



# 21st Century Government Committee

## Reinventing Lucas County Government; A Strategy for Our Future

To create a regional partnership of governmental agencies and departments, organized labor, and private providers in order to provide cost effective, exceptional service and regional efficiencies through cooperation, collaboration, and goal setting. This partnership will result in the highest possible standard of living and quality of life for the region's citizens and business partners, as well as place our region as one of the most competitive and attractive in the new global marketplace.

Presented to:  
Lucas County Commissioner Ben Konop

Toledo, Ohio  
August 2007



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# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee

August 21, 2007

Commissioner Ben Konop  
Lucas County Board of Commissioners  
One Government Center  
Suite 800  
Toledo, OH 43604

Re: Report on Reinventing Lucas County Government; A Strategy for Our Future

Dear Mr. Konop:

The attached report represents the final recommendations of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee. In accordance with your charge the Committee studied local governments in order to identify areas of potential collaboration. The Committee has highlighted eight such areas, and designed a potential process to implement those goals.

Intergovernmental cooperation is vital to the future success of Lucas County. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century paradigm of government no longer serves the public efficiently. Cooperation and collaboration between all levels of government should improve efficient delivery of services.

We would like to thank the members of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee for their time and effort this summer. The diverse makeup of the committee provided new and interesting insights to the task at hand. We would also like to thank our research staff for their assistance on the project.

Sincerely,

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Jim Holzemer  
Co-Chair

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Benjamin F. Marsh  
Co-Chair

## **M**ission Statement

“To create a regional partnership of governmental agencies and departments, organized labor, and private providers in order to provide cost effective, exceptional service and regional efficiencies through cooperation, collaboration, and goal setting. This partnership will result in the highest possible standard of living and quality of life for the region’s citizens and business partners, as well as place our region as one of the most competitive and attractive in the new global marketplace.”

## **Executive Summary**

In Lucas County today, as elsewhere across the county, shrinking tax bases and economic pressure have left local government officials in an unenviable position: either raise taxes or cut services. Both these options, understandably, are strongly disfavored by both residents and officials alike. However, there is also a third option: change the way services are delivered. This third option is the focus of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee was called together to determine how, within the existing structures in Northwest Ohio government, we can operate more efficiently, effectively, and collaboratively, and how our government could be remodeled to increase the efficiency and global competitiveness of our region in the future. It is our hope, that by these and other like efforts, we can carry Lucas County into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## **Recommendations**

1. Embrace a focus on customer service.
  - Designate one county employee as a Citizens' Advocate who will serve as a customer service ombudsperson, monitoring Lucas County responsiveness to citizens' needs and concerns.
  - Set up a Customer Service Hotline for complaints, compliments, etc., monitored by the customer service ombudsperson.
  - Create a department-level and individual staff member "Customer Service of the Month" award to recognize top-quality customer service.
  - Set a goal of providing customer service training to all county employees. Initially, Lucas County Human Resources and the Citizen's Advocate should create a list of "priority" trainees, being those employees with supervisory roles and those with regular interaction with members of the public.
  - Encourage on-going county efforts to foster efficiency and effectiveness, such as unifying the two-step land transfer process into one-step, shortening inmate layovers in county jail, unburdening the County of unneeded property, or hiring in-house staff attorneys for Juvenile Court.
2. Expand commitment to joint purchasing among all units of government in the region, plus local universities, colleges, and public school districts.
  - Foster joint purchasing programs between counties, cities, and townships as permitted under the Ohio Revised Code, as past joint purchasing initiatives have led to savings through lower commodity cost and decreased staff time.
  - Review effective and successful models for joint purchasing.
  - Emulate best practices through the formation of the Northwest Compact.

3. Employ technology to identify and solve problems, improve interconnectivity and reduce duplication in regional information technology infrastructure.
  - Encourage the Data Processing Board to exercise its statutory authority more aggressively to oversee the six different Information Technology (IT) groups in county government.
  - The Board should conduct a study of IT duplication and system incompatibility in the county. Departments involved in any identified areas should be called before the Board to justify their continued departure from standard systems and platforms. The Board should apply a presumption that duplication or incompatibility should be eliminated in short order, and, going forward, a presumption against any incompatible or duplicative IT purchases.
  - Empower regional cooperation in information services by the formation of the Lucas County Intergovernmental Networking Cooperative (LINC).
4. Expand commitment to joint services among all units of government in the region, plus local universities, colleges, and public school districts.
  - Joint service agreements are critical to any effort to streamline government. For example, there could be one agency responsible for grounds maintenance for a given geographical area, regardless of the ownership of the underlying ground.
  - Encourage joint service agreements wherever possible, such as:
    - Facility and equipment management
    - Building inspections services
    - Housing programs
    - Joint or cooperative public safety programs
    - Regional water authority
5. Review the geographic location of regional operations and consolidate and/or relocate facilities closer to the point of service delivery.
  - Pursue joint agreements with other jurisdictions to define the scope of the County service delivery area.
  - Position the operations to maximize efficient service delivery and reduce transit time.

6. Emphasize goal setting and outcome measurement.
  - Adopt a standardized process of goal setting and outcome reporting within all county departments.
  - Require each department to designate two or three key “outcome measures” and report them on monthly basis to the Commissioners.
  
  - Include “external” performance objectives within these measures, not limiting them to “internal” objectives such as staffing and budgetary matters. For example, the County Engineer could list “number of potholes filled.” The County Recorder could list “number of title transfers.” Job and Family Services could list “number of families helped.”
  
7. Commit to holding growth in county spending below the rate of inflation.
  - Adopt a firm fiscal standard to reduce the cost of business and emphasize efficient government.
  
8. Address urban sprawl and economic development issues when making significant county operational or policy decisions.
  - Recognize that urban sprawl promotes harmful economic and racial segregation, inefficient use of public tax-dollars, duplicative infrastructure, and overall community decline.
  - Make the question of sprawl and economic development a consideration in all major county policy and operational decisions, enabling the County to promote growth, rather than the slow decline, of our urban areas in particular and our entire region more generally.

## Implementation

1. Create Regional Implementation Team.
  - Team to oversee and coordinate potential intergovernmental initiatives.
  - Each participating member to select whom they wish to serve as their representative on the Team. Representatives must have ability to affect change within their respective entity.
  - Initial team representatives to then select other members. Ultimately, team to consist of no more than 25 members, each having one vote.
  
2. Hold sessions to inform and encourage collaboration.
  - Designate spokesperson(s) for the Regional Implementation Team.
  - Designate people within Lucas County to commit to informing others.
  - Need clear message and description of what Regional Implementation Team plans to do.
  - Informational sessions to occur in the following order:
    - Initial eight members of Regional Implementation Team
    - Other Regional Implementation Team members
    - Stakeholders not on Regional Implementation Team
    - Public
  - Implement Model Student Metro Government Project.
    - Interest Lucas County students in intergovernmental issues through their participation in a model metro government.
  
3. Provide inventory of services with potential for collaboration.
  - Inventory of services to be developed by short-term teams.
  - Regional Implementation Team to first work on implementation of ideas developed by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee.
  - Public then can submit ideas to Regional Implementation Team.

4. Provide process of implementation.
  - Identify the collaborative effort and determine whether the initiative should be submitted to a Project Team for evaluation.
  - Form an official Project Team and delineate what areas need to be studied in order to determine whether the initiative is feasible.
  - Determine whether the ROI/payback model indicates that the collaborative initiative has a payback.
  - Determine if other factors favor implementation of the endeavor.
  - If desired, private consultants, whose services would be paid for through a revolving implementation fund, could be used to conduct feasibility studies or map out implementation process.
  - Communities implement the collaborative endeavor.
  - After implementation, Project Team continues reporting back to Regional Implementation Team.
  
5. Develop reporting mechanisms.
  - Regional Implementation Team reports its endeavors to community.
  - Demonstration of successful initiatives will encourage buy-in as well as further collaboration.

## **Introduction**

The dawning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has changed the world. Advancements in technology and communication have made the world smaller, and brought people and businesses together from all over the globe. The United States has increasingly become a service-based economy, losing much of the industrial base that made it a world power in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The impact of this change is still being felt on a daily basis, and Lucas County has been a microcosm of this revolution. Even as old industry has fallen away, the region has worked to embrace and develop new technology.

While still standing strong amidst the struggling Midwest, Lucas County is at a crossroad. Driving through downtown Toledo, one cannot help but notice the numerous empty and boarded up buildings. A prime example of our region's industrial past is Owens Corning's old headquarters, Fiberglass Tower, which has been empty since the company constructed its new building a decade ago. At the same time, The University of Toledo has just broken ground on its Science and Technology Corridor. This program will couple the expertise of third largest university in Ohio with high tech businesses.

Statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau confirm what most people can readily observe – Lucas County is faced with impending tough economic times. From 2000 to 2006, the County lost nearly 10,000 residents, and the decline in population brings with it a decline in tax revenue.<sup>1</sup> More than 200 private business establishments in Lucas County closed from 2000 to 2004, resulting in a 3.6% decrease in private non-farm employment during that period.<sup>2</sup> The overall employment rate in Lucas County is suffering as well. In June 2007, unemployment in the County topped 6.9%, compared to the national average of 4.5%.<sup>3</sup>

Confronting these economic pressures have left local government officials in an unenviable position; either raise taxes, or cut services. Both these options are understandably strongly disfavored by residents and government officials alike. However, there is also third option: change the way services are delivered. This third option is the focus of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee was called together to determine how, within the existing structures in Northwest Ohio government, we can operate more efficiently and collaboratively, and how our government could be remodeled to increase the efficiency and global competitiveness of our region in the future. Lucas County could serve as the standard by which other counties are measured. To accomplish this, there must be a fundamental change in our attitudes and the area must work together. Lucas

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<sup>1</sup> FedStats, *MapStats – Lucas County, Ohio*, available at <http://www.fedstats.gov/qf/states/39/39095.html> (last updated May 4, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *USA Counties – General Profile, Lucas, OH*, available at <http://censtats.census.gov/cgi-bin/usac/usatable.pl> (last accessed August 10, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Ohio Workforce Informer, *Lucas County Profile*, available at <http://www.ohioworkforceinformer.org/cgi/databrowsing/localAreaProfileQSResults.asp?menuChoice=localAreaPro&state=true&selectedIndex=0&selectedArea=Lucas+County&geogArea=3904000095> (Last accessed August 14, 2007).

County may not yet be in crisis, but neither is it achieving its full potential. Changing the 20<sup>th</sup> century paradigm of government is essential if Lucas County is to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is our hope that the recommendations and process outlined in this report will help Lucas County continue to grow, innovate, and achieve success long into the future.

## **Background**

Lucas County, located in northwest Ohio, borders both the Michigan state line and Lake Erie. The county was named for Ohio Governor Robert Lucas, who sent troops to the area during the Toledo War in 1835. Lucas County encompasses 341 square miles, and its population in 2004 was 450,632. Within Lucas County are four cities, Toledo, Sylvania, Maumee and Oregon; seven villages, Berkey, Harbor View, Holland, Ottawa Hills, Swanton, Waterville and Whitehouse; and eleven townships, Harding, Jerusalem, Monclova, Providence, Richfield, Spencer, Springfield, Swanton, Sylvania, Washington and Waterville.<sup>4</sup> In addition, eleven separate public school districts, numerous special purpose government agencies (Toledo Metroparks, TARTA, TASD, Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority, etc.) as well as state and federal agencies all operate within Lucas County.<sup>5</sup>

Lucas County serves as a center for trade for counties in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. It is located within 250 miles of Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Akron, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Indianapolis, Indiana; Detroit, Michigan; and Windsor, Ontario. Approximately one-third of the population of the United States resides within 500 miles of Lucas County.

### Successful Intergovernmental Cooperation

Intergovernmental cooperation happens on a daily basis in Lucas County without great fanfare. When the Toledo Fire Department responded to a request from the Maumee Fire Department to help fight the Andersons' grain silo fire, the fire departments from the surrounding communities provided coverage of Toledo. On occasion, intergovernmental cooperation makes statewide news. The opening of the Veteran's Glass City Skyway was the culmination of a project that required cooperation not only from local and county governments, but also the State of Ohio and the federal government.

The newly implemented, unified 800 MHz radio communication system is the most advanced in the state of Ohio, and an excellent example of how efficient, effective use of technology can improve the quality of government service within Lucas County and the region. Using levy and Department of Homeland Security grants, Lucas County provided a common infrastructure for this state-of-the-art communications system which currently serves thirty-one jurisdictions. The system is capable of permitting every public safety entity in the County to communicate internally and with one another. This system stands

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<sup>4</sup> Ohio Department of Development, *Ohio County Profiles*, available at <http://www.odod.state.oh.us/research/> (last accessed August 9, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix III for a list of the 53 government agencies operating in Lucas County.

as proof that intergovernmental cooperation is possible today even without big changes in the structure of government.

The health departments of the City of Toledo and Lucas County merged January 1, 2000. Prior to the merger, the two departments had significant overlap in their jurisdictions and often would compete with each other for federal and state grants. Efforts to merge the two departments had been ongoing for 40 years, with the successful effort beginning in earnest in 1989. It was the formation of a new steering committee in 1997 that ultimately led to the successful merger. By April 1999, this committee had issued an operational plan for the combined health district, detailing the organization, financial, and personnel plans. To reach this outcome, concerns over the cost of the merger, and the belief that the City of Toledo would have too much control over the new department had to be addressed.

A merged Toledo-Lucas County Health Department has provided significant benefits for the people it serves. The combined department is governed by an independent Board of Health. This has improved the efficiency of many of the decision-making processes, as the ultimate decision makers are now closer to the issues involved. Additionally, the combined department remained budget neutral through its first few years and managed to reduce the cost of its programs in the same period. The combined department has been able to provide better services to the public, reduce its costs, and more effectively contend with public health issues.<sup>6</sup>

### Barriers to Intergovernmental Cooperation

There are many barriers to successful intergovernmental cooperation. The number and complexity of these barriers depends on the particular type of cooperative effort undertaken. However, a number of barriers are common to most initiatives: lack of trust between jurisdictions, operational challenges, and legal impediments.

Trust is absolutely vital to any cooperative endeavor. In order to implement successful intergovernmental initiatives, trust must be built among all parties involved. The futility of action taken in an atmosphere of mistrust and the need to build trust among all participants were conclusions that each of the subcommittees arrived at independently.

In order to implement successful intergovernmental initiatives, trust must be built between all parties involved. There is not a quick fix for this issue. Rather, a long-term process that allows clear communication and is inclusive from its inception is needed for the necessary trust to grow.

Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) utilizes an interesting process for new projects. TMACOG attempts to involve all parties in the discussion from the beginning. The determining factor for whether a party should be involved is actually left to the party; all parties that think they belong at the table are invited to the table. This

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<sup>6</sup> Toledo Business Journal, *Unigov: Health Department Merger Improved Effectiveness*, available at <http://www.toledobiz.com> (October 2003).

process helps to prevent the bias that can form when one entity starts a process and only invites other entities to join when the process is almost complete. In essence, TMACOG seeks to ensure that every interested party has a voice in the process from the outset.

Operational barriers are perhaps the most diverse, but they are closely related to the barriers of mistrust. When two or more entities attempt to cooperate, it is the operational barriers that often cause the most problems, and in turn increase the level of mistrust between entities. Each entity has their own procedures, policies, and sometimes their own lexicon. In order to achieve cooperation, these differences in operation and terminology must be recognized.

The single greatest barrier to intergovernmental cooperation is the lack of ready access to comparable data.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the research for this project, these differences became readily evident. In order to compare spending of area governments, it was first necessary to decipher the chart of account utilized by each government. Spending on police vehicles was alternatively accounted for as capital improvements, vehicles, and special funds. This difference in accounting methods, and indeed, differences in the standard operating procedures of any department within an entity, decreases the ability of two entities to openly communicate.

Additionally, different entities often utilize the same term but attach substantially different meanings to the term. Throughout the interviews conducted, it became evident that the term "Lucas County" was being used to mean the geographic area of Lucas County, Lucas County government, or all local governments and agencies located in Lucas County. The difference in meaning did not lead to any great misunderstandings. However, this innocuous term is an example of how a difference in the lexicon of entities can lead to miscommunication.

Operational barriers, like barriers to trust, can be overcome. Consistency, clear communication, and a willingness to tackle awkward questions will identify and neutralize operational barriers and build trust.<sup>8</sup>

Legal barriers will vary greatly depending upon the intergovernmental initiative. Local governments, such as counties, municipalities, and townships, derive their powers from different sources, those being the Ohio Constitution, the Ohio Revised Code and municipal charters. Participation on a particular initiative may require changes to city charters or state law.

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<sup>7</sup> Interview with David Akers, President and CEO of NEOSO (July 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Robert Galford & Anne Seibold Drapeau, *The Enemies of Trust*, Harvard Business Rev. (February 2003).

## Structure of Local Governments<sup>9</sup>

The recommendations in this report call for cooperation among governments from all levels. In order to recognize the strengths and barriers to cooperation inherent in each level of government, a brief introduction to the various levels is in order.

### Counties

The term “county” is used in 48 of the 50 U.S. states to designate a tier of governmental organization below the state and above the municipal tier. In Ohio, counties are entirely creatures of statute. Counties receive most of their funding from retail sales tax, with additional funding coming from millage. Title III of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) provides that counties may exercise only those powers granted to them by the Ohio General Assembly.

Chapter 307 of the Ohio Revised Code defines the powers and responsibilities of county commissioners, the chief legislative, as well as executive authority of Ohio counties. Chapter 307.15 gives commissioner’s wide latitude for establishing contractual relationships with incorporated areas (cities and villages) and townships, as well as with other counties. Such contracts permit counties to act as agents in performing functions that the contracting entities are authorized to perform. Numerous court decisions have clarified and amplified these provisions over the years. The county may, but is not obligated to, charge fees for these services. The Ohio Constitution also states, in Article X, Section 1, that “municipalities and townships shall have authority, with the consent of the county, to transfer to the county any of their powers or to revoke the transfer of any such power...”<sup>10</sup>

### Cities and Villages (Municipalities; Incorporated Areas)

The term “municipality” is used to designate the governmental tier below that of the county. Municipalities in Ohio are classified either a city (population of 5,000 or more) or village (population under 5,000), and receive most of their funding from payroll tax, with numerous additional sources supplementing that revenue. Under Ohio law, Title VII of the ORC grants municipalities certain discretionary powers, particularly in Chapter 715, and imposes certain service obligations, but municipalities also have certain powers granted to them by the Ohio Constitution that exist outside of the powers granted by the ORC. These constitutionally granted powers are known as ‘home rule’ powers, and the Ohio General Assembly cannot interfere with these powers unless the Ohio Constitution sanctions the interference. Article XVIII, Section 3 of the Ohio Constitution outlines the powers of municipal corporations as follows:

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<sup>9</sup> Adapted from Hugh Hinton & Michael J. Beazley, *Analysis of the Fiscal Impact of Public Service Delivery Practices in Lucas County*, Urban Affairs Center, University of Toledo (2002).

<sup>10</sup> This obscure and little-used constitutional provision has the potential to be an effective tool in permitting one government agency, the county, to provide uniform regulation of a variety of public health and safety matters, particularly in light of the ability of municipalities to transfer “home rule” powers to county government.

Municipalities shall have authority to exercise all powers of local self-government and to adopt and enforce within their limits such local police, sanitary and other similar regulations, as are not in conflict with general laws.

This section grants municipalities two types of “home rule” authority: both authority of local self-government and the authority to adopt local police, sanitary and other similar regulations not in conflict with general laws. The limiting language of “not in conflict with general laws” only applies to police, sanitary and other similar regulations, and not to powers of local self-government.<sup>11</sup> Section 4, Article XVIII also grants municipalities the constitutional right to own, operate and regulate public utilities. Numerous court cases have interpreted what this means, and it is often determined on a case-by-case basis.

Regarding the “home rule” authority of local self-government, pursuant to Article XVIII, Section 7 of the Ohio Constitution, municipalities must follow the procedures provided in state law unless they adopt a municipal charter, in which case they may specify procedures of self-government that vary from state law. A charter is not necessary in any case, however, in the exercise of substantive powers of local self-government, meaning that a non-charter municipality may enact ordinances that vary substantively from state law in such matters.<sup>12</sup> “Home rule” powers in local self-government are limited by the “state-wide concern” doctrine, which dictates that a municipality may not, in the regulation of local matters, infringe upon matters of general or state-wide concern.<sup>13</sup>

A charter is not necessary for a municipality to exercise “home rule” authority in the adoption of police, sanitary and other similar regulations not in conflict with general laws, but such municipal laws may not conflict with general laws.

The Constitution of Ohio and the ORC provide more autonomy to incorporated areas than to unincorporated areas. With the greater autonomy comes greater mandated service requirements. These additional requirements are primarily government functions. Further, the state confers police powers on incorporated areas. These requirements include such services as public safety and public health. Incorporated areas are further permitted, but not obligated, to provide certain specified services to their residents.

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<sup>11</sup> See *Ohio Assn. of Pub. School Emp.*, Chapter No. 471 v. Twinsburg, 36 Ohio St.3d 180 (1988).

<sup>12</sup> See *Benevolent Assn. v. Parma*, 61 Ohio St.2d 375 (1980).

<sup>13</sup> See *State ex rel. Evans v. Moore*, 69 Ohio St.2d 88 (1982).

## Townships (Unincorporated Areas)

The term “township” refers to a county’s unincorporated areas. In Ohio, townships receive most of their funding from property taxes, and their governmental functions are largely discretionary. Townships may, but are not required to, provide services to their residents. The law as written often uses phrases such as “have the authority to” or “may,” while lacking such terms as “must” and “required to do so.” For example, while townships are required to maintain township roads, they are not required to have township roads. Similarly, even though they must maintain township cemeteries, they are not required to have township cemeteries. Townships may provide police and fire protection, either through their own employees/volunteers or by contracting with other jurisdictions, but, again, are not required to do so. Similar conditions apply to other functions such as parks, zoning, animal control, and a variety of other services.

Chapter 503.01 of the ORC summarizes the powers and status of townships:

Each civil township is a body politic and corporate, for the purposes of enjoying and exercising the rights and privileges conferred upon it by law. It may sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, and receive and hold real estate by devise or deed, or receive and hold personal property for the benefit of the township for any useful purpose.

Although courts in the past have referred to townships as municipal corporations, they are not corporations in the same sense that cities and villages are, and are not vested with the general powers of municipal corporations. For example, townships have no inherent or constitutionally granted police powers.

The Ohio Constitution and the ORC are clear that townships have minimal obligations to their citizens, but are less clear in defining the governmental responsibilities of municipalities and distinguishing the obligations that counties have to municipalities and townships. Although counties may charge municipalities for the services they provide, it is also clear that counties may choose not to do so. Similarly, counties may charge townships for these same services. The County, however, is not the default service provider to townships. In the absence of another provider, counties may not be required to provide these services.

## State of Ohio

Ohio achieved statehood in 1803, emerging from the Northwest Territory. In order to achieve statehood, the original Ohio Constitution was drafted in 1802, accepted by the United States Congress, and approved by the President. The Ohio Constitution is the fundamental law of Ohio. As a sovereign state, the Ohio Constitution represents the highest law in Ohio. Laws enacted by the legislative branch are compiled as the Ohio Revised Code. The Ohio Government consists of a judicial, legislative, and executive branch.

The Ohio Judicial Branch is composed of the Ohio Supreme Court, twelve District Courts of Appeal and County Common Pleas Courts. Lucas County is located within the 6<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals. The Lucas County Common Pleas Court is seated in Toledo, and is the trial level court. In addition, there are several other courts within Lucas County: Lucas County Domestic Relations Court, Lucas County Juvenile Court, and Lucas County Probate Court.<sup>14</sup> The Ohio Revised Code provides for the establishment of Municipal Courts in Toledo, Maumee, Oregon, and Sylvania along with the other municipal corporations within Ohio.<sup>15</sup> The Municipal Courts hear civil cases up to \$15,000, misdemeanors, and traffic cases.<sup>16</sup>

The Legislative Branch is named the Ohio General Assembly. This is a bicameral body, consisting of the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate. This body is the main legislative power within Ohio. However, the rights to make laws by initiative or to approve/disapprove laws by referendum have both been reserved to the people. The Ohio House of Representatives consists of 99 districts representing roughly 110,000 people. The Lucas County delegation is represented with four districts: 46th District Mark Wagoner, 47th District Peter Ujvagi, 48th District Edna Brown, and the 49th District Matt Szollosi.<sup>17</sup> The Ohio Senate consists of 33 districts representing roughly 330,000 people. The Lucas County delegation is represented with two districts: 2nd District Randy Gardner, and 11th District Teresa Fedor.<sup>18</sup>

The Executive Branch of the Ohio government consists of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General, Secretary of State, the Auditor of State, and the Treasurer of State. In addition to these elected officials, the executive branch includes numerous departments and agencies. The Executive Branch is charged with administering the laws passed by the Ohio General Assembly.

### Federal Government of the United State of America

The federal government of the United States of America is composed of three branches. The Judicial Branch consists of the United States Supreme Court, United States Courts of Appeal, and United States District Courts. Lucas County is located within the jurisdiction of the US Court of Appeals for the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit, which is seated in Cincinnati, Ohio and the US District Court-Northern District of Ohio, which is seated in Toledo, Ohio.

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<sup>14</sup> Ohio Judicial Conference, *Ohio Courts*, available at <http://www.ohiojudges.org/index.cfm?PageID=64C16230-2FAD-4EE3-99C37E40B578079B#Lucas> (2007).

<sup>15</sup> Ohio Revised Code § 1901.01 (Lexis 2007).

<sup>16</sup> Ohio Legislative Service Commission, *A Guidebook for Ohio Legislators* 127, <http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/guidebook/guidebook07.pdf> (2007).

<sup>17</sup> The Ohio House of Representatives, *Your Representatives*, available at <http://www.house.state.oh.us/jsps/Representatives.jsp> (last accessed August 10, 2007).

<sup>18</sup> The Ohio Senate, *Your Senators*, available at <http://www.senate.state.oh.us/senators/> (last accessed August 10, 2007).

The Legislative Branch of the United States government is composed of a bicameral legislature, composed of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House of Representatives is composed of 435 members, with states receiving representation based on population. The Ohio delegation currently consists of 18 members.<sup>19</sup> Lucas County falls within the 9<sup>th</sup> District of Ohio, which is represented by Marcy Kaptur, and the 5<sup>th</sup> District of Ohio, which is represented by Paul Gillmore. The Senate is composed of 100 members, two from each state. The current Ohio delegation consists of Senators George V. Voinovich and Sherrod Brown.

The Executive Branch is composed of the office of the President of the United States and the office of the Vice President of the United States. The current President of the United States is George W. Bush, and the current Vice President of the United States is Dick Cheney. In addition to these offices, there are a number of Executive Branch agencies. The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and the United States Coast Guard all have offices within Lucas County. The FBI and the US Coast Guard both cooperate with local law enforcement on a regular basis. Other federal agencies provide funding for locally administered programs. The Executive Branch agencies can be a wonderful resource for expertise and funding in a rich tapestry of areas.

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<sup>19</sup> House of Representatives, *available at* [http://www.house.gov/house/MemberWWW\\_by\\_State.shtml#oh](http://www.house.gov/house/MemberWWW_by_State.shtml#oh) (last accessed August 10, 2007).

## **Methodology**

The first meeting of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee was convened on May 7, 2007 by Lucas County Commissioner Ben Konop to address two questions: 1) how can government as of today, within its existing structures in Northwest Ohio, operate more efficiently and collaboratively, and 2) how could government be modeled in the future to increase efficiency and global competitiveness for our region. The Committee started its work by ascertaining, through fact finding, interviews, and research, what was already occurring within Lucas County.

At the third meeting, the Committee elected to divide into three subcommittees for further study of three specific areas. The Long-Term Process and Planning Subcommittee focused on identifying successful models of intergovernmental cooperation and developing a process based on best practices. The Short-Term Internal Subcommittee focused on identifying opportunities for improvement within Lucas County government. The Short-Term External Subcommittee focused on identifying opportunities for improvement through cooperation of the governments located in Lucas County.

The findings of the three Subcommittees were reported to the Committee. The suggestions drawn from the findings were further researched, and a draft of the final report was prepared. The final recommendations, detailed below, were presented to Commissioner Konop on August 21, 2007.

## **Recommendations**

### **Embrace a focus on customer service.**

- Designate one county employee as a Citizens' Advocate who will serve as a customer service ombudsperson, monitoring Lucas County responsiveness to citizens' needs and concerns.
- Set up a Customer Service Hotline, for complaints, compliments, etc., monitored by the customer service ombudsperson.
- Create a department-level and individual staff member "Customer Service of the Month" award to recognize top-quality customer service.
- Set a goal of providing customer service training to all county employees. Initially, Lucas County Human Resources and the Citizens' Advocate should create a list of "priority" trainees, being those employees with supervisory roles and those with regular interaction with members of the public.
- Encourage on-going county efforts to foster efficiency and effectiveness, such as unifying the two-step land transfer process into one-step, shortening inmate layovers in county jail, unburdening the county of unneeded property, or hiring in-house staff attorneys for Juvenile Court.

### **Citizen's Advocate**

The Ohio system of government as it stands was organized over a century and a half ago and has rolled into the 21<sup>st</sup> century on inertia. This de-centralized, fragmented structure still prevails in Lucas County, and there is currently no process in place to identify regional government service duplication and inefficiency on any consistent basis. It is unrealistic to expect existing county employees to have the time, authority or interest to focus on making county government more efficient, effective and customer friendly unless there is a position designated to follow-up on these initiatives on a full-time basis. Unless there is someone in charge of implementing and pressing for change, any ephemeral focus on progress will fall by the wayside.

Similarly, there is no unified oversight of the quality of customer service being provided by Lucas County agencies. Without this unified oversight, it is likewise unrealistic to expect existing county employees to have the time or authority to act upon citizen complaints in any practical manner above the normal, focused call of their duties. As a result, the current county workload often permits only piecemeal remedial actions. In response to this, there ought to be a position empowered to respond to citizen needs.

Therefore, one county employee could be designated as the Lucas County Citizens' Advocate. The Citizens' Advocate should be invested with real authority to make decisions and settle citizen complaints on behalf of the Commissioners. The Citizens' Advocate should also function as a 'customer service ombudsperson' to provide oversight over all the different departments and a unified approach to customer service that ensures Lucas County citizens are receiving the best service possible. We anticipate that the Citizens' Advocate will be in a unique position to observe and report to the

Commissioners about inefficiencies and duplications of services, allowing them to take remedial action.

### Customer Service

The City of Toledo currently has a customer service hotline available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. A Lucas County Customer Service Hotline could similarly function as an excellent mechanism for the Citizens' Advocate in the role of customer service ombudsman to receive complaints (and, hopefully, compliments) from the citizenry. Lucas County should make this resource available as an example of its commitment to treating its citizens as customers.

In the past, the Lucas County Human Resources Department spearheaded numerous customer service-oriented training programs for employees each quarter. In 2004, these initiatives, along with several other employee-training programs, were severely cut back due to changing departmental priorities. With a goal of providing customer service training to all county employees, initially, Lucas County Human Resources and the Citizens' Advocate should create a list of "priority" trainees, being those employees with supervisory roles and those with regular interaction with members of the public. These "priority" trainees should undergo customer-service training similar to those discontinued programs. Certain existing training programs, such as "Leaders Emerging and Developing" (L.E.A.D.), "Phone Courtesy" and "Bridges Out of Poverty" should be continued, encouraged and expanded. Other programs, such as "Serving Our Public" should be resuscitated, while new programs should be researched and instituted. This approach should then expand to encompass all county employees, with an appreciation for their specific interactions with either internal or external customers.

By law, Lucas County elected officials are their own appointing authority,<sup>20</sup> and therefore have their own personnel function. The State Department of Administrative Services previously supervised these functions, but today the County Commissioners have the authority to establish a County Personnel Department (CPD) to serve personnel needs,<sup>21</sup> and have done so. The CPD services are automatically provided to all employees for whom the Commissioners are the appointing authority, but may also be provided to any employees under any elected official or board who takes action to opt into the CPD.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 325.17 (Lexis 2007).

<sup>21</sup> Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 124.14(G) (Lexis 2007). The powers of the County Personnel Board are 1) preparing, conducting and grading competitive examinations and unstructured, non-competitive examinations; 2) preparing eligible lists of persons qualified for appointment to positions; 3) preparing, amending and maintaining class plans and class specifications; 4) assigning covered employees to proper classification; 5) developing and conducting personnel recruitment; 6) developing and conducting personnel training programs in cooperation with appointing authorities; 7) appointing such examiners, inspectors, clerks and other assistants as are necessary to carry out the functions of the department; and 8) keeping a journal of final decisions regarding classification of positions and assignment of employees to classifications.

<sup>22</sup> Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 124.14(G)(2) (Lexis 2007).

Several county offices have no human resource professional on staff. These offices, which include the County Coroner, the Board of Health, Mental Health and Recovery Services, the Board of Elections, the Recorder, Domestic Relations Court, and the County Sheriff, should opt into the CPD. By doing so, these offices would lose none of their appointing authority over their staff and would gain a professional service for their personnel functions. Ultimately, the County should consider providing a common employment application for all county services, making these applications available electronically, creating a common recipient pool for all county jobs, and encouraging all elected county officials and boards to utilize the CPD for their personnel functions. These steps would not take away the autonomy from any elected official or board, but would make personnel functions easier and more efficient internally and facilitate more efficient interactions with prospective applicants externally.

## Encourage On-going County Efforts

- Establish a consolidated One-stop Land Transfer Shop, in order to make the land transfer process more efficient between the County Auditor and County Recorder.

When engaging in a land transfer, a person must wait through two different lines, one at both the County Auditor and the County Recorder, and write two different checks, in order to complete the transaction. A consolidated, one-stop shop could provide this service more efficiently.

All title transactions, when pertaining to land, must go through a two-step process. The Ohio Revised Code requires that the County Auditor transfer any land or town lot on application and presentation of title with required affidavits, bearing the last known address of the grantee and a reference to the volume and page of the recording of the next preceding recorded instrument by or through which the grantor claims title.<sup>23</sup> Subsequent to this, the transfer of title must be recorded with the County Recorder. The Ohio Revised Code requires the County Recorder to maintain a record of all deeds for the sale or conveyance of lands.<sup>24</sup>

In order to facilitate these requirements, both the Auditor and Recorder have developed highly efficient procedures, trained and experienced staff, and taken advantage of technology. Despite this, in order to transfer land, a person must wait through two different lines, one at both the County Auditor and the County Recorder, and write two different checks. The establishment of a One-Stop Land Transfer Shop would allow the public to more efficiently meet the legal requirements to transfer property. This initiative will require the County Auditor, Recorder, and Treasurer to work closely together.

