

**Proposal for Shared  
Services, Town Merger and  
Village Dissolution  
Feasibility Study  
Village of Medina and Towns of  
Ridgeway and Shelby**

**August, 2009**

Prepared for:  
**Village of Medina  
Town of Ridgeway  
Town of Shelby**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Governmental Research (CGR) is pleased to respond to the July 2009 Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the Village of Medina and the Towns of Ridgeway and Shelby to conduct a shared services, Town merger and Village dissolution feasibility study.

The Towns are located in southwestern Orleans County and each incorporates a portion of the Village. Together the three municipalities serve 11,729 residents living in a 97 square mile area. Although the Village accounts for a small portion of this area (3.3 square miles), its residents account for 52% of the overall population, according to 2008 U.S. Census Bureau estimates. As noted in the RFP, the Village and Towns have been under fiscal stress for several decades.

The Village successfully applied to the state's Local Government Efficiency (LGE) program for a high priority planning grant to conduct a "dissolution feasibility study" in cooperation with the Towns. The Village wants to explore whether dissolving the Village could result in increased efficiency and cost savings and also assess other viable options for streamlining government. Separately the Towns successfully applied for an LGE grant to conduct a "merger feasibility study" in cooperation with the Village. The Towns want to present residents with information on merging the two Towns – with or without dissolving the Village – and also assess other viable service delivery options.

CGR's Proposal, in response to the RFP, is based on conducting a project that combines the objectives of both grants into one study. In effect, this project will entail addressing the questions of shared services, merger and dissolution working with all three municipalities at the same time. In many ways, the *process* for this study will be similar to the study CGR completed in March, 2009 for the Village of Albion and the Towns of Albion and Gaines, which also looked at options for shared services, merging the towns and potential dissolution of the village. However, the *options and possible opportunities* for efficiencies and costs savings will undoubtedly be different, because of the unique characteristics and history of the communities of Medina, Ridgeway and Shelby.

CGR will conduct this study in order to develop an impartial assessment of the services provided by each of these unique three governments and to determine whether there are more cost effective ways to provide those services through some combination of shared services or consolidation/merger between one, two or all three governments.

CGR has conducted many shared services/consolidation/ dissolution projects for towns and villages across the state over the last three years.

Based on this experience, we have learned that there are four components that are key to producing a study with recommendations that communities find useful and are willing to implement. Thus, we propose organizing this study around these four key components:

- A complete, accurate, objective collection of facts about current operations and future projections, including comprehensive cost, revenue and tax projections. CGR obtains facts from published documents, plans, budgets, etc. and extensive interviewing of department heads, other key staff, elected officials and other knowledgeable community leaders.
- A close working relationship with a study Committee, comprised of representatives from each community. The Committee will be a critical factor in the success of this study and its value to each community. CGR will meet frequently with the Committee and will rely on the Committee to ensure that the study fairly represents the needs and best interests of both the individual communities and the greater community.
- Identification of a range of options, and the service and cost impact of those options. Because this project involves three governments, many services and multiple cost centers, there will likely be a number of opportunities for efficiencies. These can build on the steps the communities have already taken to reduce costs through innovative sharing arrangements such as the combined Town court operations. CGR, working with the Committee, will first identify the range of opportunities and then focus on selected key opportunities, showing the costs and benefits of making the changes identified. This will provide all three communities with an understanding of the implications for moving forward with any of the options.
- An open, inclusive and transparent public engagement process. CGR has planned four public meetings during the project for direct public input, however, in addition, we will host and manage a website dedicated to the project. This provides an opportunity for the public to have immediate access to the documents and information collected during the project and presented to the Committee. It also provides a way for the public to contact the Committee, ask questions, etc. In addition, the Committee can make hard copies of the documents from the website and have them available at selected sites in the Village and Towns for seniors and others in the community who do not use the web or have no easy access to the Internet.

The details of our proposal and specific responses to the RFP are presented in the following sections. In brief, CGR's work plan breaks the project into the six major tasks listed in the Scope of Services section in

the RFP, and within each task are several components. Our approach breaks down the project tasks in ways that incorporate the components outlined in the RFP. Our proposed work plan includes a minimum of four scheduled meetings with the Study Committee (including others as needed), four public meetings, two presentations to the boards, and multiple site visits to collect information and interview staff and other community leaders. CGR can begin this project upon notification of award and complete the project within approximately nine months.

As described in the Statement of Qualifications section, CGR has extensive experience in assessing and identifying alternative ways to organize local governments to provide effective and efficient municipal services. We have been the preferred consultant for 17 SMSI/LGE projects since 2007, so we are very familiar with the requirements and expectations the State has for these projects. Within the past year, in western New York alone, we completed the shared services/consolidation project for the Village of Albion and the Towns of Albion and Gaines mentioned above, we completed a study that evaluated options for consolidating the Town and City of Batavia, and we are currently assisting the Dissolution Committee for the Village of Seneca Falls to develop a dissolution plan in conjunction with the Town of Seneca Falls.

Project oversight will be provided by Charles Zettek Jr., Vice President and Director of Government Management Services, who directed all of the projects described below in *Project Experience*. Mr. Zettek will be primarily assisted by Vicki Brown, Associate Director, and Scott Sittig, Senior Research Associate. Ms. Brown and Mr. Sittig have extensive experience in local government management and organizational studies, and both have been principal researchers on shared services/consolidation projects. Additional CGR staff will be utilized on the project as needed.

CGR offers to conduct this study for an all-inclusive fee of \$97,600. This fee includes all costs, including staff, travel, and website costs. The only costs not included will be costs for the public meeting facilities, costs of any legal notices required and costs of mailings or materials the Village and Towns may wish to distribute for informational purposes.

To conclude, CGR would be privileged to be selected as the consultant for this important work for the Village and Towns. CGR has an unmatched reputation for providing local governments with objective, comprehensive information about options for improvement, and we have extensive experience leading communities through a public engagement process that provides citizens with the information they need to make informed choices. We look forward to working with you.

## HOW CGR PROPOSES TO COMBINE TWO STUDIES INTO ONE

CGR's reading of the RFP and the related Work Plans (i.e., Appendix D of the municipalities' respective LGE contracts with the State – # T-088813 and # T-088814) leads us to conclude that the Village and Towns are seeking a consultant with the experience and capability of providing ten different types of services. Thus, we plan to provide these services by simultaneously conducting the dissolution feasibility study and the merger feasibility study in a single study. CGR will:

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of all municipal services currently provided separately by the Village and Towns, and accurately describe each major service and how it is delivered including associated costs and revenues, personnel, and any special staff requirements;
2. Gather and assess available information on each municipality's financial assets (including fixed assets) and debts;
3. Review available capital plans (if applicable) or otherwise overview major capital needs to the extent possible based upon interviews with officials or municipal consultants identified by the Village or Towns;
4. Identify through research and analysis, the potential benefits and disadvantages – including significant impacts on service quality – that dissolution / merger / service sharing would have on each service;
5. Ensure that Village and Town residents' views and concerns are addressed by implementing a tailored public engagement process, and presenting at public forums and official information meetings;
6. Develop accurate measures of the cost and tax impact of delivering services under both the existing structure and alternative methods of consolidation, which based on our reading of the RFP would encompass (a) status quo, (b) