SCHUYLER COUNTY

SHARED SERVICES PLAN

AUGUST 2017

Updated October 2019

COUNTY-WIDE SHARED SERVICES INITIATIVE

INTRODUCTION

Local governments within Schuyler County have a well-documented reputation for collaboration and cooperation. The Schuyler County Council of Governments, formed in 2005 and still active and engaged, is a testament to the local commitment to improving efficiency while lowering the high cost of government in NYS. Seven years ago, municipal and county leaders took the dramatic step of consolidating the property tax assessment function which on its own has generated savings in excess of over a million dollars. Additionally, public safety communications, public transit, records management, shared facilities, inter / intra county partnerships and consolidations, water and wastewater treatment, and employee health benefits have been brought together under common organizational structures.

As in past State initiatives, the 2017 Shared Services Law doesn't account for the past performance of counties like Schuyler. The expectations placed on Schuyler County are the same as in communities considering innovations such as centralized assessment or numerous other successfully implemented initiatives as outlined further in this report. In meetings spanning four months, the Schuyler County Shared Services Panel considered a variety of shared services possibilities that would meet the State's test of producing new property tax savings, and the State's timeline that requires a report with certified savings by September 15th.

This report summarizes the Panel's actions and subsequent findings and recommendations, and is the County Administrator's Shared Services Plan for review by the County Legislature.

Schuyler County Shared Services Building. *This complex includes the Schuyler County Highway Department, Village of Watkins Glen Public Works, Shared Fuel Facility, and Central Garage.*

PRIMARY GOAL:

The primary goal of this initiative is to develop a shared services plan which creates actual and demonstrable property tax savings. County's that are able to achieve these tax savings may be eligible for a one-time match of the net savings resulting from new actions implemented pursuant to the Plan.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this initiative is to:

- Develop a County-wide Shared Service Property Tax Savings Plan to identify, propose and implement new actions to save taxpayers money through shared, coordinated and more efficient services between local governments within the county.
- Save taxpayer dollars, engage the public and have the opportunity for State match funding. Plans that create actual and demonstrable savings across multiple jurisdictions may be eligible for a one-time match of the net savings resulting from new actions implemented pursuant to the Plan.

SHARED SERVICES PANEL

The Schuyler County shared services panel was chaired by County Administrator Tim O'Hearn and was comprised of the mayor of each village and the supervisor of each town within the county. While invitations were extended to each school district and board of cooperative education services, none elected to participate. Below are the individuals who comprise the panel:

John VanSoest, Town of Catharine
Brandon Theetge, Town of Cayuta
Harold Russell, Town of Dix
Alvin White, Town of Hector
David Scott, Town of Montour
Jim Pinkard, Town of Orange
Gary Conklin, Town of Reading
Donald Desrochers, Town of Tyrone
Dale Walter,Village of Burdett
John King,Village of Montour Falls
Tom Letteer, Village of Odessa
Sam Schimizzi, Village of Watkins Glen
Tim O'Hearn,County Administrator

PLAN CONTENTS

- This Plan includes shared and coordinated actions that can be implemented during the 2018 calendar year.
- All proposed actions are among the county, cities, towns and villages within the county, and can be extended to include school districts should they elect to participate in the future..
- This Plan contains new recurring property tax savings to be achieved through actions such as the elimination of duplicative services, shared services, the reduction of back- office administrative overhead, and the improved coordination of service

SHARED SERVICES PLAN TIMELINE

- May 2017- Begin development of Shared Services Plan
- August 1, 2017 - Submission of Shared Services Plan to County Legislature
  - The plan must be accompanied by a certification as to the accuracy of the property tax savings.
- No later than September 15, 2017 - Panel votes on the Shared Services Plan
  - A majority vote of the Panel is required for approval of the Plan. Each Panel Member must state in writing the reason for his or her vote. However, prior to the vote each member of the Panel may remove any proposed action that affects their local government. Written notice of the removal will be provided to the CEO prior to the Panel-wide vote.
- No later than October15, 2017 - Public presentation of the Shared Services Plan

SCHUYLER COUNTY

Schuyler County is located in the heart of the Finger Lakes region of Upstate New York. The county is comprised of a vibrant community of eight small towns and four villages.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 2015 estimated population of Schuyler County was 18,410. The county is approximately 328 square miles, with a population density that hovers around 56 people per square mile. The population and density varies greatly from town to town and between the villages and hamlets.

