

**Muskegon County  
Economic Vitality Incentive Program (EVIP)  
County Incentive Program (CIP)  
Collaboration/Cooperation/Consolidation of Services  
Plan  
2013/2014 Plan Year**



**Prepared by the Muskegon County Department of Finance  
& Management Services**

**Submitted on January 30, 2014**

## *Introduction*

Muskegon has had a long history of striving to do "more with less". The concept of collaboration within County departments and with other jurisdictions is nothing new for Muskegon County. However, consolidation and collaboration has become increasingly necessary over the last several years with decreasing revenue streams as well as the increasing cost of providing the services County residents have come to expect from local government. A major revenue stream reduction has been property tax revenues. In FY2011, Muskegon County saw a 2.69% decrease in taxable value; FY2012 saw an additional 2.3% decrease in taxable value and FY2013 an additional 1.74%. Increased cost in health care and pension and Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) further add to widening budget gaps that constantly need to be addressed. Together, these reduced revenues and increased expenditures have resulted in General Fund budget shortfalls of \$3 million, \$1.8 million, and \$1.0 million for fiscal years 2012 through 2014.

Perhaps the strongest, most all-encompassing collaborative effort Muskegon County has undergone in recent years is the formation of budget function teams. This began with the FY2011-12 budget planning process, in an effort to address the projected budget shortfall for fiscal year 2012 in the County General Fund. Each department was assigned to one of the four function teams (General Government, Public Safety, Human Services and Community Services) depending on the core function(s) of the department. This approach created an environment within departments of a similar function to share and exchange ideas and information. The framework establishes the necessary cooperation across department lines and encourages future collaboration and review. The benefit of this approach was that the function teams were able to "think outside the box" creatively and successfully address the fiscal year 2012 budget shortfall of \$3 million and the fiscal year 2013 budget shortfall of \$1.8 million. This approach was used again for the fiscal year 2014 budget process, but with an added emphasis on "vertical" communication, which allowed more input from support staff in providing input on ways the County could be more cost effective. The function groups were successful in finding ways to balance the projected budget shortfall of \$1.0 million, all while maintaining the level of service to Muskegon County citizens.

The following is a departmental summary of cooperative, collaborative and consolidation efforts submitted previously and a status update of each one.

## Previous Year's Proposed/Planned Cooperation, Collaboration, and Consolidation Efforts and Status Updates

### Administration

Muskegon County Administration is currently or will be involved in the following collaborative efforts.

Solid Waste Transfer Station - Muskegon County wrote a planning grant application for Rural Development funding to assist the White Lake Solid Waste Authority in determining the best relocation option of the existing solid waste transfer station as well as operation of such a facility and any cost savings and efficiencies that would be gained. If awarded, funds would be made available to the Authority to retain the services of a consultant. The Northern Transfer Station is managed and operated by the Authority, which is comprised of members from the Cities of Whitehall and Montague, and the Townships of Blue Lake, Whitehall, Montague, and White River. The average population of each of the six governmental units in the Authority is 2,000. Due to a recent sale of the property that the Authority leases, it needs to evaluate its future needs and location. The planning study is proposed to evaluate the feasibility and costs of alternatives. Additionally, environmental contamination has been detected on the leased area that may be the responsibility of the Authority and the issue needs to be addressed in the planning study. Currently, Rural Development is reviewing applications and the Authority will be notified in April 2013 if the planning study has been approved. Once the funding is approved, the study should be completed by September 1, 2013. The Authority will then determine where the transfer station should be located. In the event the transfer station becomes unavailable for use, the economically impacted citizens of northern Muskegon County would have to either incur additional transportation costs to and from the Muskegon County Solid Waste facility or opt to not dispose of waste.

**Status Update:** Initially, the funds were not released for planning grants due to sequestration. Once the funds were released, Rural Development did not award the planning grant for this purpose. The guidelines for the planning grant have changed for subsequent years and a planning grant for this purpose will not meet current requirements.

The members of the White Lake Solid Waste Authority are continuing to meet and have approached Walmart for assistance in the relocation of the transfer station. Walmart is planning to build a new superstore within a few miles of the existing transfer station and has been willing to discuss the relocation of the transfer station as part of its construction process. The County of Muskegon is no longer a participant in this process.