- County Property: Lucas County owns numerous properties around the area that it must maintain. An evaluation of the usefulness of these properties is overdue, as some of these properties are of limited use and should be sold off or given away.
- Juvenile Court: Lucas County currently pays private attorneys \$2.3 million a year to represent minors in Juvenile Court. Studies suggest that if full-time staff attorneys were hired for this work, there is the potential for the County to save an estimated \$1 million in 2008, hold fewer hearings, and provide better service.<sup>25</sup>
- Common Pleas Bed-nights: Lucas County Common Pleas Court ships 1,200 inmates a year to State prison system, with an eight to twelve night layover in county jail. By working with the Courts, the County could shorten this layover, potentially saving considerable money.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 319.20 (Lexis 2007)

<sup>24</sup> Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 317.08 (Lexis 2007).

<sup>25</sup> Estimates gathered from proposals by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and the Office of Management and Budget, 2007.

<sup>26</sup> *Id.*

**Expand commitment to joint purchasing among all units of government in the region, plus local universities, colleges, and public school districts.**

- Foster joint purchasing programs between counties, cities, and townships as permitted under the Ohio Revised Code, as past joint purchasing initiatives have led to savings through lower commodity cost and decreased staff time.
- Review effective and successful models for joint purchasing.
- Emulate best practices through formation of the Northwest Compact.

Past and Current Joint Purchasing Initiatives

The Board of County Commissioners and the Mayor of the City of Toledo invited area governments and agencies to participate in cooperative purchasing. A list of general commodities was distributed to all local governmental entities. This effort led to cooperative purchasing of some commodities such as salt, copy paper, and gasoline. The participation in this program slowly waned, and eventually collapsed.

Toledo Public Schools has hosted the bid process for the purchase of office supplies. A committee entitled Northwest Ohio Non-Profit Entities and representing Lucas County, the City of Toledo, The University of Toledo, the Medical University of Ohio, Bowling Green State University, Owens Community College, and Toledo Public Schools reviewed the bid. This cooperative purchasing project led to a joint purchase of office supplies by the majority of the committee, and is still in place.

A current example of joint-purchasing agreements in Lucas County is the contract between the City of Toledo and BP Products North America, Inc. for an annual supply of automotive fuels, as achieved through competitive bidding. This contract provides fuel to eight City of Toledo locations, eleven Lucas County locations, two TARTA locations, the Lucas County Board of MMRD, the Village of Ottawa Hills, Bowling Green State University, and five Sylvania Township locations. This agreement has been in place and functioning well for at least eight years.<sup>27</sup>

Cooperative Purchasing Programs

Lucas County utilizes two cooperative purchasing programs: the Ohio DAS Cooperative Purchasing Program and U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance. Both of these programs offer members the opportunity to utilize contracts for goods and services which have already gone through a bid process. The programs are designed to capitalize on the aggregate buying power of their membership to minimize price, and to eliminate the time and expense of a formal bid process. Both programs require entities to become members of the program. Members are not required to make all of their purchases through the program. Despite this freedom, two complaints commonly are cited by purchasers: an inability to make modifications to the items, and the inability to guarantee that contracts are awarded to local businesses.

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Dan Hiskey, Division of Purchasing, Office of the Lucas County Board of County Commissioners (June 10, 2007).

Ohio Cooperative Purchasing Program

The Ohio Department of Administrative Services manages the Cooperative Purchasing Program, per the Cooperative Purchasing Act of 1985.<sup>28</sup> This voluntary program offers Ohio counties, townships, municipalities, school districts, public libraries, regional park districts and other political subdivisions and instrumentalities thereof the benefits and costs savings of buying goods and services through state contracts.<sup>29</sup> Currently, 29 governments, governmental agencies, and school districts located within Lucas County utilize this program. Statewide, there are between 1,800 and 1,900 members. Local governments save between 20 and 30 million dollars a year.<sup>30</sup>

Members are able to purchase supplies and services through state government contracts. A listing of supplies and services currently available can be found at their website.<sup>32</sup> Members must pass an ordinance authorizing participation in the program, pay an annual fee, and issue a quarterly usage report. The annual fee varies depending on the population and type of entity.

Bids are accepted from both Ohio vendors and foreign companies. Ohio vendors are given a 5% preference over foreign vendors, and are required to have a significant presence in Ohio. Seminars concerning how to become a state approved vendor are offered on a per call basis by the State Cooperative Purchasing Program.<sup>33</sup>

**Fee Table** <sup>\*31</sup>

<b>Population</b> <b>(Townships, Villages, Cities, Counties):</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Up to 25,000	\$100.00
25,001 - 100,000	\$170.00
100,001 - 350,000	\$300.00
350,001 - Over	\$420.00
<b>Other Categories:</b> School Districts and Libraries	\$100.00
All Public Entities and Authorities, Colleges and Universities	\$235.00

\*Fees for fiscal year 2007, valid through June 30, 2007

<sup>28</sup> AM. Sub. H.B. No. 100 (1985).

<sup>29</sup> Ohio Department of Administrative Services, *General Services Cooperative Purchasing Program*, available at <http://das.ohio.gov/gsd/Procurement/Coop/ods.htm> (last accessed August 9, 2007)

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Roger Grime, Cooperative Purchasing Program Administrator (July 26, 2007)

<sup>31</sup> Ohio Department of Administrative Services, *supra* at note 29.

<sup>32</sup> Ohio Department of Administrative Services, *Cooperative Purchasing Term/Multiple Award Contracts, July, 2007*, available at <http://das.ohio.gov/gsd/Procurement/Coop/pdfs/contractlisting.pdf> (July 2007).

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Roger Grime, Cooperative Purchasing Program Administrator (July 26, 2007).

## US Communities Government Purchasing Alliance

U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance (U.S. Communities), a division of U.S. Communities Public Services Alliance, was designed in cooperation with an Advisory Board of local and state government purchasing officials and is jointly sponsored by the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP), the National League of Cities (NLC), and the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM).

U.S. Communities provides a national purchasing forum for local and state government agencies, school districts (K-12), higher education, and non-profits nationwide by pooling the purchasing power of over 87,000 public agencies.<sup>34</sup>

## Regional Cooperative Purchasing Programs

In addition to these programs, there are two regional cooperative purchasing programs within Ohio: Northeast Ohio Sourcing Office and Southwest Ohio Purchasers for Government. These programs are interesting models of what can be accomplished through regional cooperation. Northwest Ohio should consider the formation of its own such entity.

### *Northeast Ohio Sourcing Office*

The Northeast Ohio Sourcing Office (NEOSO) was formed in 2005 as a Council of Governments and is a non-profit organization. Its intent is to serve “as a politically, legally and operationally sustainable mechanism to improve the economic condition of local government members.” Current membership of NEOSO includes 61 governments across 16 northeast Ohio counties. Expanding to a statewide service area in the fall of 2007 is currently under consideration.

NEOSO attempts to create leverage for its members through aggregating demand for products and services, implementing sound business practices as shared services across multiple communities, and augmenting existing local government staff with specialized NEOSO expertise as needed through shared services.

NEOSO works with its members to identify products of interest and develop a set of specifications based on the input of the members. Vendors are awarded bids based on a total cost of ownership model. NEOSO analyzes not only the initial price of an item, but also the cost of administration, invoicing, inventory, downtime and man hours, among other factors. A cost+ model, where the price is a predetermined margin above the vendors’ cost, is preferred over a traditional discount price model. This model aims to align the interests of the vendor and the customer.

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<sup>34</sup> U.S. Communities, available at <http://www.uscommunities.org/> (last accessed August 9, 2007).

Currently, NEOSO has developed offerings for Original Equipment Manufacture auto parts as well as aggregate roadwork and resurfacing contracts, and is developing programs for fuel, salt, and oil and lubrication.

NEOSO has developed several services in the information technology field. The Computer Care Package keeps participating members' computers safe and up-to-date, and works to resolve problems when they arise. The Shared Chief Information Officer program provides members with a world-class team of senior level CIO's, which can help develop and implement comprehensive information technology plans, and provide strategic planning and assessment of technological systems and processes. The IT User Training program provides members with customized IT training for their staff.

NEOSO has also developed a Contract Administrator program which reviews the existing method of contract administration, tailors a NEOSO web-based contract administration tool to specific needs, enters contracts into the system, provides training on the new systems, and scans each contract into a centralized electronic data repository. NEOSO has also developed the Network Expense Management program, which works to identify and recoup overpayments from past telecommunication invoices and make recommendations to reduce ongoing telecommunication costs.<sup>35</sup>

Original seed funding for NEOSO came from foundations and member governments in Northeast Ohio. NEOSO is working towards become self-sustaining. Revenue is generated through the goods and services that are offered, based on three different models: a 3% to 7% surcharge on the amount spent on a contract, a percentage of the savings generated, or a straight fee for the service provided. NEOSO should become self-sustaining with continued growth in both membership and increased product offerings.

#### *Southwest Ohio Purchasers for Government*

Southwest Ohio Purchasers for Government (SWOP4G) was formed in 1986 by local government purchasers in Southwestern Ohio.<sup>36</sup> Membership includes 100 local governments, schools, and universities from southwest and central Ohio. SWOP4G seeks to save its members money and staff time through joint or cooperative buying, to provide a network to share purchasing expertise and information, to provide educational opportunities to those involved in public purchasing, and to promote and enhance ethics.<sup>37</sup>

SWOP4G has an informal structure, and the group has quarterly meetings. Fees for membership are on a two-tier structure. Participating members pay an annual fee of \$35. In order to qualify as a participating member, an entity must attend meetings or become the lead on a bid. Nonparticipating members pay an annual fee of \$60.

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<sup>35</sup> Northeast Ohio Sourcing Office, available at <http://www.neoso.org> (last accessed August 9, 2007).

<sup>36</sup> Southwest Ohio Purchasers for Government, available at <http://www.swop4g.org/swop4g.html> (last accessed August 9, 2007).

<sup>37</sup> *Id.*

SWOP4G currently bids on a group of core commodities including: road salt, traffic paint, chemicals, copy paper, film, tires and tubes, and janitorial supplies. The largest commodity has traditionally been road salt. The price for SWOP4G has been lower than the Ohio DAS Cooperative Purchasing Program price.<sup>38</sup> In addition to these items, members include language incorporating SWOP4G into their purchasing contracts, allowing other members to purchase through the contract.

### Northwest Compact

NEOSO and SWOP4G provide cooperative purchasing for around 36 counties, encompassing the major metropolitan areas of Ohio. Northwest Ohio could form a regional cooperative purchasing program similar to those offered by SWOP4G and NEOSO. This Northwest Compact would aim to foster operational efficiency, exploit cost savings, and improve customer service. The Northwest Compact could engage in cooperative purchasing and administration programs for specific functions of government, such as: cooperative engineering, law, human resources, building inspection; equipment purchase or maintenance, and commodity purchases.

The Northwest Compact should ideally be a voluntary, opt-in organization open to all units of government in Northwest Ohio, not just Lucas County. The organization could explore the viability of allowing units of government in Michigan to join as well. Ideally, this organization should not be a think-tank committee, but rather a fully functioning service delivery resource. Various models of funding should be explored, with a recommended option of a fee of one-percent of each dollar assessed to participating governments for purchase or service delivery (i.e., eight governments come together to buy road salt for a total of \$1.2 million, there will be a one percent up charge of \$12,000 levied on an equal share basis to the participants).

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with Roy Sigritz, Montgomery County (July 30, 2007).

**Employ technology to identify and solve problems, improve interconnectivity and reduce duplication in regional information technology infrastructure.**

- Encourage the Data Processing Board to exercise its statutory authority more aggressively to oversee the six different Information Technology (IT) groups in county government.
- The Board should conduct a study of IT duplication and system incompatibility in the County. Departments involved in any identified areas should be called before the Board to justify their continued departure from standard systems and platforms. The Board should apply a presumption that duplication or incompatibility should be eliminated in short order, and, going forward, a presumption against any incompatible or duplicative IT purchases.
- Empower regional cooperation in information services by the formation of the Lucas County Intergovernmental Networking Cooperative (LINC).

Overview

Technology presents a rich area for collaboration and a vehicle for advancing our region into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Development, however, is often impeded by balkanization of information technology services. Lucas County government itself has six different Information Technology groups: Lucas County Information Services,<sup>39</sup> and groups within the Children Services Board (CSB), Job and Family Services (JFS), Lucas County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD), Juvenile Court, and Probate Court. The Lucas County Court system alone utilizes five different case-management systems possessed of limited ability to interact with one another, with a different system used in each Common Pleas Court, Probate Court, Juvenile Court, Domestic Relations Court and Court Services.

Lucas County government collects reams of information every day, but that data mostly just sits inside file cabinets – 37% of county space is currently dedicated to paper storage. Imaging technology decreases the amount of space needed to store this information, and also cuts down on the amount of paper being purchased and used by each entity. Lucas County has, for the most part, adopted Hyland OnBase technology for its imaging needs, joining the City of Toledo and Toledo Public Schools, but this system has yet to be fully integrated within all county departments.

The purpose of collecting information is to use that data to make decisions about how to improve government services. Advanced technology permits information to be presented graphically to effectively manage government services. Weekly data about crime, accidents, nuisance properties, utility problems, and citizen complaints can be matched and presented in a graphic manner to help government target its resources to solve problems. Advancing GIS technology is already used quite productively within Lucas County, but again, presents an expanding area of potential great mutual benefit.

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<sup>39</sup> See Appendix V for more information on LCIS services.

Centralizing technology functions requires substantial initial resource investment. However, the integration and standardization of systems and data will reduce future escalation of technology costs and increase functionality across the county government enterprise.

### Data Processing Board

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code § 307.84, Lucas County Information Technology (IT) services are currently governed by the Lucas County Data Processing Board (DPB), consisting of the county treasurer, recorder, auditor, clerk of the court of common pleas, and a county commissioner, among others.<sup>40</sup> The Data Processing Board “coordinate[s] the use of all automatic data processing equipment ... throughout the county,”<sup>41</sup> under the statutorily mandated oversight of the Auditor.<sup>42</sup>

The only way to alter the Auditor’s control over IT is for the Lucas County Board of Commissioners to abolish the Data Processing Board; however, if they do so, then they themselves may not assume control over IT.<sup>43</sup> Instead, in the absence of “a data processing board, a county office which requires data processing services is permitted to seek such services according to the provisions of law and procedures regulating acquisition of any goods and, or, services by a county office.”<sup>44</sup> In sum, if the Board of Commissioners were to abolish the Data Processing Board, then the Commissioners would be powerless to prevent each county office from making its own IT arrangements. The legal framework providing these roadblocks is some forty years old.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to the DPB, Lucas County has two other policy boards related to information services. The Integrated Justice System (IJS), for which LCIS provides technical support, is a three-member policy board that works to integrate information services within the different county court departments. The Imaging Advisory Board works to ensure that imaging software used by the County is compatible.

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<sup>40</sup> See Appendix V for more information on the Data Processing Board.

<sup>41</sup> Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 307.842 (Lexis 2007).

<sup>42</sup> Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 307.844 (Lexis 2007) provides: “[t]he county auditor shall be the chief administrator of the county automatic data processing board ... [with the duty to] supervise the operation of the automatic data processing center ... employ such other persons as are necessary for the operation of the center ... [and] adopt such rules and regulations as are necessary for the operation of the center.”

<sup>43</sup> See *Campanella v. Cuyahoga County*, 387 N.E.2d 254, 256-57 (Ohio Com. Pleas 1977). (holding that the board of commissioners’ attempt to “abolish the data processing board and create a new structure called ‘Department of Information Systems’ with a new chain of command directly responsible to the Commissioners” was impermissible since it did not comport with Ohio Revised Code § 307.84).

<sup>44</sup> *Id.*

<sup>45</sup> *Id.*

### Lucas County Intergovernmental Networking Cooperative (LINC)

In order for Northwest Ohio to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, proper utilization of information technology is vital. Centered in the Data Processing Board within the Auditor's office, Lucas County Intergovernmental Networking Cooperative (LINC) could create a platform to provide IT services to all county offices, plus interested townships, cities, school districts, and all other units of government. This countywide initiative could explore partnerships with area universities and the private sector to gain access to valuable leading edge IT thinking, infrastructure, and applications.

LINC could also work to leverage the underutilized IT resources within governments to provide resources to citizens. Making this resource available for small business start-ups and economic development initiatives would make Lucas County all the more attractive to new business ventures. Further, LINC could become a driving force to making Lucas County a Wi-fi hot zone.

**Expand commitment to joint services among all units of government in the region, plus local universities, colleges, and public school districts.**

- Joint service agreements are critical to any effort to streamline government. For example, there could be one agency responsible for grounds maintenance for a given geographical area, regardless of the ownership of the underlying ground.
- Encourage joint service agreements wherever possible, such as:
  - Facility and equipment management
  - Building inspections services
  - Housing programs
  - Joint or cooperative public safety programs
  - Regional water authority

Introduction

Governments across the County provide substantially similar services to their constituents. Many of these service duplications lend themselves to cooperative initiatives or creation of one regional entity that would provide the services. Following are several examples of significant service overlap that could benefit from a regional approach. All levels of government within Lucas County must maintain buildings, land, and equipment. Many of these areas would be better served through a collaborative approach. Other areas could include claims handling, tax collection and administration, legal defense of civil lawsuits, paper shredding, elevator services, recycling services, and janitorial services.