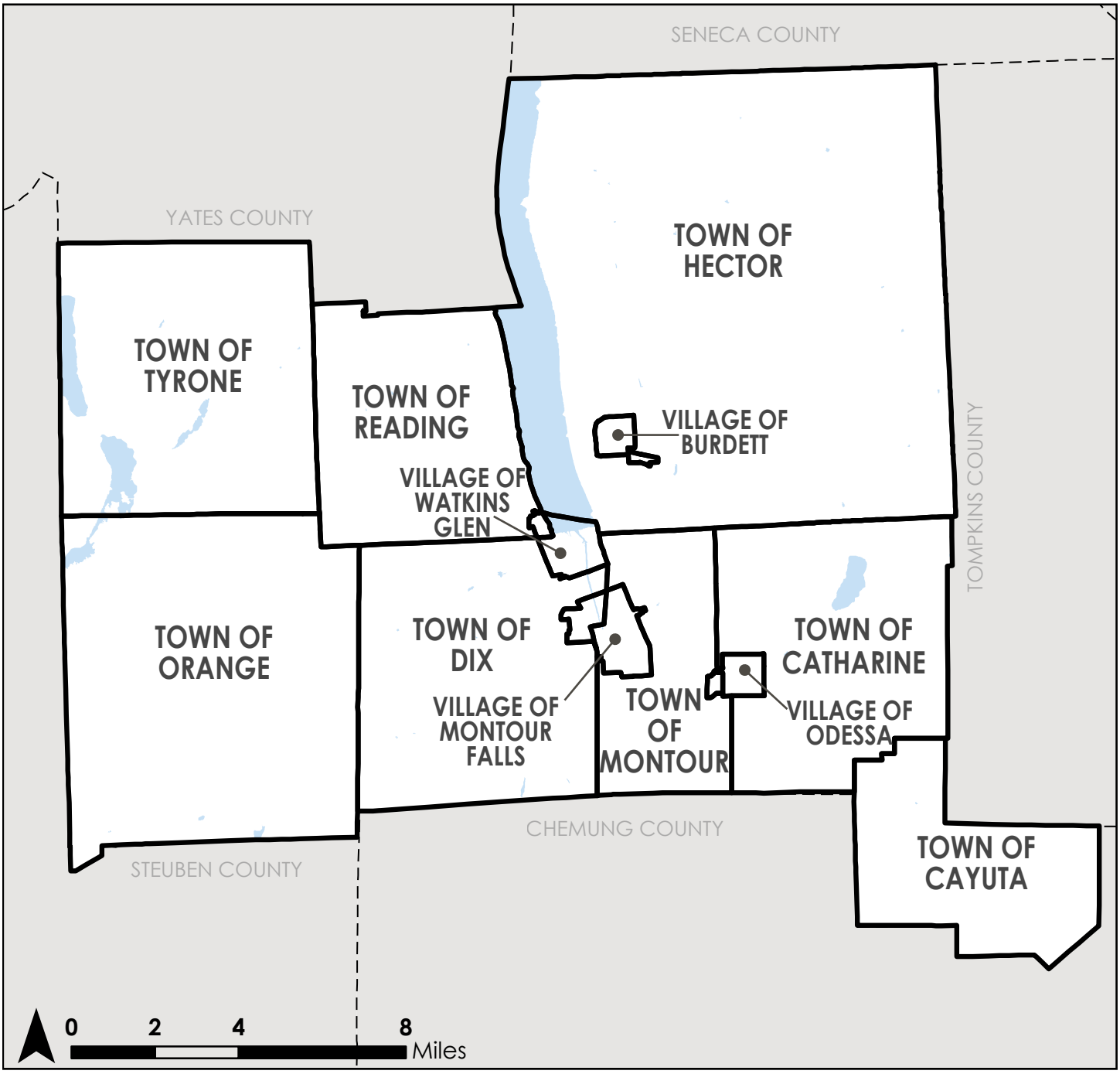
The main challenges facing Schuyler County mirror those faced by many rural communities in New York State. Increasing operational cost and a low population density make it increasingly difficult to provide community services without large tax increases.

The following table provides generalized demographic date for each municipality within Schuyler County.

Municipality Demographics

Municipality	Est. 2015 Population	Land Area	Water Area	Density *(People/Sq. Mile)*	Median Household Income	Zoning
Schuyler County	18,410	328 Sq. Mi	14 Sq. Mi	56	$47,680	-
Town of Catharine	1,769	32.2 Sq. Mi	0.6 Sq. Mi	55	$46,960	Yes
Town of Cayuta	425	20.3 Sq. Mi	0.0 Sq. Mi	21	$36,875	No
Town of Dix	3,905	36.1 Sq. Mi	0.5 Sq. Mi	108	$42,318	Yes
Town of Hector	4,995	102.5 Sq. Mi	10 Sq. Mi	49	$56,203	No
Town of Montour	2,406	18.6 Sq. Mi	0.0 Sq. Mi	129	$36,842	Yes
Town of Orange	1,710	54.1 Sq. Mi	0.3 Sq. Mi	31	$48,042	No
Town of Reading	1,547	27.2 Sq. Mi	0.0 Sq. Mi	57	$60,350	Yes
Town of Tyrone	1,653	37.5 Sq. Mi	2.1 Sq. Mi	44	$43,833	No
Village of Burdett	364	1.0 Sq. Mi	0.0 Sq. Mi	364	$47,500	No
Village of Montour Falls	1,821	3.0 Sq. Mi	0.0 Sq. Mi	607	$32,720	Yes
Village of Odessa	661	1.2 Sq. Mi	0.0 Sq. Mi	550	$45,278	Yes
Village of Watkins Glen	1,912	1.9 Sq. Mi	.04 Sq. Mi	1,006	$35,556	Yes