Great Lakes "Area of Concern" Wetland Restoration - In September 2012, Muskegon County was awarded the funds to acquire the Bosma property, which is a 64 acre parcel of prior converted wetland along a 4,571 foot stretch of Muskegon River, located entirely within the surface water boundary of

Muskegon Lake Area of Concern (AOC). It is part of the Lake Michigan watershed and the Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands System. The project site, referred to as the former Muskegon River Celery Flats/Bosma property, is specifically listed as a habitat restoration project in the Muskegon Lake AOC Stage II Remedial Action Plan (MDEQ, 2011) and in the Muskegon Lake AOC Fish and Wildlife Habitat Restoration and Beneficial Use Impairment Removal Plan (Michigan Lake Watershed Partnership (MLWP), 2008). The Bosma property is located in Muskegon Township. Muskegon Township was unable to apply for the funding. Muskegon County agreed to be the applicant to restore the Bosma property to wetlands as a way to preserve and improve the water quality of Muskegon Lake for the Citizens of Muskegon Township and Muskegon County. The restoration of the property is anticipated to begin March 2014.

The acquisition of the Bosma property has been a priority for the MLWP. The acquisition of the land will meet the following objectives: to restore the wetlands, improve the water quality of Muskegon Lake over the long term and provide recreation opportunities along the Muskegon River.

**Status Update:** The restoration of the property is now anticipated to begin in November 2014 and would be completed between 18-36 months after the start date. There are a couple of potential barriers that would hinder completing this project timely. One is the funding of the project. Currently, this has been approved by Congress for the FY2015 budget. While it is unlikely, it is possible for Congress to pull the grant funding due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e. sequestration, etc.) Another potential barrier to completion of the project within the timeframe is the discovery of any environmental issues that were not detected during the initial testing phase of the restoration project.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Grant - The City of North Muskegon was awarded an NOAA grant to purchase 17 acres of the Willbrandt property to restore to wetlands as a way to assist in the clean-up of Muskegon Lake. Future restoration of the wetlands would reconnect Bear Creek for sediment and nutrient filtering and uptake. The City of North Muskegon was unable to continue as grant recipient and has requested that Muskegon County become the sub-grantee, perform the grant and acquisition work for the City of North Muskegon, and ultimately take title of the property once acquired. The governmental units entered into an Inter-Local Agreement on May 7, 2012 to perform the work.

Currently, Muskegon County is in the process of obtaining appraisals for both the Bosma and Willbrandt property and following the NOAA requirements for the land acquisition. Once the NOAA approves the appraisals and the County's compliance with their purchase requirements, the County will purchase the properties and begin the restoration process which should occur no later than September 2013.

**Status Update:** The County of Muskegon purchased the land is and is working with the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission to acquire funding for the habitat restoration.

The County of Muskegon was awarded funds in June, 2013 to purchase an additional 18 acres of property (located in the City of North Muskegon and Laketon Township) to continue the restoration of the wetlands on Bear Creek. The initial survey work is underway with acquisition scheduled to occur in November, 2014 and would be completed between 18-36 months after the start date. . As with the Great Lakes "Area of Concern" wetland restoration project, there are a couple of potential barriers that would hinder completing this project timely. One is the funding of the project. Currently, this has been approved by Congress for the FY2015 budget. While it is unlikely, it is possible for Congress to pull the grant funding due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e. sequestration, etc.) Another potential barrier to completion of the project within the timeframe is the discovery of any environmental issues that were not detected during the initial testing phase of the restoration project.

#### **Airport / Convention & Visitors Bureau / Muskegon Area Transit System**

The Muskegon County Airport currently uses MATS buses as an advertising media. When the Airport has a new promotion, the advertising with MATS increases accordingly. The Airport and CVB are further exploring greater consolidation of MATS and Airport advertising and public relations efforts, and will be submitting a Request for Proposal for these services in the third quarter of FY2013 (April to June 2013) and anticipate having a new agent on board in the fourth quarter of FY2013 (July to September 2013). While no quantifiable savings are associated with these efforts at this time, the expected outcome would be improved services and efficiencies to MATS and Airport advertisers, as well as monetary gains through increased advertising revenue collections in both Airport and MATS operations.

**Status Update:** This plan is now in the implementation phase. The Muskegon County Airport (MKG) continues to advertise on Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS) buses. In the fourth quarter FY13, MATS hired a part-time Transit Marketing Specialist, responsible for development of MATS community outreach programs and collateral, advertising rate cards and information, and graphic design primarily for MATS, but with occasional work for the CVB and MKG.

Barriers experienced during implementation process-While an advertising sales representative or agency has not yet been engaged, MATS, MKG and the CVB are still exploring this option.

Advertising sales and graphic design/marketing efforts will be finalized by June 30, 2014.