Lawn Care Services

Lawn care, specifically lawn mowing, is handled by a multitude of different entities within Lucas County. Regarding the County itself, the County Sanitation Department, the County Engineer, and Lucas County Facilities all provide grass-cutting services to various locations around the County.

The County Sanitation Department is responsible for mowing six water-booster pumping stations (one in Swanton Township, one in Holland Township, three in Sylvania Township, and one in Springfield Township).<sup>46</sup> The Sanitation Department is also responsible for mowing eighteen sewer pump stations sporadically located in township areas. Most cities require a weed whacker and push mower, while other areas also require a riding mower. The Sanitation Department has two to four seasonal workers hired by Human Resources to provide these mowing services.

The County Engineer is responsible for mowing the right-of-ways on all county roads, which in Lucas County are all located in township areas.

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<sup>46</sup> Lucas County Sanitary Engineer, Map of Lawn Crew Service Location.

Lucas County Facilities is responsible for mowing many locations, including the Lucas County Common Pleas Court, the Lucas County Corrections Center, Lucas County Domestic Relations Court, the Sixth District Court of Appeals, the Lucas County Recreation Center (located in Maumee), the Office on Aging, and the Community Development Center (located on Irwin Road), as well as several satellite locations, including the Coolie Canal and vacant lots throughout the County.<sup>47</sup> County Facilities does not contract with private entities for any of these mowing duties, but does contract with private entities for fertilizing, weed killing, and tree trimming. According to Facilities, it is inefficient for them to mow the satellite locations around Lucas County, as it involves considerable driving-related costs and time.

An obvious inefficiency in county lawn mowing is that done on the grounds of the Civic Center Mall. Three lawn-mowing crews, county, city, and federal, currently service this area, with each crew mowing the grass within their respective jurisdictions, even though such jurisdictions are spatially side-by-side. All three of these parties are currently negotiating with each other as to how to operate this redundancy more efficiently, and are in agreement that something can be done better in this area. While progress is being made, labor, payment and cross-charging issues still stand as obstacles to any real change.<sup>48</sup>

#### Vehicle Maintenance

City of Toledo Fleet and Facilities has proposed an expansion of the City vehicle maintenance operation that would allow Lucas County to contract with Toledo to maintain the vehicles currently serviced at the County garage located on Spielbusch Ave. The City of Toledo fleet garage is currently across the street from the Lucas County garage, and similar maintenance functions are performed at both. If a joint city-county garage was implemented by this contract, the City of Toledo would gain new revenue stream from the County, and the County could achieve savings in both operations and facility maintenance, as Toledo claims to be able to perform the work at less cost than that provided by subcontractors. The County is currently awaiting a proposal on this issue from the City of Toledo, with delays attributed to labor differences between city and county employees.

#### Joint Recycling Fleet Facility

The Lucas County Solid Waste District is in need of a new home for its recycling trucks. The City of Toledo is in a similar situation. City of Toledo Fleet and Facilities has held discussions with the Lucas County Solid Waste staff about the possibility of Lucas County joining with the City of Toledo in constructing a new joint facility at the Hoffman Road Landfill, which would provide storage for both city and county vehicle fleets.

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<sup>47</sup> Interview with Earl Reid, Lucas County Department of Facilities (June 2007).

<sup>48</sup> Civic Center Mall Meeting (December 7, 2006).

## Road Maintenance

The Lucas County Engineer is responsible for the “maintenance and repair of all bridges, culverts, roads, drains, ditches, roads on county fairgrounds, and other public improvements.”<sup>49</sup> “According to current practice, although not required by law, all county roads are in unincorporated areas of the county.”<sup>50</sup> The County Engineer has limited responsibilities to roads within municipalities.

Coordination between the County Engineer and the townships could be improved. Townships control the zoning of areas within their jurisdiction. These zoning decisions currently may be made independent of county input, because the County Engineer’s power is limited to ensuring that construction regulations are met. When the township does decide to allow development, it is the County’s responsibility to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of the roads in the area. Therefore, while regional growth in unincorporated areas is a joint responsibility between the county and townships, townships have the power to make unilateral decisions that increase the burden upon the County. Increased cooperation between the county and townships concerning development and subsequent road maintenance would be beneficial.

## Building Inspections Services

The Lucas County Building Inspection office handles the inspection of all residential and commercial buildings in Lucas County except for the cities of Toledo, Maumee, Oregon and Village of Whitehouse. Each of these areas, with the exception of Whitehouse, who contracts with Maumee, has its own building inspection services. Building inspection is responsible for ensuring that plumbing, electric, heating, and buildings are up to code.

The combination of the area building inspection departments should be explored. Combination of these entities could reduce overhead costs in both staffing and equipment, although a determination whether this would provide more efficient services to the public requires more in-depth analysis.

## Housing Programs

Lucas County and the City of Toledo have been in discussion to merge their Housing Programs. Lucas County currently has a small federally funded housing/CHIP program that provides service for only a small number of families a year. Consultants currently manage a large portion of the program. Discussion has explored merging the Lucas County department into the larger Toledo Housing Department. Savings realized through this merger would allow the housing programs to impact positively a greater number of needy citizens.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 315.08 (Lexis 2007).

<sup>50</sup> Hugh Hinton & Michael J. Beazley, *supra* note 9.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Mike Beazley, Office of Lucas County Administrator (June 2007).

### Joint or cooperative public safety programs

Most police and fire departments already have reciprocity agreements in place with their counterparts in surrounding communities. The departments regularly provide support for each other and have even conducted joint training exercises. This history of interdepartmental cooperation, coupled with the substantially similar nature of the service that the departments provide and the equipment that they use, lends to the viability of joint or cooperative services provision.

### *Regional fire authority*

The Cuyahoga County cities of Berea, Brook Park, Middleburg Heights, Parma, and Parma Heights are currently exploring the formation of a regional fire service. These cities, along with Baldwin-Wallace College, conducted a study and have now progressed to a second stage where they have retained legal and financial counsel. The study identified several barriers to regionalization: location of stations, duplication of administration, collective bargaining agreements, municipal building codes, radio compatibility, standard operation procedures, and community “ownership” perceptions. The study also identified several areas in which the cities expect benefits: improvement of Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating through better utilization of resources, delivery of quality community service, increase in firefighter training, long-term equipment investment planning, improved fire safety service dispatch, and operational and investment savings.<sup>52</sup>

Professor Pierre David, an author of the study, stated that two formats for a regional authority had been considered. The first would be the formation of a Council of Governments under ORC §167, and the second would be the formation of a Joint Fire District under ORC § 505.37. The Joint Fire District will be pursued further, as this option will allow the creation of a body that can assess a tax.

A Joint Fire District can be created by “the boards of one or more townships and the legislative authority of one or more municipal corporations.”<sup>53</sup> The fire district is governed by a board of fire district trustees, composed of one representative from every member township or municipality. Currently there are 58 joint fire districts in Ohio, though none exist within Lucas County.<sup>54</sup> Most of these fire districts encompass a few townships, or a village and the surrounding townships. The joint fire district that may be created in Cuyahoga County would be one of the largest in Ohio. Based on population, the joint fire district would serve a community with a population of 150,000, roughly the same population as the City of Dayton.

Beyond Ohio, joint fire districts can be found in New York, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. There is a study available from the Downriver Community Conference in Michigan. This

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<sup>52</sup> Division of Business Administration, Baldwin-Wallace College, *Exploration of Fire Service Regionalization: Berea, Brook Park, Middleburg Heights, Parma and Parma Heights* (November 2005).

<sup>53</sup> Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 505.371 (Lexis 2007).

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Nathan Murphy, Office of Ohio State Fire Marshall (July 2007).

study was conducted by Plante Moran, and focused on the feasibility of joint fire and EMS for the communities of Allen Park, Lincoln Park, Melvindale, Southgate, and Wyandotte. Michigan allows counties, villages, and townships to form a joint emergency authority under the Emergency Services Act.<sup>55</sup>

### *SWAT/SRT force*

Currently Lucas County, the City of Toledo, the City of Sylvania, Sylvania Township, Oregon, and Maumee all have SWAT/SRT units. Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) and Special Response Teams (SRT) have become vital components of police and safety operations. Traditionally these units have provided the heightened level of firepower and training needed to successfully contend with special circumstances, including barricaded gunmen, and hostage situations. The units within Lucas County also handle drug raids, dignitary protection, suppression of gang activity, anti-terrorist assignments, riot control, and high-risk arrest and search warrants.

SWAT/SRT teams require additional training and equipment. The Toledo Police Directed Patrol Section requires its officers to complete a 120-hour basic SWAT training course and to complete additional training every month.<sup>56</sup> Training includes not only special training on several weapons, but also training in the use of several types of gas and distraction devices.<sup>57</sup> On a larger scale, area SWAT/SRT teams have conducted joint anti-terror exercises at Westfield Shoppingtown at Franklin Park. This allowed the teams to practice tactics on a large scale, and to develop improved communications.<sup>58</sup>

The need for a well-trained and well-equipped SWAT/SRT team is readily apparent. The formation of a joint SWAT/SRT force for Lucas County would allow these successful units to coordinate their monthly training, and capitalize on specialized training, equipment, and personnel from across the numerous units. Examples of multi-jurisdictional specialized units are available within Lucas County. The Northwest Ohio Bomb Squad, consisting of Toledo Police Department officers and techs drawn from Maumee and Bowling Green State University Police Departments, is a regional force.<sup>59</sup> The Northwest Ohio Bomb Squad also maintains close working relationships with both the Lucas and Wood County Sheriff's Departments.<sup>60</sup> While the bomb squad's operational levels do not reach the level of area SWAT/SRT teams, it stands as an example of a regional specialized unit.

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<sup>55</sup> Plante & Moran, *Downriver Community Conference, Fire & EMS Consolidation* (December 2006).

<sup>56</sup> Toledo Police Department, *Directed Patrol (S.W.A.T. Team)*, available at <http://www.toledopolice.com/directive%20policing.html>

<sup>57</sup> *Id.*

<sup>58</sup> Sylvania Township Police Department, *Sylvania Township Police – Investigations*, available at [http://www.sylvaniatownship.com/Police\\_Investigations.aspx](http://www.sylvaniatownship.com/Police_Investigations.aspx) (last accessed August 9, 2007).

<sup>59</sup> Toledo Police Department, *Northwest Ohio Bomb Squad*, available at <http://www.toledopolice.com/nw%20bomb%20squad.html> (last accessed August 9, 2007).

<sup>60</sup> *Id.*

### *Consolidated countywide 9-1-1 dispatch center*

There are currently seven separate 9-1-1 dispatch and call centers in Lucas County. The dispatch centers for both the City of Toledo and Lucas County are located in the same building, the Emergency Services Building on Monroe Street. Dispatchers at the seven centers are either police officers or citizens. The equipment requirements are intensive for this important public safety function. Consolidation of the call centers may allow for elimination of duplicate equipment, more efficient use of technology, and better training for dispatchers.

### *Build on the success of the new 800MHz communication system*

The newly implemented, unified 800 MHz radio communication system is the most advanced in the state of Ohio, and is an excellent example of how efficient, effective use of technology is possible within Lucas County and the region. Lucas County, through levy and Department of Homeland Security grants, was able to provide a common infrastructure on which currently thirty-one jurisdictions, but potentially any public safety entity within the County, will be able to communicate internally and with one another.

Public safety departments do not always respond to calls only from within Lucas County. Many of the departments have reciprocal agreements with communities located in neighboring counties, by which they provide backup to one another. The new communication system, while improving communicative capabilities within Lucas County, may also have a deleterious side effect of decreasing communicative capabilities with safety departments from outside of the County. For example, for Maumee departments to communicate with Perrysburg departments, they may need to maintain old communication equipment in addition to the new equipment. Expansion of the 800MHz infrastructure to surrounding communities and counties should be explored.

### Regional Water Authority

Access to clean and safe water is a vital concern. This issue has historically been one of the most contentious in Northwest Ohio. Currently, the City of Toledo and the City of Oregon have water intake and treatment facilities. The majority of surrounding communities rely on these two cities for water. As the region continues to change through development and population shifting, access to water will become more important. The creation of a regional water authority to regulate this limited resource should be explored.

**Review the geographic location of regional operations and consolidate and/or relocate facilities closer to the point of service delivery.**

- Pursue joint agreements with other jurisdictions to define the scope of the County service delivery area.
- Position the operations to maximize efficient service delivery and reduce transit time.

A review of the current geographic location of operations versus services provision should be undertaken. In order to ensure that services are provided in an efficient and cost effective manner, it is important to ensure that the location of personnel and equipment match the location where the services are most needed.

The office of the Lucas County Engineer is located in Toledo while the equipment garage for the Engineer, which holds all the equipment used to maintain the works, snow plow trucks, dump trucks, and traffic signals, is located in Maumee. Western Lucas County currently has the highest growth in businesses and population.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, while most of the County Engineer's work physically takes place in western Lucas County, having the office in Toledo may not be the most efficient use of personnel.

The offices for the Lucas County Sanitation Department and the Lucas County Building Inspector are located in Holland. Moving the County Engineer and equipment garages to join the Sanitation Department and Building Inspector all together at one location in western Lucas County may increase efficiency by placing the staff and equipment closer to where the majority of work is required. Currently, County Engineer maintenance personnel must spend much of their time driving to the equipment garage in Maumee to pick up their equipment, then driving to the job site to set up the equipment, and then traveling back to the Maumee to store the equipment at the end of the day. This is an obvious drain on time and resources.

Placing all three offices and the equipment garage in one location would also save the costs associated with maintaining each of the different buildings separately. Moreover, any developers looking to build subdivisions already must actively deal with all three service departments, and creating a "one-stop" shop would make this process easier and more efficient.

This type of review should also be taken into account when considering the possibility of offering other joint services. Creation of any department to provide a service jointly would entail analyzing the coverage currently provided, and working to eliminate any overlap by repositioning offices, equipment, or personnel to provide the most efficient service to the entire area. For example, the fire study taking place in Cuyahoga County is analyzing the current position of fire stations and their respective geographic service areas. The combination of seven departments into one Joint Fire District has created some overlap of coverage, and repositioning of the fire stations will result in better service coverage and shorter response times.

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<sup>61</sup> Interview with Keith Earley, Lucas County Engineer (June 2007).

### **Emphasize goal setting and outcome measurement.**

- Adopt a standardized process of goal setting and outcome reporting within all county departments.
- Require each department to designate for themselves two or three key “outcome measures” and report them on a monthly basis to the Commissioners.
- Include “external” performance objectives within these measures, not limiting them to “internal” objectives such as staffing and budgetary matters. For example, the County Engineer could list “number of potholes filled.” The County Recorder could list “number of title transfers.” Job and Family Services could list “number of families helped.”

Goal setting and outcome measurement increase governmental accountability by identifying agency objectives that serve as standardized performance measures. In Baltimore, this process is known as “CitiStat,” which requires bi-weekly performance evaluations of all city agencies, designed to force management to answer for departmental shortcomings.<sup>62</sup> In practice, agency and department heads come to the CitiStat meeting every other week with the mayor, deputy mayors, and key cabinet members. Several days before each meeting, each agency or department is required to submit data on its performance to the CitiStat team. This data differs from department to department; for example, the Solid Waste Bureau alone submits data on a wide variety of topics, ranging from missed trash-up complaints to sick-days called in to overtime rates. The CitiStat team analyzes the data, ensures its veracity, compares it to previous periods, and then prepares a presentation of it for the meeting highlighting problem areas. This process has saved Baltimore \$350 million since its implementation in 2000.<sup>63</sup>

Similarly, in Franklin County Ohio, local agency achievements are evaluated on a yearly basis and factored into the budgetary allocations made by the Board of County Commissioners in a process known as “performance-based budgeting.”<sup>64</sup>

While neither CitiStat nor performance-based budgeting are specifically endorsed, but recognizing that accountability breeds results, it is suggested that each department should designate, for themselves, one to three “performance measures” in order to emphasize its focus on outcome rather than spending its allotted budget. For example, the County Engineer’s Office could track the number of potholes filled, and the Recorder’s Office could list the “number of title transfers.” These examples are just that, examples; it is important that each department decide for itself the factors by which it desires to be measured. The County is encouraged to work with The University of Toledo to develop a plan in this area.

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<sup>62</sup> O’Malley & Brown, *Accountability and Responsibility in Government*, available at <http://www.martinomalley.com/content/966> (last accessed July 12, 2007).

<sup>63</sup> Stephen Kearney, Baltimore Director of Policy and Communication, *Why not a statewide CitiState?*, Examiner.com, available at [http://www.examiner.com/printa-127885~Editorial: Why\\_not\\_a\\_statewide\\_CitiStat?.html](http://www.examiner.com/printa-127885~Editorial: Why_not_a_statewide_CitiStat?.html) (last accessed August 10, 2007).

<sup>64</sup> Franklin County, *Franklin County’s 2004 Budget Summary*, available at <http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/commissioners/budget/content/04Budget/docs/BudgetBook.pdf> (last accessed August 10, 2007).