Schuyler County Vicinity Map

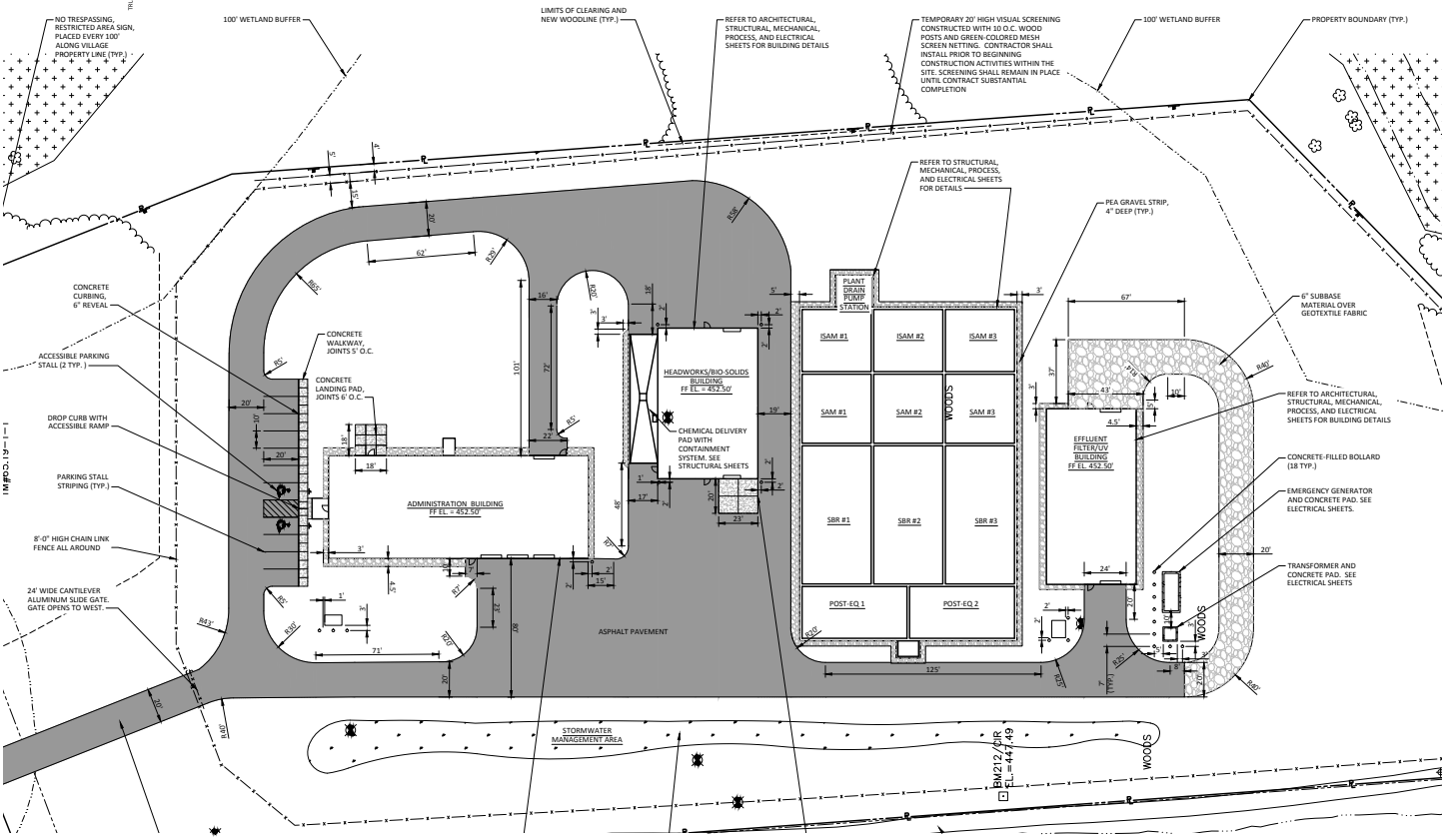


EXISTING SHARED SERVICES

Schuyler County and its municipalities have been leaders in the development of shared services. The county and local municipalities have been able to maximize limited resources and achieve substantial savings for local tax payers.

SHARED SERVICES CURRENTLY OCCURRING BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES (NOT INCLUDING COUNTY SERVICES)

- Highway equipment & manpower (cost avoidance)
- Towns of Reading & Starkey(Yates County) share a Code Enforcement Officer
- Town of Montour & Village of Montour Falls share Court resources
- Villages of Watkins Glen & Montour Falls Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant also includes Towns of Dix and Reading. Includes a study of regional governance as well.
  - Construction is to be completed in 2019.
- Village of Watkins Glen supplies water to Towns of Dix & Reading
- Town of Hector provides water to Village of Burdett
- Town of Catharine & Village of Odessa and the Town of Reading & Village of Watkins Glen share mowing services & maintenance costs.
- Town of Montour, Villages of Montour Falls & Burdett, and Schuyler County – MEGA participation (anticipated that all municipalities will ultimately participate)
- Landfill Commission (oversight of closed landfill - 6 towns, 3 villages)



Proposed Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant. *This facility will serve the Village of Watkins Glen and Montour Falls, as well as Town of Dix and Reading.*

SHARED SERVICES CURRENTLY BEING DONE BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES (INCLUDING COUNTY SERVICES)

Examples (partial list) of Cost Savings as a Result of Shared Service/Consolidation

Shared Service/ Consolidation	Estimated Annual Savings	Estimated Cumulative Savings
Consolidated Weights and Measures Department (Schuyler. Chemung, Yates)	$75,000	$450,000
Shared Records Management Facility (County, WG Schools, Village of WG, Town of Hector)	$25,000	$750,000
County Assisted Assessing	$120,000	$1,279,460
Shared Fuel Facility (County, Towns, Villages, NFP's)	$75,000	$1,200,000
Shared Public Works Facility (County, School, Village WG)	$100,000	$1,500,000
911 Dispatch between Schuyler County & Village of Watkins Glen includes Records/Administration	$120,000	$2,400,000
County Information Technology Department outsourced to BOCES	$50,000	$200,000
Schuyler/Chemung Health Insurance Consortium	$300,000	$1,800,000
Shared Assistant District Attorney (Schuyler/Steuben)	$50,000	$200,000
STN Dark Fiber Open Access Network (Schuyler, Yates, Chemung, Steuben, Broome, Tioga, Tompkins)	$500,000	$15,000,000
Dog Control (County provides for Towns)	$50,000	$1,000,000
Central Garage – Vehicle Maintenance & Repair County/Towns/Villages	$25,000	$500,000
TOTAL	**$1,490,000**	**$26,279,460**

Note: Estimated Cumulative Savings reflect total savings since inception of particular shared service initiative.

Additional Shared Service/Consolidation Efforts that are in place within Schuyler County

- Shared Legal Counsel for Certiorari Defense (large challenges)
- School Resource Officer (Village of WG/WGCSD)
- IT Services IMA between County and Town of Tyrone
- Consolidated Transportation Department - Watkins Glen & Odessa-Montour School District
- Watkins Glen & Odessa-Montour Athletics merged sports teams
- Economic Development – SCOPED (public / private partnership)
- Combined Staff Development Position DSS (Schuyler/Steuben)
- Central Garage – Vehicle Maintenance & Repair County/Towns/Villages
- Mental Health Clinical Services (Schuyler, Yates)
- WGI – IMA for law enforcement coverage w/ 9 counties
- Summer Youth Recreation Program
- Public Health Shared STD Clinic (Schuyler/Chemung)
- Radio Consortium (Interoperability) 9 County
- HazMat Response Team (Schuyler, Chemung, Steuben, Tioga)
- STC Regional Planning (Schuyler, Steuben, Chemung)
- Court Security (County, Hector, Reading)
- Villages of Watkins Glen & Montour Falls Regional Wastewater Treatment Plan
- Code Enforcement (Schuyler, Yates)

PROPOSED SHARED SERVICES

At its first meeting, the Shared Services Panel compiled a list of potential shared services opportunities for exploration as part of this initiative. These opportunities included:

- Highway Administration
- Tax Collection-Consolidation and /or Privatization
- County Role in Tax Foreclosure Extended to Villages
- Health Insurance Consortium
- Property & Liability Insurance Consortium
- Workers Compensation Consortium
- Legal Services – County to Provide to Municipalities
- Centralized Code Enforcement
- Consolidated Courts
- Combined Custodial and Buildings & Grounds Department
- Shared PH Emergency Planner (Schuyler, Yates)
- County Wide Enhanced Recycling/Composting/Curbside Pickup
- Libraries
- Franchise Agreements (Administration/Negotiation)
- Public Transit Expansion
- Sharing / Consolidation of Municipal Facilities
- Joint Purchasing
- Fire Departments: Administration/Equipment/Consolidation/Procurement
- County Wide Law Enforcement Agency / Police Consolidation (Introduced after mtg by Mayor of WG)
- Planning-Economic Development/Grant Writing
- GIS
- Human Resources & Payroll
- Central Business Office
- Financial Audits & AUD – Accounting Support
- Centralization of Issuance of Licenses – Dog, Birth, Death, Hunting
- Consolidated / Central Board of Assessment Review (Grievance Day)
- Web Hosting
- Shared Water Operator
- Municipal Consolidations

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

Through substantial discussion and debate at five separate meetings by the shared services panel (including three public hearings) it was determined that the panel would conduct further analysis on the following potential shared services opportunities.

- Centralized Code Enforcement
- County Wide Law Enforcement Agency / Police Consolidation
- Joint Purchasing
- Shared Water Operator
- Regional Wastewater Treatment / Governance
- Consolidated Courts
- Planning-Economic Development/Grant Writing
- County Wide Enhanced Recycling/Composting/Curbside Pickup

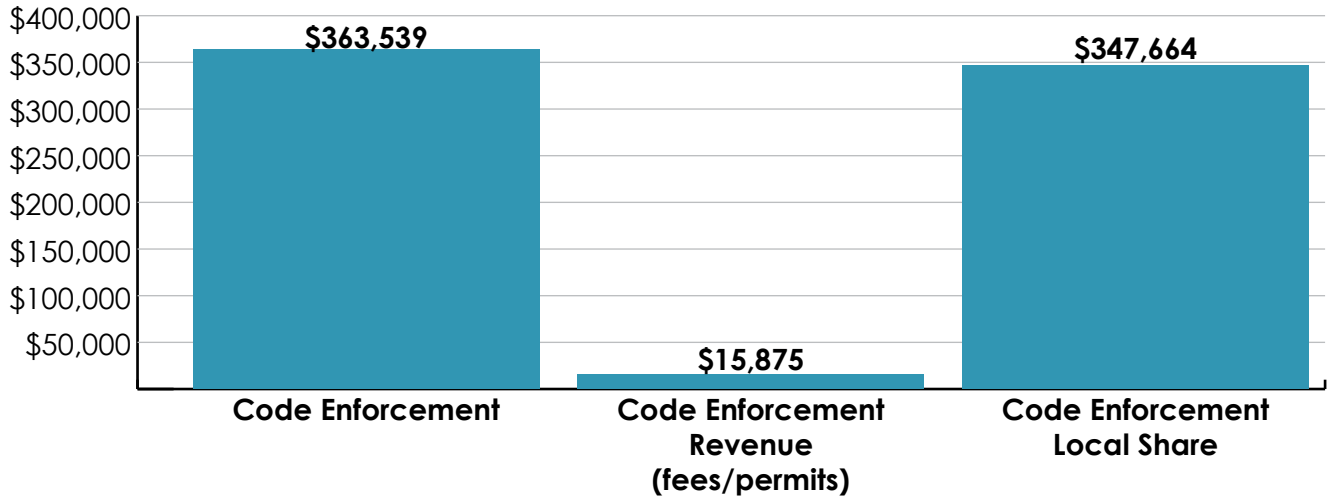
CENTRALIZED CODE ENFORCEMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Each municipality within Schuyler County currently provides for safety inspections specific to their own needs which has resulted in varying titles and administrative cost. Many municipalities already share a staff person, currently three people work for multiple communities with 8 out of the 12 towns/villages currently covered by a shared staff person.

The number of hours work per week by safety inspectors within each municipalities varies from less than 10 to 37.5. The total number of hours per week for all towns and villages is approximately 255.

Figure 2: Summary of Code Enforcement Expenditures (County-Wide)



Enforcement Type and Budget Allocation by Municipality

Municipality	Title	Part Time/ Full Time	Budget Allocation	Zoning
Town of Catharine	Code Enforcement	PT	$7,060	Yes
Town of Cayuta	Safety Inspection	PT	$5,864	No
Town of Dix	Safety	PT	$41,657	Yes
Town of Hector	Code Enforcement	FT	$57,946	No
Town of Montour	Safety Inspection	PT	$14,479	Yes
Town of Orange	Safety Inspection	PT	$9,800	No
Town of Reading	Safety Inspection	PT	$71,829	Yes
Town of Tyrone	Home Services	PT	$27,070	No
Village of Burdett	Safety Inspection	PT	$2,374	No
Village of Montour Falls	Safety Inspection	FT	$24,324	Yes
	Code Officer		$30,294	
Village of Odessa		PT	$4,000	Yes
Village of Watkins Glen	Safety Inspection	FT	$66,842	Yes

Source: 2016 Municipal Budgets

ISSUES/ CONCERNS TO BE ADDRESSED

As part of the analysis to determine the feasibility and potential cost savings/ financial impact of centralized code enforcement there were several issues/concerns raised by the Shared Services Plan including:

- How does centralization address the multiple areas of responsibility that each safety inspector must cover and be knowledgeable in. This was of particular concern in the more populated areas of the county where multiple forms of development are occurring.
  - The recommendation was to have a single safety inspector with a focus in three distinct areas; residential, commercial, and property maintenance.
- Each municipality has their own local laws, including the lack of laws, such as no Zoning (5 municipalities).
  - While this would add an additional layer of regulation, it is possible to have one staff member who is well versed on local codes and zoning laws.
- Would a consolidated system make the process longer so inspections would not be held in a timely manner?
  - Based on analysis of the current process, it is expected that a centralized system would create an expedited process. Currently a safety inspector/code enforcement office may only be in a municipality once a week, potentially creating week long gaps without the ability to have a property inspected, this can cause construction delays as well as discourage resident and business owners from following the proper procedures.
- Would every municipality be required to opt in to centralized code enforcement?
  - No, however each municipality would need to opt in or out entirely.

ILLUSTRATED COST SAVINGS

Based on current town and village's budget information the following proposal utilizes the assumptions of:

- 10,603 staffing hours total currently for Code, Safety and Zoning
- Current Expense CEO: $363,539
  - $300,082 is designated for staffing
  - $61,237 is designated for other expenses

Proposed Centralization Budget

Position	Number of Employees	hrs/ week	Salary & Benefits/ employee	Total Salary & Benefits
Coordinator of Safety and Inspections	1	35	$61,507	$61,507
Code Enforcement Officer	2	35	$52,170	$104,341
Safety Inspector	2	35	$45,045	$90,090
Clerk	1	35	$37,592	$37,592
Other expenses including training, contracts and other (carried over)				$61,237
			Total Proposed Budget	**$354,767**

POTENTIAL SAVINGS: $8,772

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

1. Establish a centralized code enforcement for all municipalities within Schuyler County. Create three distinct areas for coverage by a safety inspector or code enforcement officer.
   - Residential
   - Commercial
   - Property Maintenance
2. Determine one municipality which will house the department and provide staffing. Each remaining municipality can that enter into an inter-municipal agreement to contract for these services.
   - The villages may be asked to pay a higher rate, to compensate to the higher rate of development within the villages.

ESTIMATED LONG-TERM IMPACTS

- Improved quality of work and consistency
- Lower costs over time – long-term
- Less influence from municipal elected officials

JOINT PURCHASING

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Schuyler County has a Purchasing Department that oversees the procurement process for all county departments, including solicitation and award of competitive bids, formal and informal quotations (RFQs), and requests for proposals (RFPs). Currently each of the municipalities handles their purchasing agreements/process differently.

ISSUES/ CONCERNS TO BE ADDRESSED

- Depending on level of participation, County staffing levels may need to be increased. Any additional costs would be shared by participants as part of inter-municipal agreement terms
- There is not currently a documented policy for the issuance of RFPs/RFQ that each municipality uses.
  - The development of a uniform policy would be developed as part of the inter-municipal agreement.

ILLUSTRATED COST SAVINGS

While this proposal will not generate immediate cost reductions in operations but would provide for additional controls and oversight of purchasing which should result in cost avoidance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

1. Inter municipal agreements to be executed between participating municipalities, fire protection districts and the County
   - Include policies for solicitation of Bids, RFPs, and RFQs

ESTIMATED LONG-TERM IMPACTS

- Consistency in procurement, stronger internal controls, better pricing through economy of scale. Net effect will be a reduction in material and supply purchases and compliance with all state regulations relative to municipal procurement

REGIONAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT/ GOVERNANCE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Villages of Watkins Glen and Montour Falls each operate a municipal wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The Village of Watkins Glen additionally receives wastewater from the towns of Dix and Reading. The two Villages have agreed to jointly develop a new WWTP and decommission their respective existing facilities. The new plant in addition to being state of the art, will bring both Villages into compliance with DEC regulations and greatly improve water quality for Seneca Lake.

Additionally the Villages have agreed to jointly operate the new facility and create a regional governing structure comprised of all municipalities served by the plant.

ISSUES/ CONCERNS TO BE ADDRESSED

- Construction of the new WWTP and decommissioning of the old plants
- Establishing an operation and maintenance plan that is equitable and uniform for all users
- Establishing a municipal governing board to oversee operations and delivery of service for all users

ILLUSTRATED COST SAVINGS

Cost savings will be achieved through administrative efficiency utilizing one operator/manager as opposed to the current staffing level of two. Additionally, decommissioning of the existing sites will yield two waterfront locations suitable for future development with a capacity to generate significant revenue for each Village.

COUNTY WIDE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY / POLICE CONSOLIDATION

(NOTE: THE VILLAGE OF WATKINS GLEN HAS SUBSEQUENTLY OPTED OUT OF THIS OPTION)

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Two primary police departments operate 24 hours a day, seven days of week within Schuyler County. Additional support is provided by the New York State Police, who maintain a station in Montour Falls and serves both Schuyler and Yates Counties. The Schuyler County Sheriff's Department and Watkins Glen Village Police Department are both located within the Village of Watkins Glen. In 2013 a study was conducted by the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) to determine if efficiencies could be achieved should the Village of Watkins Glen Police Department Consolidate with the Schuyler County Sheriff's Department. At the completion of this study the Village of Watkins Glen chose to continue operating its Police Department as is. While baseline conditions have not changed substantially since the completion of this report additional fiscal and staffing constraints have impacted both the Schuyler County Sheriff's Department and the Village Police Department.

Several key considerations were identified as part of the baseline study of the original consolidation study, including;

- The Sheriffs Department and Village Police already share a number of services such as dispatching, a fingerprint machine, and investigative personnel.
- The Village Police Department relies heavily on part time personnel to prove their current level of service.
- The Sheriffs Department and Village Police are requested to provide staffing to a number of special events. Each organization currently has its own method of providing the service which would need to be reconciled if the two departments were to consider consolidation.
- The Watkins Glen Police Department has a very visible presence within the Village that may of its residents value. Potential efficiency gains could result reductions of this dedicated police presence.

Overview of Law Enforcement

Municipality	Schuyler County Sheriff's Department	Village of Watkins Glen Police Department
Full Time Employees	19	4
Part Time Employees	8	9
Total Expenses	$4,388,903	$473,197
Total Revenue	$751,119	$23,115
Calls for Service	14,727	2,254
Vehicles	19	4

ILLUSTRATED COST SAVINGS

Using the 2014 report as a baseline and updating numbers to reflect 2017 budgeted figures for each agency the CGR report was updated.

The following proposal utilizes the assumptions that 16 hours per day would be dedicated to coverage in the Village of Watkins Glen which would be provided by the Schuyler County Sheriff's Department. The following chart reflects the 2017 data:

Proposed Consolidated Law Enforcement Budget

Expense	Schuyler County Sheriff's Department	Village of Watkins Glen Police Department	Savings with Combined Agency
Personnel (.100's)*	$208,584	$326,750	**$118,156**
Contractual (.400's)	$9584	$27,600	**$6824**
Indirect Costs	$163,000	$204,733	**$41,733**
Misc (.200's)	$19,000	$40,230	**$21,233**
Total Budget	**$400,168**	**$599,313**	**$199,145**
			**Village cost do not reflect one-time payment to former Police Chief*

POTENTIAL SAVINGS: $199,145

VILLAGE RESIDENT TAX SAVINGS: 16-20% OF PROPERTY TAX BILL

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

1. The Village of Watkins Glen Board of Trustee's (subject to permissive referendum only) execute a inter-municipal agreement between the County and Village for Law Enforcement services.

ESTIMATED LONG-TERM IMPACTS

- Savings estimate reflects current staffing transfer of all full time employees to SC Sheriff's office. As turnover occurs through retirement savings would increase by an estimated $25 -$35,000/yr.

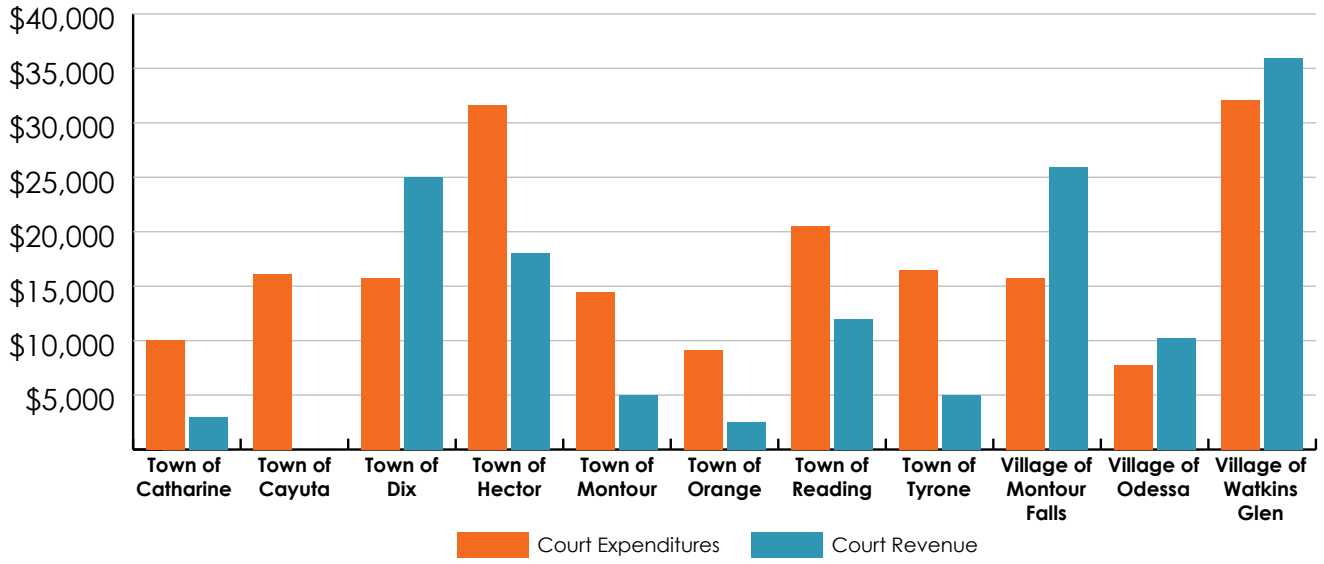
CONSOLIDATED COURTS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

With the exception of the Village of Burdett, each of the municipalities within Schuyler County maintains their own court system. The Village of Odessa and Village of Montour Falls utilize their respective town halls to hold court on a weekly basis, also utilizing the same justice for both town and village court hearings.

Municipality	Number of Justices	Court	Court Location
Town of Catharine	1	Weekly	Town of Catharine, Town Hall
Town of Cayuta	1	Bi-Weekly	Town of Cayuta, Town Hall
Town of Dix	1	Weekly	Town of Dix, Town Hall
Town of Hector	2	Weekly	Town of Hector, Town Hall
Town of Montour	1	Weekly	Village of Montour Falls, Village Office
Town of Orange	1	Weekly	Town of Orange, Town Hall
Town of Reading	2	Weekly	Town of Reading, Town Hall
Town of Tyrone	1	Weekly	Town of Tyrone, Town Hall
Village of Burdett	-	-	-
Village of Montour Falls	1	Weekly	Village of Montour Falls, Village Office
Village of Odessa	1	Weekly	Town of Catharine Town Hall
Village of Watkins Glen	1	Weekly	Village of Watkins Glen, Village Office

The cost of operating the court system within each municipality varies greatly. The Village of Watkins Glen has the highest court cost, which could be related to the increased density, tourism, and presence of a local police department. Many of the municipalities are receiving more revenues from fines than their operational cost.



ISSUES/ CONCERNS TO BE ADDRESSED

- What happens to the court fine should a Village and Town Court consolidate, the Village would still be entitled to fines resulting from dog control violations and violations of village local laws (i.e., parking ordinances) other than speeding.
  - The Village would no longer be entitled to violations of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law that occur within the village or criminal offenses that occur within the village.
- What happens to court fines if two towns were to consolidate to a single town court.
  - When a single town court is established, each town will retain their respective fine revenues.

ILLUSTRATED COST SAVINGS

Cost savings would occur indirectly and would be measured in cost avoidance. Both the Schuyler County District Attorney and Public Defender and to a smaller degree law enforcement agencies would experience a significant reduction in travel and labor costs associated with mandated attendance at first court appearance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

1. Consolidation between Village and Town Courts
   - The village board must abolish the office of village justice by local law or resolution, subject to permissive referendum. (New York State Village Law Section 3-301[2][a])
   - The local law or resolution can only take effect, however, after the elected village justice has finished his or her current term. (Village Law Section 3-301[2]; New York State Constitution, Article VI, Section 17[d])
2. Consolidation between multiple towns
   - Two or more towns that form a contiguous geographic area within the same county may establish a single justice court. This new court would be composed of justices elected from each town whose terms may not end during the same year. (New York State Uniform Justice Court Act, Section 106-a)
     - The process to establish a single court may be initiated by a petition of registered voters or by Town Board Resolution

- If a single town court is established under this process, each justice must keep separate sets of records and dockets and maintain separate bank accounts for each town in which he or she has jurisdiction.

ESTIMATED LONG-TERM IMPACTS

- Maximizing services by pooling resources;
- The court system is streamlined by centralized services
- The increased competition for the judge position could result in an increase of qualified judges.
- Reduced County costs associated with appearance at arraignment

SHARED SERVICES PANEL'S FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After five meetings and three public hearings the panel narrowed the list which is summarized below. Police consolidation, while seemingly cost effective was removed by the Village Mayor subsequent to the analysis but prior to final meeting of the panel to consider findings and recommendations. Summary is below:

FINDINGS

The Panel did not find any "low hanging fruit" that would produce significant, recurring new property tax savings. That is not to say that proposed initiatives (Centralized Code Enforcement as an example) would not be a significant accomplishment added to an already impressive list of shared service successes. It should be noted that equally important is improving service to our residents, and when this can be done while still achieving cost savings, we feel this more than meets the intent of the state mandate. In fact, examples cited by the State for consideration by counties read like a list of accomplishments already made in Schuyler County: health benefits consortia, energy purchasing consortia (MEGA), shared records management, shared facilities, shared highway equipment (informal arrangements throughout the County), reduction in back office overhead (centralized assessment.) are but a few examples.

The Panel did find merit in several relatively small shared service candidates, and agreed to continue the work through the already established Council of Governments to delve deeper into a few larger shared services possibilities that require more careful analysis and consideration than can occur within the deadlines set by the State. One such example is County-wide recycling which has been deferred to the COG for additional research and possible future action.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Panel recommends including the following shared services proposals in the County's Shared Services Plan for 2018:

Centralized Code Enforcement

To be administered by a town or village with possible County involvement consisting of the provision of office space only. Potential $ savings = $8772/year

Centralized Purchasing

County would provide procurement service for all municipalities. This could also be expanded to include Fire Protection Districts should they elect to do so. Potential savings if fully implemented are estimated to be at least $50,000/year.

Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant(WWTP)

Construction/Operation/Governance – This may be the most significant achievement of not only the plan but the region as a whole. A new WWTP utilizing a regional partnership model will produce benefits that are difficult to quantify in mere dollars. That being said, the estimated annual savings to participating municipalities (both in direct and indirect measures) is $200,000 / year.