#### **County Clerk / Register of Deeds**

It is anticipated that by March of 2013 the installation and implementation of the new Tyler Eagle software will be completed. This is a collaborative imaging

program upgrade that will benefit both the Register of Deeds and Clerk's Departments. When this is completed, it will allow the Register of Deeds to assist the Clerk with back scanning which will keep records secure in the County Clerk's Department. There will be additional savings in efficiencies going forward as the more documents are back scanned, the less time it takes to produce a certified copy for the customer as compared to physically copying hard copies. This is expected to begin in April 2013.

**Status Update:** The implementation of the new Tyler Eagle software for the Vital Records Division of the County Clerk's Office was completed in July 2013. The new software allows more flexibility in running reports and conducting searches and also allows us to more easily identify mistakes made in data entry. Implementation of the new Tyler Eagle software was completed for the Register of Deeds office in October 2013.

There were several issues in the County Clerk's office with implementation of the new software as the software is running in a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) environment. The software is accessible by users through a VDI environment. There were initially some connectivity issues for Tyler in the VDI environment and each day printers had to be reinstalled and lots of settings needed to be changed and tweaked so it would function properly all day every day. As of the week of December 9, 2013 – it seems that all issues have been resolved and we are able to operate fully.

Back scanning is an important task that has been put on hold while we worked out problems with the program. We will move forward with getting more back scanning done after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. Having a staff person from the Register of Deeds office perform scanning of our vital records so that the Vitals Office staff can perform the task of indexing the records will improve the process of back scanning because the person performing the work will be able to do so without interruptions.

#### **Drain Commissioner / Cities of Muskegon, Roosevelt Park, Muskegon Heights, Norton Shores**

The Drain Commissioner's Department is currently undergoing a collaborative effort with the Cities of Muskegon, Roosevelt Park, Muskegon Heights, and Norton Shores for enforcement of the Phase II Construction Ordinance. Muskegon County, along with the four major cities, is designated MS4 communities under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Phase II regulations. All MS4 communities are required to adopt post-construction ordinances for storm water review. Muskegon County currently does pre-construction erosion control review on a County-wide basis. Performing post construction review County-wide at the same time only makes sense. All cities meet MS4 permit requirements at no cost to them while Muskegon County provides required review at reduced cost through existing pre-construction plan reviews. Further benefits include consistency in regulatory controls, consistency in enforcement, and single regulatory reviews with pre-construction permitting. Currently, the jurisdictions involved are working on preparing the ordinance for Muskegon

County Board review and approval. It is anticipated this ordinance will be adopted by all participating municipalities in the third quarter of fiscal year 2018 (April 2018-June 2018).

**Status Update:** As of January 2014, the jurisdictions involved are moving toward a community by community adoption process that would delegate record-keeping, and in some cases review, at the county level. It is anticipated that this ordinance will be adopted by all participating municipalities by the third quarter of fiscal year 2015, between April and June 2015. At this point, there are no known barriers in reaching this objective.

### **Emergency Services / Kent County and City of Grand Rapids**

In fiscal year 2012, the County of Muskegon contracted with the Grand Rapids Fire Department to write/update and submit the SARA Title III community hazardous materials emergency response plans to the Michigan State Police Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division. It is anticipated that by March of 2013, the County of Muskegon will enter into a three year agreement with Praecipio Incorporated to provide this service. This vendor will also provide a similar service with Kent County and the City of Grand Rapids. Annual savings to Muskegon County were estimated to remain at \$3,500. This endeavor will also expand and strengthen the collaborative relationship already in place between the hazardous materials response teams from Muskegon County and the City of Grand Rapids by providing off-site emergency response plans that are concise, formatted the same, and distributed to both teams, as well as the first responder agencies in each County.

**Status Update:** In March of 2013, the Muskegon County Board of Commissioners approved entering into an agreement with Praecipio Incorporated write/update SARA Title III plans effective 03/15/13 through 06/30/15. Praecipio has fulfilled their obligation for 2013, but they have since dissolved as an organization. As of December 10, 2013 per County Board action #2013-476, the County is seeking bids/quotes for these services for 2014 to 2017. While the vendor will change going forward, this cooperative effort is still in effect with the municipalities involved and will provide uniformity in the HAZMAT response plans between Muskegon County, Kent County and the City of Grand Rapids.

### **Employment & Training / Goodwill Industries, Orchard View Schools & Whitehall Schools**

Muskegon/Oceana Michigan Works! with approval from the Workforce Development Agency to directly provide Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Trade, Employment Services and Jobs, Education and Training Program. These direct services, provided by the County of Muskegon, will utilize funding previously awarded to Goodwill Industries, Orchard View Schools & Whitehall Schools. These contractors currently employ 64 staff, which can be provided by the County with fifty-six (56) staff with this consolidation of services. The savings of benefit cost and duplication of services is estimated to save a maximum of approximately \$884,767.00, which will be put back into programming and provide needed services to the community. This

consolidation will also reduce the number of facility locations from three (3) to one (1) location. Services provided to employers, jobseekers and new staff positions will be transitioned from the contractor to the County over the next five (5) months (February – June 2013), with contractor budgets expiring June 30, 2013.

**Status Update:** Michigan Works! Muskegon-Oceana fully implemented the consolidation plans July 1, 2013. Service provider contracts expired June 30, 2013 and were not procured or renewed for further services. Michigan Works! Muskegon-Oceana (Muskegon County Department of Employment & Training) now provides services directly at single locations in Muskegon and Oceana County. The cost and productivity efficiencies experienced during the first quarter are detailed below:

**Cost Efficiencies realized for the first quarter of Direct Services**

<b>Expense Type</b>	<b>July - September</b>		<b>Savings</b>
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>(Add'l Cost)</b>
Staff Salaries and Benefits	\$ 1,029,861	\$ 724,462	\$ 305,399
Unemployment Costs	-	51,770	(51,770)
Facilities Costs	70,301	151,293	(80,992)
Indirect Costs	<u>141,737</u>	<u>30,802</u>	<u>110,935</u>
	<u>\$ 1,241,899</u>	<u>\$ 958,327</u>	<u>\$ 283,572</u>

**Productivity Efficiencies:**

Under direct services duplication of positions and efforts has been significantly reduced or eliminated. By implementing an open and standard hiring process the organization ensured that the highest qualified applicants were hired. Total Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) have been reduced from as high as 73 (under multiple contractors) to currently 55. Included in the reduction was the elimination of contractor director positions (2 FTEs), mid-level program managers (2 FTEs), fiscal staff (3.5 FTEs), and an HR position (1 FTE).

A Quality Assurance Department was created. This creation has increased the amount of time Career Developers are able to spend with jobseekers and has reduced the amount of time they spend on data entry and paperwork. The QA Department has also ensured that there is a system wide standard for program eligibility, program suitability and data validation. The process is reducing the potential for program findings by qualifying the data before enrollment and is tracking trends to identify error rates that will lead to technical staff training.

Fiscal improvements have been made through LEAN training which has reduced the amount of time jobseekers have to wait for support services. Multiple forms have been eliminated or combined in order to promote efficiency. Before direct services jobseekers could wait up to 3 weeks for supports that could potentially affect their job performance. Currently individual requests can be processed in less than 24 hours.

**Listing of Barriers or Unintended Consequences:**

One of the unintended consequences was the significant drop in Partnership, Accountability, Training & Hope (PATH) Work Participation Rate program performance during the month of May. Unfortunately, in anticipation of the transition to the direct service model, staff began to disengage with their employers and our workforce system. Staff began taking early layoffs or finding alternative employment, leaving inflated caseloads for those remaining. Staff morale greatly suffered at our service providers, which was also unintended.

There are on-going concerns regarding data validation elements and future reviews. Due to continual service provider consolidation from 2010 through July 1, 2013, many job seeker files have transferred multiple times as providers realigned and accepted inherited caseloads. Although systems were in place for data validation documentation collection, our MW has inherited files lacking the necessary information, which is now our responsibility. Through the direct service model and the addition of Quality Assurance Specialist positions, our MW is confident that these will be issues of the past, but not current, job seeker files. Our MW now has a Quality Assurance team that ensures all the necessary documentation is contained in the file and the files are organized in a consistent manner due to the direct oversight of this process.

The final unintended consequence noted at this time is the decline in job seeker traffic at our single Muskegon County location. Although some reduction was anticipated due to the change in service offerings (no current GED/Adult Ed or Good Temps co-location) at the Muskegon site, we have experienced decreases in job seeker traffic beyond the service offering change. Below is a comparison between the quarter July-September 2012 and 2013, based on G-Star recorded traffic.

<b>MUSKEGON SITE</b>	<b>TOTAL VISITS</b>	<b>UNIQUE VISITS</b>
7/1/12-9/30/12	30,560	9,186
7/1/13-9/30/13	15,542	6,253
% DECREASE	49%	32%

Further analysis of these numbers will be conducted to determine the factors impacting the change in traffic (i.e. reduction in PATH referrals, reduction in registering for work, etc.) prior to formalizing any conclusions that this has resulted simply due to a change in location.