### **Commit to holding growth in county spending below the rate of inflation.**

- Adopt a firm fiscal standard to reduce the cost of business and emphasize efficient government.

The costs associated with living and doing business in Lucas County play a major role in the attraction and retention of residents. As a result, reductions in the rate of local government spending that reduce the share of the city economy needed for continued government operations have the potential to make Lucas County a more attractive place to live and do business.

However, rather than actually cutting government expenditures, an effective reduction in spending was achieved in Milwaukee by former Mayor John Norquist. The initiative, known as “Norquist’s Law,” provides that any growth in government spending must be held below the rate of inflation, effectively reducing the value of the money spent. This program cut city spending in Milwaukee by 20%.<sup>65</sup> After a review of the pertinent literature, it is recommended that Lucas County undertake an initiative similar to that of Milwaukee, and keep county spending below the rate of inflation.

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<sup>65</sup> Fame Company.com, *Change – John Norquist*, available at [www.fastcompany.com/online/20/norquist.html](http://www.fastcompany.com/online/20/norquist.html) (last accessed August 10, 2007).

**Address urban sprawl and economic development issues when making significant county operational or policy decisions.**

- Recognize that urban sprawl promotes harmful economic and racial segregation, inefficient use of public tax-dollars, duplicative infrastructure, and overall community decline.<sup>66</sup>
- Make the question of sprawl and economic development a consideration in all major county policy and operational decisions, enabling the County to promote growth, rather than the slow decline, of our urban areas in particular and our entire region more generally.

Urban sprawl is a phenomenon taking place all over the country, with myriad social consequences. A recent Toledo case study performed by Ameregis, the Metropolitan Area Research Corporation, and the Urban Affairs Center noted:

“Greater Toledo is increasingly segregated by income and race. The core city remains troubled, and a group of suburbs is experiencing changes that portend trouble ahead ... Despite slow population growth, the region continues to sprawl outward in a pattern of low-density development that threatens valuable open space and increases traffic congestion.”<sup>67</sup>

As evidenced by that report, and as citizens witness each day, sprawl damages all communities, and will continue to do so until its effects are taken into account in the decision-making process. Because of this, local policy decisions should include a review and analysis of their anticipated affect on urban sprawl in the form of an impact assessment. While this recommendation does not call for a formal study requirement before any significant government action, it does strongly advocate the need for these issues to be made of part of policy and operational decisions.

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<sup>66</sup> Ameregis Metropolitan Area Research Corporation, *Toledo Metropatterns: A Regional Agenda for Community and Stability in Toledo* (2003).

<sup>67</sup> *Id.* at 1.

## **Implementation**

### **Create Regional Implementation Team.**

- Team to oversee and coordinate potential intergovernmental initiatives.
- Each participating member to select whom they wish to serve as their representative on the Team. Representatives must have ability to affect change within their respective entity.
- Initial eight team representatives to then select other members. Ultimately, team to consist of no more than 25 members, each having one vote.

The Regional Implementation Team should initially consist of eight representatives. These eight representatives should be selected from the following areas: the City of Toledo, union labor, the Lucas County Township Association, colleges and universities, the Regional Growth Partnership/ Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce, Toledo Community Foundation, and one representative from Sylvania, Oregon or Maumee. The eighth member should be a Lucas County Commissioner. Each member should be charged with selecting whom they want to serve as their representative on the Regional Implementation Team. This representative must have ability to affect change within their respective entity.

Once initial eight representatives are determined, they should select approximately seventeen other representatives to serve on the team. Additional membership could include (but should not be limited to) representatives from cities, villages, townships, county management, elected officials, unions, department employees, citizen groups and residents, local businesses, non-profits, foundations, faith-based organizations, and schools and colleges.<sup>68</sup> Representatives could be chosen by a majority vote. Once the members are in place, the Regional Implementation Team will be ready to consider potential intergovernmental cooperation initiatives.

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<sup>68</sup> Michigan Government Finance Officers Association, *Selling Stakeholders on Interlocal Cooperation*, available at [http://www.oakgov.com/services\\_index/government/cvt\\_services\\_docs/mgfoa\\_igc\\_stakeholder\\_selling%20white%20paper.pdf](http://www.oakgov.com/services_index/government/cvt_services_docs/mgfoa_igc_stakeholder_selling%20white%20paper.pdf) (September 8, 2005).

### **Hold sessions to inform and encourage collaboration.**

- Designate spokesperson(s) for the Regional Implementation Team.
- Designate people within Lucas County to commit to informing others.
- Need clear message and description of what Regional Implementation Team plans to do.
- Informational sessions to occur in the following order:
  - Initial eight members of Regional Implementation Team
  - Other Regional Implementation Team members
  - Stakeholders not on Regional Implementation Team
  - Public
- Implement Model Student Metro Government Project.
  - Interest Lucas County students in intergovernmental issues through their participation in a model metro government.

Holding informational sessions with the Regional Implementation Team members, stakeholders, and the public will be essential to establishing trust and to the success of any cooperative effort. The first step in the process is to foster an understanding of regionalism among the initial eight members of the team. These members can in turn pass on this understanding to the other selected members. During this process, the Regional Implementation Team should establish a clear description of what it plans to do and how to go about doing it. Once informational sessions have been held with all team members, stakeholders without a formal seat on the team should be brought into the loop. This could be done through a series of meetings. Designated team spokesperson(s) should be charged with conveying this message to the press and the public.

The development of a website will be crucial to keeping the public informed. The website could include information on intergovernmental cooperation in general as well as past successful cooperative endeavors. The website could also include information on how to submit an idea to the Regional Implementation Team as well as the application required for submission. The application could be completed and submitted electronically. Additionally, the website could contain an avenue through which citizens could submit informal suggestions and air their grievances.

Having some of the Regional Implementation Team and Project Team meetings open to the public would provide opportunities for comments by residents or members of stakeholder groups. Public education could also include editorials, regular press conferences, and occasional press releases, etc., articulating the benefits of a particular endeavor and mitigating concerns.<sup>69</sup> Additionally, the creation of a model metropolitan government for area high school students would allow the public to see examples of the benefits of a successful collaborative model.

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<sup>69</sup> *Id.* at 11.

### Model Student Metro Government Project

The Model Student Metro Government Project would be designed to interest young people in public service and to develop a model showcasing the potential viability of a metro government approach in Lucas County. This Project would call for the participation of one student in their junior year from each Lucas County high school, and involve them in an exciting educational opportunity. Each participant to this project would serve as a representative to the Model Student Metro Government Assembly for the unit of government in which their school is located (one from Maumee, two from Sylvania, twelve from Toledo, etc). This Assembly, meeting twice a month, would be faced with the same issues being dealt with by local governments today, and challenged to solve these issues in real-time within the framework of a Metropolitan government.

Participation by area elected officials would provide the representatives with a hands-on learning experience. Partnership between government and area youth organizations, such as Youth Leadership Toledo, is vital to the administration of this project.

**Provide inventory of services with potential for collaboration.**

- Inventory of services to be developed by short-term teams.
- Regional Implementation Team to work first on implementation of ideas developed by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee.
- Public then can submit ideas to Regional Implementation Team.

Initially, the Regional Implementation Team will work towards implementing the ideas proposed by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Committee. The Regional Implementation Team should implement less complicated, short-term endeavors first. Once there are successes and trust is established, larger more complex endeavors could be undertaken. Once the ideas proposed by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government have been exhausted, the public would then be able to submit ideas.

Submission of an idea for a cooperative effort could require completing a detailed application.<sup>70</sup> The application could address such issues as the goals and objectives for the proposed endeavor, challenges to the initiative, and tangible and intangible benefits of the endeavor, among other things. The completed application would then be reviewed by the Regional Implementation Team.

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<sup>70</sup> For an example application, see the Oakland County webpage, *available at* [http://www.oakgov.com/exec/assets/docs/ccirf\\_app.pdf](http://www.oakgov.com/exec/assets/docs/ccirf_app.pdf) (September 8, 2005).

### **Provide process of implementation.**

- Identify the collaborative effort and determine whether the initiative should be submitted to a Project Team for evaluation.
- Form an official Project Team and delineate what areas need to be studied in order to determine whether the initiative is feasible.
- Determine whether the ROI/payback model indicates that the collaborative initiative has a payback.
- Determine if other factors favor implementation of the endeavor.
- If desired, private consultants, whose services would be paid for through a revolving implementation fund, could be used to conduct feasibility studies or map out implementation process.
- Communities implement the collaborative endeavor.
- After implementation, Project Team continues reporting back to Regional Implementation Team.

After a collaborative effort is submitted, members of the Regional Implementation Team would then vote on whether the idea should be submitted to a Project Team for evaluation.<sup>71</sup> If a majority of the Regional Implementation Team votes in favor of the idea, a Project Team is then formed. Membership on a Project Team would be determined on a case-by-case basis. For example, if the Regional Implementation Team wished to study an idea regarding Information Technology (IT), members of the Project Team could include staff from the County's IT department, private persons with extensive IT background, union members representing IT department staff, members of the Data Processing Board, and local professors with expertise in IT.

Once in place, the Project Team members should adopt a set of informal guidelines to be followed to conduct meetings, research issues, and reach conclusions.<sup>72</sup> In order to track progress, the Project Team would report back to the Regional Implementation Team quarterly. The Project Team would delineate which areas relative to their proposed endeavor require study.

Once the Project Team has collected its data, benchmarked and verified all projections, and agreed on a transition plan, ROI/Payback models need to be developed. If the ROI/payback model indicates that the collaborative initiative has a payback and other factors are favorable, the Regional Implementation Team would then take the recommendation to their communities to proceed.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> See Appendix VI for examples of potential areas of study for Project Teams.

<sup>72</sup> Art Holdsworth, *Intergovernmental Cooperation in Michigan: A Policy Dialogue*, available at [www.landpolicy.msu.edu/modules.php?name=Documents&op=viewlive&sp\\_id=315](http://www.landpolicy.msu.edu/modules.php?name=Documents&op=viewlive&sp_id=315) (last accessed August 10, 2007).

<sup>73</sup> Michigan Government Finance Officers Association, *Justifying Interlocal Cooperation: Feasibility Studies, Financing and Cost Allocation*, available at [www.oakgov.com/services\\_index/government/cvt\\_services\\_docs/mgfoa\\_igc\\_roi\\_white\\_paper.pdf](http://www.oakgov.com/services_index/government/cvt_services_docs/mgfoa_igc_roi_white_paper.pdf) (September 8, 2005).

Next, buy-in from stakeholders must be secured – unions and employees, elected officials, citizen groups and residents, administrators, the media, local business groups and companies, etc.<sup>74</sup> Once buy-in is achieved, private consultants could be hired to map the implementation process. The consultants could be paid for through a revolving implementation fund. The communities involved in the collaborative effort could direct a portion of their actual cost savings/revenue enhancements back to the fund.<sup>75</sup> This revolving fund could be largely self-financed and thus not require much supplemental funding. The implementation plan could be presented to the appropriate communities/entities, who would then execute the endeavor. The Project Team would continue reporting the endeavor’s progress to the Regional Implementation Team until no longer necessary.

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<sup>74</sup> *Id.* at 10.

<sup>75</sup> Michigan Government Finance Officers Association, *supra* note 73, at 7.

### **Develop reporting mechanisms.**

- Regional Implementation Team reports its endeavors to community.
- Demonstration of successful initiatives will encourage buy-in as well as further collaboration.

Buy-in depends largely in part on public perception of intergovernmental cooperation. For this reason, reporting successful endeavors to the public will be crucial to the continued success of intergovernmental cooperation. Reporting could be done via the media and public meetings, as well as through the website. Similar initiatives have benefited greatly from media support. Media buy-in must be achieved early on, as its support will be crucial.

## Appendices

### **Appendix I: 21<sup>ST</sup> Century Government Committee Biographies**

#### **Committee Members:**

**Benjamin F. Marsh (Co-Chair)** - Mr. Marsh is a local attorney with years of experience representing local governments. He has worked with various governmental committees including the County Charter Commission, Area Cooperation Committee (the predecessor of TMACOG), the Northwest Ohio Mayors and Managers Association, Ohio Municipal League, Ohio Municipal Attorney's Association.

**Jim Holzemer (Co-Chair)** - Mr. Holzemer has worked in local government for over 40 years. He is a former County Commissioner, State Legislator and Toledo Municipal Clerk of Court.

**Bob Savage, Jr.** - Mr. Savage is the President of Savage Consulting, which handles strategic business consulting for enterprises ranging from the high-tech start-ups to established manufacturing companies.

**Fred Treuhaft** - Mr. Treuhaft is a Certified Public Accountant at Plante Moran Financial Advisors.

**George Tucker** - Mr. Tucker is the retired Regional Director and Executive Secretary of the American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Ohio Council 8, AFL-CIO. He is currently the chair of the United Labor Committee and Toledo AFL-CIO.

**Nancy Norman** - Ms. Norman is the Office Manager for Teamsters Local 20, Trustee for Teamsters Local 20, President of the Board of Directors for the Toledo Teamsters Federal Credit Union, and serves on the Lucas County Children Services Board.

**Geoff Rapp** - Mr. Rapp is a graduate of Harvard and Yale Law and currently an Assistant Professor of Law at The University of Toledo College of Law.

**Dr. Lynn Bachelor** - Dr. Bachelor is a Professor of Political Science and the Acting Department Chair of Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Toledo.

**Mark Luetke** - Mr. Luetke is president of Funk Luetke Skunda Marketing Inc. Prior to joining Funk Luetke Skunda, Mr. Luetke was the Manager of Public Relations for the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority. Mr. Luetke is also a Sylvania City Councilman.

**John Hayward** - Mr. Hayward is the President of the Mercy College of Northwest Ohio.

**Greg Braylock** - Mr. Braylock is a recent graduate of The University of Toledo's College of Education. He is currently a Youth Coordinator for United Way of Greater Toledo.

**Keith Wilkowski** - Mr. Wilkowski is an attorney at Vasser, Dills and Dawson. He is a former Lucas County Commissioner and former member of the Toledo Board of Education.

**Donna Owens** - Ms. Owens is a former Toledo City Councilwoman, Mayor of Toledo, and Director of Ohio Department of Commerce, and has also held various positions in local and state commissions and committees.

**John Escobar** – Mr. Escobar is a successful local businessman with a firm that handles mortgages and home financing.

**Lanaya McDonald** - Ms. McDonald is a Case Manager at the Lucas County Child Support Agency, a former Chief Steward and President for the AFSCME Local 544-04 at CSEA, and a Delegate for the AFL-CIO.

**Joe Napoli** - Mr. Napoli is the General Manager for the Toledo Mud Hens.

**Bill Brennan** - Mr. Brennan is the President of the Associated General Contractors.

**Linda Furney** - Ms. Furney is a former State Senator and retired educator.

**Brian Epstein**- Mr. Epstein is a Trust Executive at The Trust Company of Toledo, N.A., and the Chairman of EPIC Toledo.

**Research Staff:**

Eric Walter Komuniecki, Senior Law Fellow  
Laura Monroe, Law Fellow  
Miyuki Oshima, Law Fellow  
Travis Roberston, Law Fellow  
Todd M. Williams, Law Fellow

## **Appendix II: Lucas County, 2050**

**August 1, 2050**

### **LUCAS COUNTY RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD AS MODEL COUNTY Guest Columnist Keith Wilkowski**

(WASHINGTON) Associated Press - The National Association of Counties (“NACo”) today announced that Lucas County, Ohio has been selected to receive NACo’s highest award, the Model County Award for the year 2050. Lucas County, located in Northwest Ohio on the shores of Lake Erie, was selected from among over 200 counties nominated for the prestigious award. Lucas County’s won the award on the basis of creatively reshaping government to efficiently and effectively meet the needs of its citizens.

“Lucas County has reduced the overall cost of government to the citizens of the county and to the business community through aggressive service consolidation programs” said NACo President Andrea Adams. “Even more importantly, Lucas County’s annual citizen satisfaction survey” (one of the county’s innovative measurement tools), “reveals that the overwhelming majority of citizens perceive their local government as effective and responsive to their needs,” Adams noted.

#### **History of Lucas County’s Transformation**

Lucas County first started down the reform road during the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As citizens saw the benefits of consolidated services, tax-sharing programs and the widespread deployment of technology, the consolidation movement caught on. Soon, county, municipal and township officials were seeking office espousing the reform platform. Historians have noted that Lucas County has a distinctive history of leading the way in the area of government reform. The City of Toledo, the county seat for Lucas County, was led by reform Mayor Samuel “Golden Rule” Jones at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Building on their proud history in the area of government innovation and reform, Lucas County leaders succeeded because they trusted that their constituents would understand and embrace new ways of doing things.

“Today,” said Barry Brown, CEO of the 9 member County Consolidated Services Board (formerly referred to as the Board of County Commissioners), “every citizen in Lucas County can count on receiving a consistently high level of service without regard to archaic boundary lines that historically separated the various political subdivisions.”

Over a period of about 5 years, starting in 2007, Lucas County began to merge its internal operations at every opportunity, demonstrating that consolidated services did not equate to inferior services. The movement had really started a year earlier when the University of Toledo and the Medical University of Ohio merged to become the third largest university in Ohio. “Not only did that merger ultimately result in significant cost savings,” claimed Brown, “it proved that it was possible to better serve our constituencies

- students, staff, faculty and the community at-large – by employing a comprehensive services approach.”