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SUMMARY

The Schuyler County Shared Services Panel is pleased that its deliberations have helped identify or accelerate several promising shared service initiatives. While the anticipated savings are not on the magnitude of the many consolidations and collaborations already accomplished in Schuyler County, we note the savings produced by our recommendations will be in addition to the several millions of dollars being saved each year as the result of those prior efforts.

We encourage the Schuyler County Legislature to review the proposed Shared Services Plan and to offer any comments it may have by September 1, 2017, so the Panel may comply with State Law by voting on a final plan before September 15, 2017.

SHARED SERVICES PANEL

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Brandon Theetge, Town of Cayuta
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Tom Letteer, Village of Odessa
Sam Schimizzi, Village of Watkins Glen
Tim O'Hearn,County Administrator

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

Shawn Rosno
Kristin VanHorn
Peggy Tomassi

PLAN CERTIFICATION

By my signature below, I hereby certify that the savings identified and contained herein are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Timothy O'Hearn
County Administrator

ORGANIZED IN 1855

SCHUYLER COUNTY, NY

County-Wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan
Summary 2019 Update

Appendix A

County of Schuyler			
County Contact: Tim O'Hearn			
Contact Telephone: 607-535-8106			
Contact Email: tohearn@co.schuyler.ny.us			
Partners			
Row 1 – (0) Cities in Schuyler County			
Participating Cities		**Panel Representative**	**Vote Cast (Yes or No)***
1.			
2.			
3.			
Row 2 – (8) Towns in Schuyler County			
Participating Towns		**Panel Representative**	**Vote Cast (Yes or No)***
1.	Dix	Harold Russell, Town Supervisor	Yes
2.	Cayuta	Brandon Theetge, Town Supervisor	Yes
3.	Catharine	John VanSoest, Town Supervisor	Yes
4.	Hector	Alvin White, Town Supervisor	Yes
5.	Reading	Gary Conklin, Town Supervisor	Yes
6.	Orange	Joanne Randall, Town Supervisor	Yes
7.	Montour	Dave Scott, Town Supervisor	Yes
8.	Tyrone	Don Desrochers, Town Supervisor	Yes
9.			
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13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			

County-Wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Summary

Appendix A

17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			

Use Additional Sheets if necessary
***The written justification provided by each Panel Representative in support of his or her vote on the Plan is attached hereto, as Exhibit 1.**

Row 3 – (4) Villages in Schuyler County

	Participating Villages	Panel Representative	Vote Cast (Yes or No)*
1.	Burdett	Dale Walter, Mayor	Yes
2.	Montour Falls	John King, Mayor	Yes
3.	Odessa	Gerry Messmer, Mayor	Abstain*
4.	Watkins Glen	Luke Leszyk, Mayor	Yes
5.			
6.	* Mayor was newly elected and absent from Village throughout first three months of term therefore elected to abstain from vote		
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

Use Additional Sheets if necessary
***The written justification provided by each Panel Representative in support of his or her vote on the Plan is attached hereto, as Exhibit 1.**

Row 4 – (0) School Districts, BOCES, and Special Improvement Districts in County

	Participating School Districts, BOCES, and Special Improvement Districts	Panel Representative	Vote Cast (Yes or No)*
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			

County-Wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Summary

Appendix A

10.			
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18.			
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20.			

Use Additional Sheets if necessary
*The written justification provided by each Panel Representative in support of his or her vote on the Plan is attached hereto, as Exhibit 1.

Row 5	
2017 Local Government Property Taxes	**The sum total of property taxes levied in the year 2017 by the county, cities, towns, villages, school districts, BOCES, and special improvement districts within such county.**
	$39,941,083

Row 6	
2017 Participating Entities Property Taxes	**The sum total of property taxes levied in the year 2017 by the county, any cities, towns, villages, school districts, BOCES, and special improvements districts identified as participating in the panel in the rows above.**
	$20,093,594

Row 7	
Total Anticipated Savings	**The sum total of net savings in such plan certified as being anticipated in calendar year 2018, calendar year 2019, and annually thereafter.**
	$250,000, $300,000, $400,000

Row 8	
Anticipated Savings as a Percentage of Participating Entities property taxes	**The sum total of net savings in such plan certified as being anticipated in calendar year 2018 as a percentage of the sum total in Row 6, calendar year**

County-Wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Summary

Appendix A

	2019 as a percentage of the sum total in Row 6, and annually thereafter as a percentage of the sum total in Row 6.
	1.2%, 1.49%, 1.99%
Row 9	
Anticipated Savings to the Average Taxpayer	**The amount of the savings that the average taxpayer in the county will realize in calendar year 2018, calendar year 2019, and annually thereafter if the net savings certified in the plan are realized.**
	$19.23, $23.07, $30.77
Row 10	
Anticipated Costs/Savings to the Average Homeowner	**The percentage amount a homeowner can expect his or her property taxes to increase or decrease in calendar year 2018, calendar year 2019, and annually thereafter if the net savings certified in the plan are realized.**
	.4%, .5%, .5%
Row 11	
Anticipated Costs/Savings to the Average Business	**The percentage amount a business can expect its property taxes to increase or decrease in calendar year 2018, calendar year 2019, and annually thereafter if the net savings certified in the plan are realized.**
	.4%, .5%, .5%

CERTIFICATION

I hereby affirm under penalty of perjury that information provided is true to the best of my knowledge and belief. This is the finalized county-wide shared services property tax savings plan. The county-wide shared services property tax savings plan was approved on _____, 2017, and it was disseminated to residents of the county in accordance with the County-wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Law.

Timothy O'Hearn _____ County Chief Executive Officer _____

(Print Name)

_____ January 14, 2020

(Signature) (Date)