**Equalization / various local municipalities**

In addition to the assessing and GIS basic level of service program the Equalization Department provides to various municipalities, there are still municipalities the County does not partner with for these services. It is a constant goal to continue to add current non-assessing units and other Counties as partners in assessing and GIS services. The Township of Ravenna and City of Montague of Muskegon County currently employ an independent contractor

for these services. It is anticipated that this contractor will retire within the first quarter of calendar year 2014. The aim for partnering with these two municipalities is by May of 2014. While the financial benefit is unknown at this point, this would allow better uniformity as assessing for these local units of government is done pursuant to standards. It would also be easier to equalize based on work quality, as well as more consistent data and improved accuracy.

**Status Update:** The current independent contractor is still the assessor for the Township of Ravenna and the City of Montague. It is still anticipated that this contractor will retire within the first quarter of calendar year 2014 and the aim for working towards a partnership with these two municipalities for assessing services is still by May of 2014. The barriers to implementing this consolidation effort are 1) the independent contractor could delay retirement, or 2) the municipalities could choose to contract with another independent contractor.

### **Equalization / Ottawa, Kent, Allegan and Van Buren Counties**

The Equalization Department is looking at a multi-county partnership for aerial photography for both assessing and equalization as well as GIS with spring of 2014 (March – May 2014) as the aim of the flyover. Potential Counties include Ottawa, Kent, Allegan and Van Buren. This will allow for consistent data as well as easy data sharing and analysis across numerous Counties. The exact financial benefit is unknown at this point, but due to economies of scale, the larger the area of aerial photography collection, the greater the cost savings will be.

**Status Update:** The aerial photography fly-over is still scheduled for spring of 2014. The County received a contract from Pictometry in November 2013 for review in anticipation of the spring 2014 fly-over. The only potential barriers are natural resources based acquisition troubles (i.e. weather that hinders the acquisition of the photography), or partnering counties that end up not participating. At this point, it is certain that Kent and Ottawa Counties are participating in the project.

### **Family/Circuit Court / District Court / Probate Court**

The Electronic Content Management (ECM) project is a collaborative project between the Circuit, District and Probate Courts, as well as the Sheriff's Department, County Clerk (Circuit Court Records) and Prosecutor's Department currently in process that will ultimately allow all parts of the criminal justice system access to records that are electronically imaged and archived. It will incorporate work flow process that will reduce the amount of time spent managing the flow of paper files that consume inordinate amounts of time. The justice system rides on an information highway that is currently contained in paper files that must move from judge to judge and office to office. The goal of this project is to allow all parts of the system to capture the information electronically, archive it appropriately and forward it to those parts of the justice system that require it to perform their mandated functions. Benefits of this project include universal access to records within the justice system in Muskegon County and electronic transfer of documents between departments saving time

and paper supplies, although projected staff and supply cost savings are unknown at this point. Currently, the bids for this project are being reviewed and it is anticipated that full implementation will occur by the summer of 2014.

**Status Update:** A vendor has been selected and staff and began negotiating the contract in September 2013. Staff has also contracted with a firm that focuses on process analyst and improvement to assist the Family Division in developing workflow and case management processes.

One barrier to implementing this project is securing financial resources for the project. Muskegon County has hired a consulting firm that is working with the State IV-D office to determine how much of this project can be funded using State IV-D funding. Another barrier is completing the process innovation/workflow programming. Muskegon County is working with a consulting firm to work towards this goal.

This collaborative effort is the first phase of an ongoing project and involves Family Court, Circuit Court and Probate Court. It is anticipated that full implementation of this phase will occur by the end of summer 2014.

#### **Public Health / Hackley Community Care Center**

In fiscal year 2013, the Public Health Department expects to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Hackley Community Care Center to complete electronic Medicaid billing. On July 25, 2012, staff made initial contact with Hackley Community Care Center who has expressed interest and willingness to process the County Medicaid billing claims for a fee per claim or small flat-rate contract. Public Health staff is expected to gather and review historical billing data; project expected volume; and analyze cost-vs.-benefit before the collaborative discussions can continue. Based on volume and reimbursement rate of the "paper claims" that the County has processed in the past, Public Health estimates a cost avoidance range of \$5,000 - \$8,000 annually. The target date for implementation is October 2013.