In addition to the positive example of the UT/MUO merger, some negative factors also pushed Lucas County to change. “At the start of the century,” Brown explained, “Lucas County residents were experiencing increasing taxes, fees and charges to support infrastructure and provide services. At the same, taxpayers were seeing those services scaled back”. Paying more; getting less. Increasingly, residents and community leaders alike were of the view that something had to change.

As it turned out, the county was able to improve the quality of its services despite lower personnel levels because it aggressively employed technology at every turn. For example, nearly every government application, from applications for building permits to employment applications and even applications for emergency housing assistance initiated through community organizations like the YWCA are now submitted and tracked electronically. The intelligent use of technology dramatically increased the speed at which government was able to respond to the needs of its citizens. Just as importantly, technology allowed Lucas County to access and use the vast data the government accumulates so as to manage services and solve problems.

“Today it may seem hard to imagine,” Brown said, “but at the outset of the reform movement, despite the existence of powerful technology in every government office, the systems were largely incompatible with one another.” That Balkanized information technology system was dramatically revised and improved through the leadership the County Commissioners in empowering the County Data Processing Board to create a uniform system. “We found that in many instances, we didn’t have to create new vehicles to effect change, all we had to do was make effective use of the structures we already had.” Brown noted.

### **Using Fire Services to Unite the Community and Ignite the Movement**

During that initial period of consolidation, the county merged its 9-1-1, Emergency Management and Emergency Medical Services systems, all then under the control of the County Commissioners. They placed those departments under the leadership of the County Sheriff’s Department, which became known as the Lucas County Safety Services Department. That in turn sparked a move to consolidate fire departments throughout Lucas County, first by cooperative contracts, and then by way of formal mergers. Fire and safety services proved to be the proper vehicle for reform because if there was one value the entire community could embrace, it was that people and their property should be protected in emergencies no matter what part of the county they lived in.

“The community did have some heated debates about how to equalize the tax structure so that everyone paid their fair share for safety services,” local history Professor Connie Conrad acknowledged, “but since we already had a number of countywide safety programs, moving fire and first-responder EMS to that model was a step the community

was willing to take.” Almost as a demonstration of good faith to show that consolidated services could be delivered at a lower cost, the County Commissioners reduced the county’s general real estate tax millage by a small percentage. After that, Conrad said, “the movement to consolidate services took on a life of its own.”

After the safety services consolidation, streamlining and merging other services was almost easy, according to Lucas County officials. “Why did we have literally dozens of grass cutting and property maintenance departments operating in one county?” asked Dan Durham, Lucas County’s Director of Grounds Maintenance. “It just made no sense.” Today, Durham’s one department directs operations for just about every government-owned property in the county at the local, state and even federal levels. In fact, Grounds Maintenance Department employees even care for the grounds of several large, semi-public institutions under contracts with the Consolidated Services Board.

### **Tax Sharing and Community Planning To Discourage Sprawl**

Like many counties at the start of this century, development in Lucas County was sprawling ever outward even though its population level was stagnant. The population of the largest city, Toledo, was dwindling, and the suburbs were experiencing their own difficulties in building and maintaining infrastructure, paying for schools, and providing essential services. “The bottom line was that continuing to spread development outward amounted to substantial tax increase for the community as a whole,” said Elisa Edwards, the Director of the University of Toledo Urban Affairs Center. County leaders recognized that if the region was to make a comeback, people and businesses had to come back to the central urban community.

The County Commissioners lobbied for necessary changes to state laws allowing them to forge tax-sharing agreements between Toledo and the suburban communities. Those agreements gave the suburbs a real investment in Toledo’s redevelopment. “Sprawl was dividing us economically and racially,” said Edwards. “All the consolidations and mergers in the universe weren’t going to advance our community if we didn’t address sprawl.” Planning and economic development officials also put together an aggressive program of incentives to encourage development inside the urban core and got suburbs to buy-in with tax a tax-sharing program they regarded as fair.

“Maybe it was the community’s increasing recognition that sprawl was very much an environmental concern, or maybe people finally got fed up with seeing their hard-earned dollars used to create and maintain more and more public infrastructure,” observed Fred Franklin, the County’s Public Information Officer. Whatever the motivation, “There’s no doubt that Lucas County would not be receiving this award today if we hadn’t put the brakes on sprawl and made Toledo’s redevelopment an integral part of Lucas County’s plan for government reform.”

Today Toledo, just like Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a net exporter of tax dollars to suburban communities. “At first, people thought that all development would continue to be in the outlying areas and that the large city would simply take a share of suburban tax

dollars. But it has evolved to the point where Toledo now pays the suburbs because we have substantial growth inside the urban core,” according to Franklin.

### **The Essential Role of Public Employees**

Another essential element, all of the Lucas County representatives agree, was the buy-in by public employees and their labor representatives. “All this streamlining and consolidating might look great on paper,” said Gretchen Goodrich, the representative for many of the public employee unions in Lucas County, “unless it’s your job being streamlined and consolidated out of existence.” To ameliorate those concerns, Lucas County entered into agreements that provided for reductions only through attrition and voluntary buy-outs during the first three years following any consolidation. Workers played a central role in identifying service inefficiencies and were rewarded for their efforts. At least 50% of any cost savings resulting from the consolidation was dedicated to the employees, either in increased wages or enhanced fringe benefits.

“It took some trust-building, that’s for sure,” Goodrich acknowledged, “but when we saw that public employees were not facing big lay-offs and they were putting the savings from the consolidations into the pockets of the employees, it really has worked for our members.” Like the community at-large, public employees also saw that they were falling victim to yearly budget cut-backs and reductions. “We were either going to help craft workable solutions,” Goodrich said, “similar to those embraced in the automotive industry, or we were going to continue to see our members suffer ad hoc and increasing lay-offs. We choose to be the masters of our fate.”

### **The Tipping Point: City-County Merger**

Despite all of the mergers and consolidations of departments and services, and the cooperative service agreements between jurisdictions, it wasn’t until the year 2020 that Lucas County really exploded onto the national scene. In that year, the community came together to merge county government with its four major cities, Toledo, Sylvania, Maumee and Oregon, as well as the smaller municipalities operating as villages. “People realized that absent major structural changes in how we operated, we were ‘marching toward fiscal obsolescence,’” a phrase used to describe Louisville, Kentucky before it accomplished a similar merger between city and county government earlier in the century, according to Harold Hanley, the President of the Regional Growth Partnership. Taxes, assessments and charges were inching up, yet services were being scaled back. “We had to change if we hoped to have any real chance to compete in the global economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A costly 19<sup>th</sup> century governmental structure stood as a real impediment.”

Having experienced good results with the consolidation movement up to that point, the community was ready to take the big step and formally merge county and city operations. The electorate in each community had to vote whether to merge, and with a focused and intelligent discussion, every community approved merger on the first vote. “We succeeded in the merger effort in large part because the communities had the option to

maintain their independent existence as policy makers and to protect their unique rural and suburban characters,” Hanley said.

### **Lucas County Today**

Today, some thirty years after the city-county merger, Lucas County is recognized as the national leader in unified service delivery systems. For example, one agency provides all road maintenance services in Lucas County under the auspices of the County Engineer, a professional position appointed by the Consolidated Services Board from a list of qualified individuals. Similarly, the Board appoints qualified persons to fill the roles of Coroner, Recorder, and Clerk of Courts. The Treasurer and the Auditor, positions with financial responsibilities, remain independently elected posts.

The County Treasurer also has assumed the responsibility of administering all local income taxes in addition to property taxes. Similarly, the county’s building inspection department handles all inspection activities countywide. Police services, like fire and EMS, fall under the Safety Services Department, and utilities are administered under the independent regional Public Utility Authority with uniform rates for all citizens no matter where one resides in Lucas County.

The “big picture” benefit to Lucas County as a result of consolidation and merger, however, is not simply more efficient and cost effective government services. It turns out that Lucas County has finally become that “business-friendly” community everyone talks about, said Hanley, the RGP President. “It isn’t just marginally lower taxes that did it,” Hanley said, though that certainly helps sell Lucas County as a place to do business. The key factor, according to Hanley, is the region’s ability to immediately respond to development proposals with one, unified agency applying a cohesive set of development rules. “Knowing that you are not going to have to run from one agency to another, with different rules depending on what side of the road your project is on”, made a huge difference according to Hanley.

The proof, Hanley proudly noted, is in the economic development pudding:

Lucas County’s unemployment rate has been the lowest in the State of Ohio for four years running and the county leads the State in the creation of new businesses and jobs. “There is no doubt that Lucas County is indeed a model for the nation”, concluded NACo President Adams. “This Model County Award is richly deserved”.

And as for Lucas County officials, they’re not resting on their laurels. Next on their agenda: consolidated service agreements with Michigan communities to the north and Wood County communities to the south.

### **Appendix III: Lucas County Governmental Entities**

#### **Cities (4):**

Maumee  
Oregon  
Sylvania  
Toledo

#### **Villages (7):**

Berkey  
Harbor View  
Holland  
Ottawa Hills  
Swanton  
Waterville  
Whitehouse

#### **Townships (11):**

Harding  
Jerusalem  
Monclova  
Providence  
Richfield  
Spencer  
Springfield  
Swanton  
Sylvania  
Washington  
Waterville

#### **Public Agencies (9):**

TARTA  
Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority  
Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Lucas Soil & Water Conservation District  
Solid Waste Management District  
Toledo Area Sanitary District  
Mental Health & Recovery Services  
Children Services  
Board of Mental Retardation and  
Development Disability

#### **Courts (8):**

Lucas County Common Pleas  
Lucas County Domestic Relations Division  
Lucas County Juvenile Division  
Lucas County Probate Division  
Maumee Municipal  
Oregon Municipal  
Sylvania Municipal  
Toledo Municipal

#### **Park Systems (3):**

Metroparks of the Toledo Area  
Olander Park System  
Sylvania Area Joint Recreation District

#### **School Districts (11):**

Anthony Wayne Local  
Evergreen Local  
Lucas County Educational Service Center  
Maumee City  
Oregon City  
Ottawa Hills Local  
Springfield Local  
Swanton Local  
Sylvania Local  
Toledo City  
Washington Local

## Appendix IV: Regional Approaches to Governmental Cooperation/Consolidation

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### **Easiest to Achieve**

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1. *Informal Cooperation.* Involves collaborative and reciprocal actions between two or more local jurisdictions, but usually does not require fiscal action. Probably the most common regional approach.
2. *Interlocal Service Contracts.* Voluntary formal agreements between two or more local governments. Used more by local governments in metropolitan areas than other areas.
3. *Joint Powers Agreements.* Agreements between two or more local governments to provide for the joint planning, financing, and delivery of a service to the residents of the jurisdictions involved. All states authorize such agreements.
4. *Extraterritorial Powers.* Thirty-five states permit some cities to exercise regulatory authority to a distance beyond their respective boundary. It does not apply to incorporated areas beyond their boundaries.
5. *Regional Councils/Councils of Government (COGs).* These are the approximately 530 voluntary councils of elected officials drawn from the local governments primarily in metropolitan areas. Their creation was stimulated by federal requirements for grants, most of which have subsequently been reduced or eliminated.
6. *Federally Encouraged Single-purpose Regional Bodies.* While over 1,000 of these were created in the 1970 and 1980, only a handful remain today because of federal budget cuts. They dealt primarily with economic development, aging, job training, and transportation.
7. *State Planning and Development Districts (SPDDs).* Established in the late 1960s and 1970s by states to bring together a variety of federal special-purpose regional programs. Only 43 remain today; they perform mostly a clearinghouse function for federal programs. Most are underfunded.
8. *Private Contracting.* Contracting with the private sector for service delivery is quite common. Most states authorize local governments to do so; many do.

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**Middling**

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9. *Local Special Districts*. In 1992 the Census listed 29,036 single-purpose districts, two-thirds with boundaries that are not coterminous with other local jurisdictions.
10. *Transfer of Functions*. This is a more permanent transfer of functions to another local unit of the state. Common in metropolitan areas.
11. *Annexation*. This was the most common method of aligning regional needs in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century; still used today but most usually involve small areas. Voter approval in the annexed area is usually required.
12. *Regional Special Districts and Authorities*. These are usually area-wide governmental units that provide a single service such as water or sewer districts, hospitals, mass, transit, etc.
13. *Metropolitan Multipurpose Districts*. Area-wide districts that provide more than one of the above type of services.
14. *The Reformed Urban County*. About three-fourths of the counties located within metropolitan areas have modernized their administrative structures and many provide supplementary urban-type services to their unincorporated areas.

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**Hardest**

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15. *Consolidated City-County*. The major city and the county government consolidate and the reorganized unit serves as both a county and municipal government. Small suburban municipalities, special districts, and school districts may or may not be included in the consolidation. Most of these consolidations have occurred since World War II.
16. *Two-Tier Restructuring*. This is the federative approach where area-wide functions are separated from more local interests. The best example is Miami-Dade County.
17. *Three-Tier Reforms*. There are only two examples of this form of restructuring—Minneapolis-St. Paul and Portland, Oregon.

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Adapted from G. Ross Stephens and Nelson Wikstrom, 2000. *Metropolitan Government and Governance*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 123-124.

## Appendix V: County Government Structure

### Lucas County's current configuration

Lucas County is organized under the traditional statutory framework set forth in Title III of the Ohio Revised Code. The sections therein provide for county governments headed by eleven elected officials, including three County Commissioners, a Treasurer, Prosecutor, Clerk of Courts, Engineer, Coroner, Auditor, and Sheriff.<sup>76</sup> Each elected official is assigned specific statutory duties, which define official responsibilities and restrict the official's authority to act to powers expressly provided, or those that are necessary to the exercise of express powers.<sup>77</sup>

This mechanistic structure has been criticized as being out of date,<sup>78</sup> and corrupt;<sup>79</sup> however, despite several statutory alternatives, it is still in place in eighty-seven of Ohio's eighty-eight counties—including Lucas.<sup>80</sup> While an investigation into the factors contributing to this predominate resistance to change is beyond the scope of this discussion, a brief overview of the structural alternatives available to Lucas, and other Ohio counties follows.

### County Charter

The first option for change is the county charter, or home rule option, which allows the citizens of a County to “form a government of their own ... creation, providing for their own method of selection of officials, their own determination of what officials to have, and all the terms and conditions of their government.”<sup>81</sup> Essentially, this means that the public offices, statutorily required by Title III, can be altered or eliminated, as long as the charter otherwise provides for the duties and powers imposed on such positions.<sup>82</sup>

In Summit County, Ohio's only charter county, this has allowed the replacement of the county commissioners by an elected executive and eleven-member council. Additionally, Summit has combined the powers and duties of the recorder, treasurer and auditor under the supervision of its “Fiscal Officer.”<sup>83</sup> While no statistical information was found indicating the financial effect of these changes, it seems logical that the increased accountability provided by the revised hierarchy and reduction in county bureaucracies,

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<sup>76</sup> County Commissioner's Association of Ohio, *Ohio County Commissioners Handbook* § 1.02 available at <http://www.ccao.org/db/publications/hdbkchap001-2002.pdf> (updated November 2002).

<sup>77</sup> Ohio Jurisprudence 3d, *Counties* § 107 (2007).

<sup>78</sup> 33 WYTV, *Charter Government Part 2: Summit County*, available at <http://www.wyvtv.com/news/government/1551256.html> (“The commissioner form of government is a pretty rudimentary form of government—it's a fairly unsophisticated form.”).

<sup>79</sup> Steve Hoffman, political writer for the Akron Beacon journal, identified public dissatisfaction with the state of local politics and the scandalous conduct of county officials as the main considerations in Summit County's charter adoption. Interview with Steve Hoffman, political writer for the Akron Beacon Journal (June 26, 2007).

<sup>80</sup> Summit County, Ohio, at <http://www.co.summit.oh.us/> (last accessed August 10, 2007).

<sup>81</sup> Ohio Jurisprudence 3d, *Counties* § 33 (2007).

<sup>82</sup> *Id.*

<sup>83</sup> Summit County, Ohio *supra* note 80.

would reduce government waste. Accordingly, Lucas County may be wise to consider this alternative further, since a consolidation of functions could, at the very least, save the County duplicative costs.

Charter adoption is far from an instantaneous process, however, requiring that either a petition signed by ten percent of the electors and proposed charter be submitted to the board of commissioners,<sup>84</sup> or that the board resolve to submit to the voters the question of whether a charter commission should be created to draft a charter.<sup>85</sup> In the latter case, if the majority of voters answer in the affirmative, a fifteen-member commission is elected to draft a proposed charter. Finally, whether the charter has been citizen or commission drafted, it must garner majority support in a public election before it can be officially adopted.<sup>86</sup>

There have been two attempts to change the Lucas County charter. The last attempt began in November of 1958, a year previous to the 1959 Toledo Election, when the fifteen-member Lucas County Charter Commission was elected. The proposed Charter, as put together and approved by a majority of the Commission on August 24, 1959, would have provided for broader legislative power for an enlarged board of county commissioners, a personnel system, an appointive (rather than elected) County Engineer and Coroner, and welfare and institutions departments.<sup>87</sup> It would have provided “home-rule” powers to the County Commissioners, while not taking authority away from the cities, villages or townships. Six Democrats split from the Commission in July of 1959, citing differences regarding the shift to an appointed rather than elected County Engineer, and later voted against its approval in August. This group then went on to circulate paid advertisements in *The Toledo Blade*<sup>88</sup> calling for the proposed charter to be voted down. On November 3, 1959, the proposed charter was indeed voted down, by a margin of nearly two to one, along with the “Strong-Mayor Plan.”<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> County Commissioner’s Association of Ohio, *supra* note 76, at § 2.06. The petition and proposed charter may also be submitted to the board of elections, who then forward the petition and proposal to the board of commissioners. *Id.*

<sup>85</sup> *Id.* at § 2.07. If petitioned by eight percent of the county electors, the commissioners must adopt a resolution to submit the question. *Id.*

<sup>86</sup> *Id.* at § 2.05.

