privacy policy (including Internet Media Liability) with Beazley Insurance Company. As a part of a Human Services Liability endorsement, CGR provides for coverage extending to Funders and Grantors who are named as Additional Insureds on CGR policies. General Liability and Professional Liability coverage limits are both

\$1,000,000 per occurrence with a \$2,000,000 aggregate limit. Certificates of Insurance naming CGR clients are available and issued upon request.

Attachment A

RESPONDENT CERTIFICATION

The undersigned agrees and understands that this proposal and all attachments, additional information, etc. submitted herewith constitute merely an offer to negotiate with the Town of Ossining and the Village of Ossining and is NOT A BID. Submission of this proposal, attachments, and additional information shall not obligate or entitle the proposing entity to enter into a service agreement with the Town of Ossining and the Village of Ossining for the required services. The undersigned agrees and understands that the Town of Ossining, and the Village of Ossining is not obligated to respond to this proposal nor is it legally bound in any manner whatsoever by the submission of same. Further, the undersigned agrees and understands that any and all proposals and negotiations shall not be binding or valid against the Town of Ossining, and the Village of Ossining, its directors, officers, employees or agents unless an agreement is signed by a duly authorized officer of the Town of Ossining and the Village of Ossining and approved by the legal counsel for each municipality.

It is understood and agreed that the Town of Ossining, and the Village of Ossining reserves the right to reject consideration of any and all proposals including, but not limited to, proposals which are conditional or incomplete. It is further understood and agreed that the Town of Ossining and the Village of Ossining reserves all rights specified in the Request for Proposals.

It is represented and warranted by those submitting this proposal that except as disclosed in the proposal, no officer or employee of the Town of Ossining and the Village of Ossining is directly or indirectly a part to or in any other manner interested in this proposal or any subsequent service agreement that may be entered into.

KENT GARDNER
(Legal Name of Person, Firm or Corporation)

By: 
(Signature of Authorized Representative)

Title: PRESIDENT / CEO

Dated: APRIL 6, 2011