**Status Update:** On December 9, 2013, the Public Health Finance Supervisor contacted the Billing Supervisor at Hackley Community Care Center to continue discussions about processing Medicaid billing claims for a fee per claim or small flat-rate contract. Hackley Community Care Center informed Public Health that 1) they are anticipating an increase in the volume of internal claims and related documents due to Medicaid Expansion, 2) they are not set-up to process claims outside of their specific tax I.D. and N.P.I. (National Provider Identifier) number, and 3) the resources required to process third party claims will cost more than the potential revenue generated. **Therefore, this effort is not feasible. However, please see the proposed consolidation/collaborative effort between the Muskegon County Public Health Department and the Michigan Department of Community Health.**

## **Additional Consolidation/Collaborative Efforts Not Previously Reported**

As part of the annual budget process for the County of Muskegon, which begins in March for the upcoming fiscal year beginning 10/01, County departments are asked to provide planned or proposed consolidation efforts they are pursuing. Often, these efforts are included in the County's Adopted budget. As a result of the timing of the County's annual fiscal year and the submittal of the category #2 consolidation of services report to the State of Michigan, several new consolidation efforts have been implemented that were not included in the State report sent in January 2013. These efforts are worth including in this report as they further show Muskegon County's continuous efforts at working at consolidating services with other jurisdictions or within the County of Muskegon. Below is a listing of those consolidation efforts.

### **Airport / Sheriff's Department**

The Muskegon County Airport is required by law to provide law enforcement surveillance, response, and random patrols of the Muskegon County Airport property. The cost of fulfilling this requirement has historically been covered by grant dollars provided by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Prior to fiscal year 2014, the law enforcement services were provided by the City of Norton Shores Police Department. Beginning in fiscal year 2014, these services will be provided by the Muskegon County Sheriff's Department using existing resources which will result in approximately \$20,000 in County general fund expenditures being covered by grant dollars.

### **Circuit Court Records / Family Court**

The Circuit Court Records division of the County Clerk's office worked with the Family/Circuit Court Administrator to incorporate a paragraph into the Order of Filiation regarding the filiation fee collected by the Circuit Court Records office. Family Court has included a paragraph in the Judgment of Paternity (order of filiation) to notify the defendant/father that, upon the payment of the appropriate fee, the State of Michigan will issue an amended birth record, containing the name of the father. It is anticipated that this will help enforce collection of the County fee so that the father's name can be added to the child's birth certificate and the corrected record placed on file with the County Clerk of the county in which the birth occurred. The benefit is that this will save the State of Michigan time and effort in collection of these fees when a defendant/father wants to add their name to the record several years after the birth of the child. By adding the name at the time of judgment, all parties benefit.

### **Muskegon County Community Mental Health (CMH) / Ottawa County CMH / West Michigan CMH / Allegan County CMH / Network 180 / Lakeshore Coordinating Council**

The Muskegon County CMH department regionalized with Ottawa County CMH, West Michigan CMH, Allegan County CMH, Network 180 and the Lakeshore Coordinating Council. The Muskegon County Mental Health Board has approved the Lakeshore Regional Entity operations and conflict agreements at

their full board meeting on May 24, 2013. This will result in better service to CMH clients and will eventually see a cost reduction as certain services and reporting requirements are consolidated. Other benefits include coordinated efforts and benefits in administrative costs and duties (i.e. State reporting for Medicaid funded services for the Region will be handled by one organization). This will also provide a benefit to the partners and customers involved in that the best available services will be accessible on a regional scale versus on a county-by-county scale, and by utilizing combined resources and the strengths of each County. This regionalization was effective on January 2, 2014.

#### **Finance & Management Services / Muskegon County Road Commission**

On September 3, 2013, Muskegon County entered into an agreement with the Muskegon County Road Commission (MCRC) in which Muskegon County will provide the MCRC space on the County's telecommunication servers, will provide maintenance and support for the MCRC's telecommunications, and provide the MCRC with connectivity service through Muskegon County's information technology infrastructure. This agreement will provide the County an annual revenue stream of \$2,366.

#### **Finance & Management Services / Moorland Township**

On February 7, 2013, Muskegon County entered into an agreement with Moorland Township in which Muskegon County will provide the hard drive space on the County's telecommunication servers, will provide maintenance and support for Moorland Township's server, and include licensing for Microsoft Office, BS&A Equalization, Windows, Website and Email hosting for all users on Moorland Township's system. This agreement will provide the County an annual revenue stream of \$2,768.

#### **Finance & Management Services / St. Joseph County**

On February 12, 2013, Muskegon County entered into an agreement with St. Joseph County for Muskegon County to provide professional services pertaining to Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) programming, design and implementation, as well as maintenance and support for St. Joseph County's Utility Project Management solution and consultation services to support St. Joseph County's strategic and capital plans. This agreement will result in an estimated annual revenue stream of \$3,000.