<sup>87</sup> *County Charter will add new legislative power*, *The Toledo Blade* (October 30, 1959).

<sup>88</sup> *A Minority Report/The Plain Truth About the County Charter*, *The Toledo Blade*, (November 1, 2, 1959).

<sup>89</sup> *County Charter Plan Defeated*, *The Toledo Blade*, (November 4, 1959).

### **Alternative form of government**

The second option is the alternative form of government, which allows the county commissioners to take on a more extensive role in county policy decisions, while assigning traditional Commissioner functions to an elected or appointed county executive.<sup>90</sup> Unlike the county charter option, the alternative form does not allow the elimination of any elected official, as such, it presents a much more restricted alternative.<sup>91</sup>

There are currently no alternative form governments in Ohio despite a relatively simple initiation process requiring only a petition from three percent of County Electors or a Board of Commissioners resolution to submit the issue to voters.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> See generally *supra* note 76, at §§ 2.27-2.29.

<sup>91</sup> *Id.* at § 2.19.

<sup>92</sup> *Id.* at § 2.20.

## **Appendix VI: Information Services**

### **Data Processing Board**

#### **Board Member**

Ms. Anita Lopez, Secretary of Board  
Judge Lewandowski  
Judge McDonald  
Ms. Jeanine Perry  
Mr. Pete Gerken  
Mr. Wade Kapszukiewicz  
Mr. Bernie Quilter  
Ms. Jill Kelly, Director  
Mr. Dan Pilrose, Deputy-Director

#### **Others to Notify**

Director  
Mr. John Creeger  
Mr. Paul Fretti  
Mr. John Zeitler/Diana Minor  
Mr. Mike Jacobs  
Mr. CJ Holley  
Ms. Cindy Waldmannstetter

#### **Office**

Auditor  
DRC  
Common Pleas  
Recorder  
Commissioner  
Treasurer  
Clerk of Courts  
Board of Elections  
Board of Elections

Information Svcs.  
Common Pleas-IJS  
DRC  
OMB  
Information Svcs.  
Information Svcs.  
Information Svcs.

Lucas County Information Services

The Lucas County Data Processing Center/Information Services provided services to the following entities:<sup>93</sup>

Adult Probation Division	Clerk of Courts	Engineer's Office	Risk Management
Appeals Court	Domestic Relations Court	Facilities Management	Sanitary Engineer's Office
Auditor's Office	Common Pleas Court	Family Council	Solid Waste Management
Auto Title	Coroner's Office	Jail - Sheriff	Sheriff's Office
Board of Commissioners	Correctional Treatment	Job and Family Services	Treasurer's Office
Board of Elections	Data Processing Center	Juvenile Court	Vehicle Maintenance
Board of Health	Dog Warden	Probate Court	Veteran's Services
Building Regulations	Economic Development	Recorder's Office	
Child Support Enforcement	Emergency 9-1-1	Recreation Center	
Children Services Board	Emergency Management	Records Center	

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<sup>93</sup> Lucas County Information Services, *Lucas County Information Services Annual Report – 2005*.

## LCIS On-Going Collaborative Efforts

Lucas County Information Services is engaged in the following collaborative efforts:<sup>94</sup>

- Standardization/centralization of PC purchases/configuration with Life Cycle Management strategy.
- Document Imaging (Enterprise Content Management) – cooperating with the City of Toledo, the City of Sylvania, Toledo Public Schools, Lucas County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD), Lucas County Metropolitan Housing Authority (LMHA), in addition to all county agencies.
- GIS Mapping Standardization – projection, scale, coordination systems to share with all political entities. Key components include the City of Toledo Water and Sewer Atlas, Lucas County Sanitary Engineer Water and Sewer Atlas and Toledo Police and Lucas County Sheriff Crime Mapping.
- GIS Data Sharing – components include Pictometry (oblique aerial photography for entire county), Orthophotography (aerial coverage from 1993), Terrestrial Structure Images with Lucas County E9-1-1, and various GIS layers.
- Street Address Standardization – 30 agencies and political subdivisions participating.
- Enterprise Technology Strategy – combined, coordinated and cross-agency IT planning and governance.
- Central Human Resource Management System – PeopleSoft.
- Comprehensive County Website – 25 departments and agencies.
- Centralized Records Management support with document imaging.
- Centralized backup and Recovery Functions.
- Server and Data Platform (IBM and EMC) Standardization.
- Development Platform (Computer Operating Systems – Microsoft).
- Database (Microsoft SQL Server) Platform Standardization.
- Standardization of Technology Delivery Process (Process Management).
- OH\*1 Network/Third Frontier Network – State initiative to centralize data access for counties (Lucas County proposed pilot site).

Recommended Areas of Interest:

- Consolidated Case Management System
- Consolidated Court Clerk Function – Juvenile, Probate, Common Pleas
- Business Continuity Planning
- Consolidating Data Centers
- Consolidating Networks

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<sup>94</sup> Adapted from *Lucas County, Ohio: Consolidation of Services and Regional Cooperation Report* (2005).

## **Appendix VII: Potential Areas of Study for Project Teams<sup>95</sup>**

(Note: “entity” as used in this appendix means any collaborative arrangement, i.e. cooperative purchasing, service contracts, etc.)

Feasibility Study and Cost Allocation/Financing – should an independent third-party be retained to conduct the feasibility study (calculate the ROI/payback) and present it to stakeholders; what would be each participant’s share of the costs, debt, etc; what funding options/sources are available, etc. The results of the study will determine cost sharing. Ultimately, each community must decide on the fairest approach to take. Whether the communities are of similar size, have similar land use, and have a similar demand for services also plays into the decision. Typically, one of the following three approaches is taken:

1. Agree to a simple, equal-share allocation to all parties.
2. Split the costs based on service usage.
3. Take a hybrid approach that captures both the fixed costs and the variable costs of service usage, such as a formula based on population, property values, and fire runs. This approach has the advantage of being the most economically fair but it is also the most complex to administer and monitor.

Infrastructure and Assets – whose assets will the new entity use, where will staff be located, are expanded or new facilities needed, are assets outdated or due for replacement, etc.

Governance – who makes up the governing body (e.g. from which communities, public vs. private sector, included constituents or not, how many), how are they selected, what are their terms, what skill sets should they possess, etc. The most productive boards are those with members who possess a vested interest in the collaborative initiative’s success – economically, legally and operationally – and can proactively contribute to that success by bringing to the table a broad set of skills.

Management – who will manage the new entity, how will they be selected, who will they report to, etc.

Organization – what will the organization and its reporting relationships look like, how will combined staffing levels compare with current levels, how will training and continuing education be accommodated, how will each staff member’s prior seniority be accounted for in the new organization, what will the salary/pay scale look like, how will preexisting pension and other benefit plans be accommodated, etc.

Support Services – how will the new entity secure necessary support services and pay for them, e.g. financial accounting, information technology services, facilities maintenance, human resources management and payroll, etc. This involves both identifying which

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<sup>95</sup> List adapted from Michigan Government Finance Officers Association, *Selling Stakeholders on Interlocal Cooperation*, *supra* note 68.

services are needed and who will provide them. Subcontracting with one of the participating communities is a logical choice, but third-party outsourcing should be considered as well. A “make or buy” decision process should be undertaken.

Operations – what service types need to be performed, what service quality levels need to be maintained, what geographic areas need to be served, what is the density and distribution of customers, are there new services that will be offered, what are the technology/communication needs of the broader entity, etc. Identify a credible source for assistance in benchmarking service levels and quality standards.

Transition Planning – how and when will the assets, staff, policies, organization, etc. actually be put into place; will additional communities be solicited to join the collaborative initiative, etc.

Communications – who will communicate with the media, who are the stakeholder groups that need to be kept informed, etc. Once all stakeholder groups are identified, keeping them informed consistently and coherently is crucial to gaining and keeping buy-in.

Once the Project Team completes its analysis, the Project Team would then collect the following information, which will facilitate conducting the feasibility study and selecting appropriate financing and cost allocation strategies:<sup>96</sup>

- Demographics and community profile
- Most recent Audited Financial Statements and/or CAFR for each community
- An organization chart of programs/departments affected by the proposed cooperative initiative, including all positions and their years of service, qualifications, certifications, etc.
- Revenues of programs/departments affected by the proposed cooperative initiative; Dedicated Millage/Rates, SEVs, and Taxable Values for each community; General Fund Contribution; Grants; Fees/Fines; etc.
- Expenditures of programs/departments affected by the proposed cooperative initiative
- A copy of the most recent labor contracts representing the staff of the programs/departments affected by the proposed cooperative initiative
- Rotation (e.g. 12 hour vs. 24 hour), shifts, and minimum staffing levels by facility.
- Major capital outlay projections and anticipated expenditure increases (e.g. equipment, buildings, new hiring, etc.) of programs/departments affected by the proposed cooperative initiative.
- Existing assets of programs/departments affected by the proposed cooperative initiative, including their purchase price, current estimated market value, and likely replacement date.

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<sup>96</sup> Michigan Government Finance Officers Association, *Justifying Interlocal Cooperation: Feasibility Studies, Financing and Cost Allocation*, *supra* note 73.

- Facilities owned and operated by the programs/departments affected by the proposed cooperative initiative, including address, size, cost of construction, book value and debt outstanding.
- Work load data (e.g. work orders, number of events, number of runs or incidents) and target customer service level/response time objectives (and actuals) by facility and in total for each program/department affected by the proposed cooperative initiative

Current revenues and expenditures must be collected and projections of revenues and expenditures must be calculated, based on valid assumptions. Often, a third-party, such as a CPA firm, is retained to perform this task.

## Appendix VIII: Regional Forms of Government

Inter-governmental cooperation can be initiated by legislation, by referendum, or by inter-local agreement.<sup>97</sup> Examples of legislative initiation include Indianapolis, Minneapolis and Portland.

### By Legislation

Indianapolis represents the least “consolidated” of the legislative models with a limited county government,<sup>98</sup> six independent municipal corporations<sup>99</sup> and a handful of municipalities that retain independence through their refusal to submit to the joint city-county council that was formed to combine city and county administration.<sup>100</sup> Under this system, the city-county council oversees parks and recreation, street maintenance, transportation, housing, solid-waste collection and disposal, planning, zoning, and sanitary sewers; with the burden for fire protection and school district oversight falling on individual municipalities.<sup>101</sup> The Indianapolis initiative increased federal funding through population growth, but also increased taxes to an unascertainable extent.<sup>102</sup>

Minneapolis and Portland share a number of similarities. Each is composed of a regional council responsible for transportation, waste management and growth planning services for constituent cities.<sup>103</sup> In the case of Minneapolis, the regional council approach enjoyed early success in curbing sewage problems, but over time, it has become bureaucratic and impotent on regional issues.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Chuck Powell, *A brief Analysis of City/County Government Consolidations* 5 (2002).

<sup>98</sup> The county still has a number of elected officials including: sheriff, assessor, auditor, clerk, coroner, prosecutor, recorder, surveyor and treasurer. Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report, *Cooperation Not Consolidation: The Answer for Milwaukee Governance* 8 (2002). For a more detailed breakdown of the governmental structure see Table 1.

<sup>99</sup> The six municipal corporations include: The Capital Improvements Board, City-County Building Authority, Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County, Indianapolis Airport Authority, Indianapolis Transportation Corporation, and the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library. *Id.*

<sup>100</sup> *Id.* at 8. It is important to note that even the municipalities incorporated into Indianapolis’ city-county structure retain their own elected officials and continue to provide fire, school and poverty services. *Id.*

<sup>101</sup> *Id.*

<sup>102</sup> *Id.*

<sup>103</sup> John F. Freie, *The Case for Government Consolidation* 7, 8 (2005).

<sup>104</sup> *Id.*

## **By Referendum**

Initiation by referendum has proven to be the most wide-spread method, allowing implementation in a number of southern areas. In Nashville, for example, the city and county governments have merged to form a county-wide government organized by districts. The general services district (GSD) provides police, fire, library, school, park and road maintenance services to all county residents; while the urban services district (USD) provides water, sewer, garbage and extra police protection for Nashville residents.<sup>105</sup> The impact of each functional consolidation on city-county efficiency is unclear at this point, but the combination of the sheriff's and police departments has resulted in economic gains.<sup>106</sup>

Jacksonville-Duval County, Florida has a county-wide form of government that provides police, fire, health and public works services, but the majority of area spending is directed by independent agencies.<sup>107</sup> Jacksonville's system has been criticized as inefficient.<sup>108</sup>

Lexington-Fayette County, Kentucky has the only "truly consolidated" form of county-wide government. In this system, police, fire, schools, street maintenance, parks and recreation are provided to taxpayers across the county.<sup>109</sup> Under this system, the city of Lexington and Fayette County were able to reduce the total number of government employees significantly.<sup>110</sup>

Louisville-Jefferson County, Kentucky is governed by a city-county council, which resulted from the consolidation of the Louisville and Jefferson County functions. This merger combined the public workforces of Louisville and Jefferson County, reducing the amount of administrative oversight necessary to supervise the workforce; but essentially maintaining the services residents received prior to the merger.<sup>111</sup> The reduction in duplicative managerial staff is expected to result in increased savings.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report, *supra* note 98, at 5-6.

<sup>106</sup> *Id.*

<sup>107</sup> The Electric Authority, Port Authority, Hospital Authority, Beaches Public Hospital Board, School Board, Area Planning Board and Civil Service Board are each independent and collectively control two-thirds of local spending. *Id.* at 7.

<sup>108</sup> Due to property tax adjustments following consolidation, it is difficult to determine the exact effect of the Jacksonville merger, but the fact that "per capita tax to per capita spending increased in Jacksonville but decreased concurrently in [a similarly situated, unconsolidated community, suggests] ... less efficiency. *Id.*

<sup>109</sup> *Id.* at 9.

<sup>110</sup> Through the merger, the city-county government decreased the number of its "employees from one employee for every 85 citizens to one employee per one 100 citizens." *Id.*

<sup>111</sup> *Id.* at 10.

<sup>112</sup> A financial review placed prospective savings at \$500,000 per year. *Id.*

Miami-Dade County, Florida functions under a two-tier system, with each incorporated municipality providing local services—such as fire and police protection—and Metro-Dade providing county-wide transportation, airport, sewer, water and court services.<sup>113</sup> Following the enactment of this program, taxes and government expenditures have increased.<sup>114</sup>

### **By Agreement**

Consolidation through inter-local agreements was accomplished in Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, North Carolina after the repeated failure of structural changes by referendum. Under this system, the city and county governments function side-by-side through service agreements that provide for differentiation between city and county services, minimizing overlap and allowing the achievement of economies of scale.<sup>115</sup>

As for the policy issues implicated by structural re-organization, city-county corroboration can dilute the effect of minority voting strength as suburban populations are incorporated into the regional vote.<sup>116</sup> Similarly, tax issues were experienced in a number of the jurisdictions explored, with Miami-Dade and Indianapolis undergoing verifiable increases after consolidation<sup>117</sup> and other jurisdictions undergoing contemporaneous adjustments that have disguised the true taxing effects on residents.<sup>118</sup>

Additionally, initiation by referendum has been largely unsuccessful in prompting structural change. Most jurisdictions that have relied on this method have experienced at least one defeat, and often changed circumstances were required to motivate the corresponding change in voter sentiment.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> *Id.* at 11.

<sup>114</sup> Susan S. Hein, *The Future of Government Consolidation in Milwaukee County*, 12 *Wisconsin Interest* 35, 38 (2003).

<sup>115</sup> Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report, *supra* note 98, at 12

<sup>116</sup> Hein, *supra* note 114.

<sup>117</sup> *Id.* at 38-39.

<sup>118</sup> For example, in Lexington, property tax rates have declined since city-county consolidation, but an additional county-wide payroll tax has been instituted. *Id.* at 38.

<sup>119</sup> *See generally* Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report, *supra* note 98.

City	Governmental Structure	Critiques
Indianapolis	<p>City-county council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local parks and recreation, street maintenance, public transportation, public housing, solid-waste collection and disposal, planning, zoning and sanitary sewers</li> </ul> <p>Marion County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sheriff, assessor, auditor, clerk, coroner, prosecutor, recorder, surveyor, and treasurer</li> </ul> <p>Municipal corporations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital Improvements Board</li> <li>• City-County Building Authority</li> <li>• Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County</li> <li>• Indianapolis Airport Authority</li> <li>• Indianapolis Transportation Corporation</li> <li>• Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library</li> </ul> <p>Independent municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four municipalities retain their own governments, but continue to enjoy services formerly provided by the county.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The city-county merger has increased federal funding through population growth, but has also resulted in taxing increases.<sup>120</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>120</sup> Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report, *supra* note 98.