#### **Prosecutor / Muskegon County Central Dispatch / Local Law Enforcement Agencies**

Beginning in February 2013, the Prosecutor's Office began a collaborative effort in partnership with Muskegon County Central Dispatch to develop a secure server which allows local law enforcement agencies to submit warrant requests electronically. This has allowed law enforcement personnel to not have to deliver warrant requests to the Prosecutor's Office and then wait for the requests to be reviewed, paperwork completed, and warrants generated. This process allows a better utilization of law enforcement personnel resources. This system has already seen approximately 57% of all warrants from participating law enforcement agencies being turned in electronically.

To date, the City of Norton Shores Police Department, the City of Whitehall Police Department, the City of Montague Police Department, the City of Muskegon Police Department, the City of Muskegon Heights Police Department, and the City of Fruitport Police Department have all signed on to use this system.

### **Prosecutor / District Court**

In early fiscal year 2013, the Prosecutor implemented a revised plea bargaining policy at the District Court level. With limited exceptions, the defendant must either accept the plea agreement proposed at pretrial prior to the Prosecutor's Office requiring subpoenaed witnesses appearing or the plea agreement will be rescinded. This procedure will allow for better utilization of Prosecutorial resources on the morning of trial and reduce congestion within the Court's docket. This will prevent civilian witnesses from appearing unnecessarily. This has already resulted in being able to call off 25% more witnesses.

### **Proposed/Planned Cooperative, Collaborative, and Consolidation Efforts**

#### **County Clerk / Michigan Department of Community Health**

Muskegon County Clerk's vital records office is on a waiting list to be added to the State Electronic Birth Records system (Central Issuance) through Lansing's Department of Community Health Vital Records office. This will allow County staff to print Muskegon County birth records that, for one reason or another, are not filed locally. This will save customers the time and expense of requesting the record from Lansing's Vital Records Office, and they would be able to receive immediate delivery of the requested record. This would provide a new revenue stream for Muskegon County in that the County could charge a convenience fee for processing said records. The Michigan Department of Community Health (State of Michigan) would also receive a specified amount for each record issued from the system. The revenue stream is unknown at this point as any fee increases are approved by the County Board of Commissioners. This will be reviewed as the implementation date approaches.

As of January 2014, the State Registrar is working towards finalizing the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Community Health and the local registrar offices. They are also currently waiting for programming to be completed for the billing and accounting portion. Once the Intergovernmental agreement is approved, the plan is to move forward to get local offices signed up for Central Issuance to at the very least have the ability to index through the State's system and to print certified amendments when changes are made to records or for record replacement. Muskegon County is already on the list to be added to Central Issuance. It is anticipated that this will be implemented by July 2014 so it may still impact the FY2014 budget.

#### **County Clerk / State of Michigan**

The County Clerk is working with the State of Michigan in making old records and their indexes available in Lansing for availability and research. The Clerk's office sent all records preceding 1941 to Lansing in May 2012 and will begin

scanning the indexes for these records so that they can be forwarded to Lansing as well. As of January 2014, the Clerk's office is researching contractors that could scan the remaining records and what the cost estimate would be. The benefit to this collaborative effort is that all circuit court records and indexes from 1941 and prior will be available in Lansing for the general public. Circuit Court Records will send one complete original index and a copy of the second index. All records in the first index are for years prior to 1941. Records in the second index are for records before 1941, 1941, and after 1941. The timeline for completion of this is within the last quarter of the 2014 calendar year.

**Public Health / Michigan Department of Community Health**

Prior to discussions with Hackley Community Care Center regarding Medicaid billing, Public Health staff contacted other County departments (Community Mental Health and Brookhaven) and found that our Medicaid claims/services are too different to combine or collaborate processing.

Subsequently, Public Health considered reaching out to health departments in other counties, but realized that subcontracting would not be conducive to their organization because, like Hackley Community Care Center, they are not designated and/or certified to process third party claims.

The number of claims, and specifically, Medicaid revenue generated from Public Health activities and services have drastically declined over the last 5 years (*see chart below*).