<u>City</u>	<u>Government Structure</u>	<u>Critique</u>
Minneapolis	<p>Metropolitan Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops regional growth and economic goals</li> <li>• Studies air quality, parks and open spaces, water pollution, waste disposal, tax disparities, storm water drainage, consolidation of local government services and land-planning.</li> </ul> <p>Local governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain responsibility for local services such as police and fire protection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The regional council approach has become increasingly bureaucratic and ineffective.<sup>121</sup></li> </ul>
Portland	<p>Metro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for growth, zoo and transportation management, as well as land use and transportation planning, solid waste disposal and tourism</li> </ul> <p>Local governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• retain responsibility for local services such as police and fire protection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Metro is credited with limiting urban sprawl by establishing a metropolitan growth boundary that encourages more intense use of land”<sup>122</sup></li> </ul>
Nashville	<p>City-county council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General services district (GSD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Police and fire, library, airport, schools, streets and road maintenance, housing codes, zoning planning, courts and parks and recreation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The merged police and sheriff’s department enjoyed economic savings.<sup>123</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>121</sup> Freie, *supra* note 103.

<sup>122</sup> *Id* at 8.

<u>City</u>	<u>Government Structure</u>	<u>Critique</u>
Nashville (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban services district (USD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Water and sewers, garbage removal, street lighting, more extensive police and fire protection</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Jacksonville	<p>City-county council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police and fire protection, health and welfare, recreation, public works, housing and urban development.</li> </ul> <p>Municipal corporations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electric Authority</li> <li>• Port Authority</li> <li>• Hospital Authority</li> <li>• Beaches Public Hospital Board</li> <li>• School Board</li> <li>• Area Planning Board</li> <li>• Civil Service Board</li> </ul> <p>Independent municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four communities refused to consolidate. They remain responsible for supplying their own services; but have the option of contracting with the city-county government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The merger made Jacksonville-Duval County less efficient in service delivery.<sup>124</sup></li> </ul>
Lexington	Truly consolidated, county-wide government providing police, fire, schools, street maintenance, parks and recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through consolidation, the county-wide government was able to reduce its total number of employees.<sup>125</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>123</sup> Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report, *supra* note 98, at 5-6.

<sup>124</sup> *Id.* at 7.

<sup>125</sup> *Id.* at 9.

<u>City</u>	<u>Government Structure</u>	<u>Critique</u>
Louisville	<p>City-county council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Louisville and Jefferson County employees were merged under one hierarchy, so services provided by the city-county mirror those formerly provided each individually.</li> </ul> <p>Independent municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipalities outside of Louisville continue to receive services formerly provided by the county and remain responsible for provision of their own local services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Louisville’s consolidation was expected to save a significant amount of money through the reduction of administrative salaries.<sup>126</sup></li> </ul>
Miami	<p>Two-tiered government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metro-Dade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Provides transportation, airport, sewer, water and courts to the metropolitan area.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• All municipalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Municipalities remain responsible for providing local services like fire and police protection</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The two-tiered government approach has led to increased tax rates in Miami.<sup>127</sup></li> </ul>
Charlotte	<p>City and county governments functioning side-by-side under contracts, which has resulted in a de facto separation of functions:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separating functions has allowed the city of Charlotte to achieve increased efficiency through economies of scale.<sup>128</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>126</sup> *Id.* at 10.

<sup>127</sup> Hein, *supra* note 114.

<u>City</u>	<u>Government Structure</u>	
Charlotte (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Planning and zoning, police, solid waste disposal, storm water, public transit, water, sewer, animal control, community relations, historic landmarks/districts, cable TV regulation, communications.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• County Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Parks and recreation, storm water, building inspection, elections, purchasing, tax administration, computer services and licensing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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<sup>128</sup> Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report, *supra* note 98, at 12.

## **Appendix IX: Regional Case-studies**

### **Cuyahoga County, Ohio**

The Cuyahoga County Board of Commissioners have been exploring regional cooperation. The Commissioners have created Office of Government Services Coordination as a commitment to “sustaining our efforts to work with other political jurisdictions to deliver public services in as cost effective manner as possible.”<sup>129</sup> This office works with many of the organizations mentioned above.

The Commissioners in conjunction with the Department of Development created a Blue Ribbon Task Force(BRTF) to study regional economic development. The BRTF took two years researching the issue and issued its report and recommendations December of 2005. The BRTF’s report focused on twelve initiatives, of which five were fully developed and intended to be started in 2006.

#### CuyahogaNext

A group of civic leaders (partners) and an informal group of advisors drawn from a network of people engaged in economic development (advisors). They work together to implement regional economic development.

#### North Coast Clusters

This is a joint investment (County and private sector entities) program in emerging technology-based business opportunities.

#### Cuyahoga Innovation Zones

Zones are designated around college, university, and research campuses such as NASA and the Cleveland Clinic, in an attempt to create an atmosphere where business development investment, and new businesses will flourish.

#### Invest in Children

This is a recognition that education starts at an early age, and that investment in early education will pay dividends in future economic development.

#### New Start Partners

This program is designed to revitalize the both brownfields and greyfields. This is a new approach which seeks to capitalize on successful revitalization projects focused on greyfields, and to use the return on investment to expand the program to more greyfields and then to brownfields.

CuyahogaNext has been successfully meeting for the last three years. CuyahogaNext was set up as an informal committee, with the Partners drawn from local civic leaders. Membership includes local mayors, county commissioners, heads of the local university and other organizations. The BRTF had recommended that the Partners have a voting

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<sup>129</sup> Cuyahoga County website, available at <http://bocc.cuyahogacounty.us/GSC/default.htm> (last accessed August 10, 2007)

structure, but that idea was abandoned. CuyahogaNext makes decisions on an ongoing, consensus-building basis. This helps CuyahogaNext to meet its goal of building trust among the regions many governments and agencies. Setting up a voting structure was setting up somebody to lose. Membership in the Partners' portion of CuyahogaNext is limited. Membership in the second part of the committee, the Advisors, is open to anyone who is interested, and has fluctuated between 50 to 60 advisors. The Advisors represent local business, non-profit, and economic development interests.

CuyahogaNext has been the vehicle utilized to implement the other recommendations of the BRTF. Invest in Children was actually an operating program at the time of the BRTF report, but the Cuyahoga Commissioners have funded the program further. The Cuyahoga Innovation Zones project is starting now. The North Coast Clusters initiative was modified to match a program that was already in place. Cuyahoga County made an effort to analyze what programs were already succeeding in the area. Best practices, and successful leaders were identified, and attempts have been made to align with and provide support for these programs.

Regionalism has been a long-standing concept in Cuyahoga County. There is a long history of failed attempts to create a joint county – metropolitan governments. Despite these failures there is a deeply rooted spirit of regional cooperation in Northeast Ohio, and multiple governments and organizations have been formed to capitalize on the strengths of the region.

Some of the organizations active in the area include:

NOLLA - Northeast Ohio League for Leadership & Advocacy

NOLLA is “a joint, cooperative organization designed to advance the interests of Northeast Ohio. A voluntary organization, comprised of elected officials from county, municipal and township governments, NOLLA will provide a forum to prioritize local and county issues and then devise the strategic actions necessary to impact and influence elected officials at the state and federal levels. Any public sector agency in the counties of Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, Stark, Summit and Wayne” are eligible for membership.<sup>130</sup>

NOACA -Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Council

“NOACA is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina Counties in Northeast Ohio. This designation certifies NOACA to conduct transportation planning and transportation-related air quality planning in the Greater Cleveland area, as provided for by federal law (the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2005-a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)). NOACA also carries out water quality planning for the region’s navigable rivers. As the MPO, NOACA administers federal and state provisions that include developing a long-range Transportation Plan(s).”<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> *Id.* available at <http://boecc.cuyahogacounty.us/GSC/NOLLA.htm> (last accessed August 10, 2007)

<sup>131</sup> NOACA website, available at <http://www.noaca.org/> (last accessed August 10, 2007)

### Team NEO

Team NEO is “a joint venture of the largest metro chambers, representing 4 million people in 13 counties” Members include The Greater Cleveland Partnership, Greater Akron Chamber, Stark Development Board, Team Lorain County, Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber, and Medina County Economic Development Organization. “Team NEO markets Northeast Ohio to attract business investment in targeted industry clusters”<sup>132</sup>

### Fund Our Economic Future

Fund Our Economic Future is a Northeast Ohio philanthropic organization that strives “to support economic development initiatives, measure our region's economic performance, and engage and encourage the public and the region's leadership to take actions that support growing our economy. Launched in February 2004, more than 90 foundations, organizations and individuals have contributed to the Fund. The Fund and its members have deployed more than \$40 million to initiatives and programs aimed at growing our region's economy.”<sup>133</sup>

### NorTech

NorTech is a technology-based economic development organization, supported by the private sector, focused on continuous improvement of Northeast Ohio’s technology environment and economy. They work to ensure the economic growth and leadership of Northeast Ohio through innovation and entrepreneurship. Their activities are regional and stretch from Canton to Cleveland, Lorain to Youngstown and all of the communities in between. Just as importantly, our Urban Technology and Inclusion programs are designed to ensure that Northeast Ohio’s technology-based growth includes all of the region's constituencies, particularly underserved and under-represented populations.<sup>134</sup>

### NEOSO -Northeast Ohio Sourcing Office

“NEOSO serves as a trusted operations advisor to its members. NEOSO’s job is to systematically create leverage for local governments on an ongoing basis by identifying leverage opportunities and developing offerings to capitalize on those opportunities. Leverage manifests in three critical ways:

1. Aggregating demand for products and services leads to cost savings.
2. Implementing sound business practices as shared services across multiple communities avoids future costs.
3. Augmenting existing local government staff with specialized NEOSO expertise as needed through shared services increases operating capacity.”<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Team NEO website, available at <http://www.teamneo.org/> (last accessed August 10, 2007)

<sup>133</sup> Fund Our Economic Future website, available at <http://www.futurefundneo.org/page9066.cfm> (last accessed August 10, 2007)

<sup>134</sup> Nortech website, available at <http://www.nortech.org/> (last accessed August 10, 2007)

<sup>135</sup> NEOSO website, available at <http://www.neoso.org/Images/Executive%20Summary0206.pdf> (last accessed August 10, 2007)

### Cuyahoga County Mayors and City Managers Association

The Cuyahoga County Mayors and City Managers Association “acts as a clearinghouse for discussion, study, and action on issues of municipal governance affecting Greater Cleveland. Organized informally during the Depression, the political leaders exchanged ideas on ways to cut municipal expenses in order to live within their shrinking budgets. Later, discussions expanded to include all matters in which they shared a common interest.

With the rapid growth of Cleveland's suburbs after World War II, the association addressed metropolitan problems arising from the fragmentation of local governmental service units and the unequal revenue sources available to them. It initiated county-wide studies of municipal personnel policies and police and fire compensation to improve administrative practice and attempted to draft a charter enabling county government to deal with regional problems more effectively. The group was more successful in coordinating suburban efforts to be represented on the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District Board of Trustees. When that was achieved in 1972, it formed a Council of Governments (COG) to elect the board's suburban representatives. The association also was active in organizing the Regional Income Tax Agency to administer municipal income tax collection for 44 member municipalities. Affiliated with the Institute of Urban Studies at Cleveland State University, the Cuyahoga County Mayors and City Managers Association elects its own officers, a 5-member Board of Trustees, and an executive director to coordinate its activities.”<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, available at <http://ech.cwru.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=CCMACMA> (last accessed August 10, 2007)

## Nashville-Davidson County, Tennessee

In 1963, the city of Nashville and Davidson County merged to form a single, countywide government with an elected mayor and 40-member council. Consolidated Nashville-Davidson County was divided into two taxing districts: a general services district (GSD) and an urban services district (USD), with all residents of Davidson County receiving services from the GSD and those within the borders of the Nashville city limits receiving the additional, USD services.<sup>137</sup> Currently, GSD property tax rates are \$4.04 per \$100 assessed value, and USD rates are \$0.65 per \$100 assessed value.

Table 1

GSD	USD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Police &amp; fire</li><li>• Library</li><li>• Airport</li><li>• Schools</li><li>• Streets and road maintenance</li><li>• Housing codes</li><li>• Zoning</li><li>• Courts</li><li>• Parks and recreation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More extensive police and fire protection</li><li>• Water and sewers</li><li>• Garbage removal</li><li>• Street lighting</li></ul>

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<sup>137</sup> For a breakdown of the services provided by each district see Table 1.

## **The Minnesota Plan**

In 1971, a tax-sharing plan, the Twin Cities Fiscal Disparities Act, was pushed through the Minnesota legislature.<sup>138</sup> After surviving four years of legal challenges, the plan today obligates cities within the seven-county affected region to share 40 percent of the growth in their commercial and industrial property assessments through a group fund. The plan affects 186 cities, villages and townships, 48 school districts, and 60 other taxing authorities, and is the only plan of its kind in the country.<sup>139</sup> A redistribution formula estimates each community's population, and then measures how its per-capita commercial tax base compares with the regional per-capita average. Poorer communities then receive more back from the fund than they contribute, while wealthier communities contribute more than they receive.

Around 150 towns with the seven-county affected region receive more than they contribute in property valuations, being buoyed by the four dozen or so cities in the region with exceptionally high growth rates. Many policy experts from around the region agree that the program reduced the wealth gap between older and newer municipalities. Over the three decades the plan has been in place, the inequalities in per-capita tax base between the richest and poorest cities is estimated to have been reduced from a ratio of 50-1 to 12-1.<sup>140</sup>

Under the Minnesota Plan, bedroom communities lacking high levels of commercial development are big winners: these communities, saddled with expensive homes, low taxes and high per-capita wealth, receive a great benefit because they have little industry. The tax-sharing plan has also only been the first step in a series of regional initiatives; Minnesota's public school districts receive 80 percent of their funding, on average, from the state, reducing their reliance on property taxes, and reducing the gap between the richer and poorer districts.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Minn. Stat. § 473(F) (2007).

<sup>139</sup> Urban and Regional Development Handbook, University of Michigan, *available at* <http://www.umich.edu/~econdev/fiscaldisparityplan/index.html> (last accessed August 10, 2007)

<sup>140</sup> Myron Orfield, *Metropolitcs: A Regional Agenda for Community Stability*, Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution Press, 87 (1997).

<sup>141</sup> Bill Toland, *A blueprint for tax-sharing: In Minnesota, dividing the spoils helps cities and suburbs*, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (February 15, 2004).

## **Oakland County, Michigan**

Oakland County, Michigan is composed of 62 cities, villages and townships. It is the wealthiest county in the state. However, the state of Michigan is facing a dire economic situation. Recognizing this, Oakland County representatives decided that it was necessary for the County's cities, villages and townships to collaborate on various initiatives in order to save money and use resources more efficiently.

Currently, interlocal cooperation takes place in 21 Oakland County departments.<sup>142</sup> Departments with the most intergovernmental cooperation include Economic Development and Community Services, Information Technology, Public Services and Sheriff.<sup>143</sup> A central element of Oakland County's program is its Capital and Cooperative Initiatives Revolving Fund. The fund was established to "maintain the financial stability of Oakland County as budgetary pressures continue to impact local communities."<sup>144</sup> The money in the fund can be used to obtain consulting assistance for communities as they look at interlocal cooperation initiatives.<sup>145</sup> The communities must submit an application and are subject to a formal selection process.<sup>146</sup>

Oakland County has the advantage of state support. For example, the state of Michigan initiated the Centers for Regional Excellence Program. The program was created by Governor Jennifer Granholm "to encourage resource sharing and savings among local governments."<sup>147</sup> In 2006, seven community partnerships were selected to receive a "Center for Excellence" grant for up to \$25,000 over two years to fund their projects.<sup>148</sup> Additionally, the Michigan Government Finance Officers Association is very supportive of collaborative endeavors. MGFOA has two standing committees that have focused much of their time and effort on fostering intergovernmental cooperation.<sup>149</sup> MGFOA has conducted extensive research and put out a series of White Papers addressing intergovernmental cooperation. Finally, Michigan law contains provisions that favor regional collaboration. There are three general statutes authorizing intergovernmental cooperation in Michigan: Intergovernmental Contracts between Municipalities Act 35 of 1951, Urban Cooperation Act 7 of 1967, and the Intergovernmental Transfers of Functions and Responsibilities Act 8 of 1967.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Oakland County website, available at [www.oakgov.com](http://www.oakgov.com) (last accessed August 10, 2007).

<sup>143</sup> *Id.*

<sup>144</sup> Michigan Government Finance Officers Association, *Justifying Interlocal Cooperation: Feasibility Studies, Financing and Cost Allocation*, *supra* note 73, at 9.

<sup>145</sup> *Id.*

<sup>146</sup> *Id.*

<sup>147</sup> Heidi Watson, *Government Announces "Center for Excellence" to Streamline Government Resources and Save Taxpayers Money*, available at [www.michigan.gov](http://www.michigan.gov) (March 3, 2006).

<sup>148</sup> *Id.*

<sup>149</sup> Michigan Government Finance Officers Association, *Inter-Governmental Cooperation: A Position Paper from the Michigan Government Finance Officers Association*, *supra* note 72.

<sup>150</sup> Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C., *Michigan's Legal Tools for Cooperative Arrangements 2*, available at <http://www.semco.org/cgi-bin/products/publications/cfm> (April 2003).