<b>PUBLIC HEALTH MUSKEGON COUNTY</b>									
<b>Comparison of Medicaid Services and Revenue</b>									
	<b>Immunizations</b>		<b>STD's</b>		<b>Lead</b>		<b>Total</b>		
	<b>No. of</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>No. of</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>No. of</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b># of Claims</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
<b>FY08</b>	1,408	\$ 38,086.38	365	\$ 16,323.61	222	\$ 7,136.31	<b>1,995</b>	<b>\$ 61,546.30</b>	<b>FY08</b>
<b>FY09</b>	1,455	\$ 36,347.65	338	\$ 10,638.22	901	\$ 11,741.16	<b>2,694</b>	<b>\$ 58,727.03</b>	<b>FY09</b>
<b>FY10</b>	1,461	\$ 32,906.62	301	\$ 9,986.27	543	\$ 11,905.11	<b>2,305</b>	<b>\$ 54,798.00</b>	<b>FY10</b>
<b>FY11</b>	1,353	\$ 21,902.00	192	\$ 4,683.22	242	\$ 2,192.33	<b>1,787</b>	<b>\$ 28,777.55</b>	<b>FY11</b>
<b>FY12</b>	924	\$ 5,845.39	153	\$ 1,341.36	100	\$ 428.22	<b>1,177</b>	<b>\$ 7,614.97</b>	<b>FY12</b>

There are still numerous advantages for Public Health to pursue electronic Medicaid claims filing. Electronic Medicaid claims filing is more cost effective, more accurate, payment is received more quickly and administrative functions can be automated. Public Health can achieve cost savings by moving away from paper claims processing to electronic and/or online processing. The cost of labor (staff time) to manually review, input, copy, file, mail and follow up on the paper claims is estimated to be \$6,500. Public Health officials expect to achieve a cost reduction of approximately \$3,500 in labor and incidental costs such as paper, copes and postage.

The Michigan Department of Community Health has streamlined and improved access to the Community Health Automated Medicaid Processing System (CHAMPS) which enables providers to send claims electronically by file transfer

or through the Data Exchange Gateway (DEG). **Public Health will pursue submitting claims directly or through a state-approved authorized billing agent. We will complete an assessment of our options by January 15, 2014 and target implementation by April 1, 2014.**

### **Public Health / Muskegon Area Transit System**

The Public Health Department is working collaboratively with the Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS) to represent their interest and assist in the implementation and installation of bicycle racks at destination points along MATS bus routes. The Public Health supervisor chairs and facilitates a community infrastructure subcommittee charged with increasing exercise by supporting the coordination of the community planning and design process. MATS leadership has agreed to cover the salary & fringe benefit cost of the Public Health supervisor associated with representing and assisting MATS in determining locations for bike racks and recommending/developing bike route signage to be displayed on the MATS bus routes.

The timeline for full implementation (project completion) is by the last quarter of fiscal year 2014 (July – August 2014). To date (01/17/14), MATS has covered approximately \$620 of the Public Health Supervisor's cost. It is anticipated that the total cost reduction of the consolidation effort to be approximately \$3,000. Other benefits include enhanced resources (bicycle racks) and convenience for Muskegon County citizens in their transportation needs.

### **Public Health / Community Foundation for Muskegon County**

Public Health is involved in a joint multi-agency initiative that is administered by the Community Foundation for Muskegon County and supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Public Health received an award of \$23,500 on February 25, 2013 for a three year period beginning fiscal year 2013 and ending October 1, 2015 to utilize a mobile food cart to provide demonstrations and recipes to residents at the Muskegon Farmers Market and food trucks, as well as other community events. Projects were required to be collaborative in nature, and grantees will attend ongoing network meetings to coordinate efforts for improved results. Other grantees include: Coalition for Community Development (Urban Gardens at MLK Jr. Elementary School and Edgewood Middle School), Community Encompass (McLaughlin Grows Urban Farm), Fruitport Lions (Love Community Garden), Muskegon Public Schools (Growing Goods Program), and Pioneer Resources (Food for Thought). Grants were awarded based on the goals of increasing access to healthy local food, improving healthy behaviors, and improving health outcomes for minority children living in the cities of Muskegon and Muskegon Heights. In addition to the benefits listed, other benefits include leveraging local dollars and cost avoidance to address this issue alone as well as generating approximately \$240,000 in new community revenue over three years that focus on healthy, nutritious eating.

Accomplishments in year 1 include increased community awareness about eating healthy and participation in Public Health's Mobile Food Cart project.

Public Health expects to continue achieving the initial goals in year 2, with an added focus of capturing feedback and statistical data needed to approach future sponsors. Year 3 will be more of the same, but in addition, Public Health will target local businesses for sponsorships to cover and continue the Mobile Food Cart activities beyond the grant period.

### **Conclusion**

As indicated by these past and proposed consolidation efforts, Muskegon County has shown that it has been and continues to work towards streamlining efficiencies and doing what it takes to provide the best service possible to its citizens. While not all of these efforts have a tangible cost benefit associated with them, they do all share a common theme of working towards maintaining and improving the current level of service the citizens expect. Muskegon County continues to strive towards doing more with less and being fiscally responsible to its taxpayers.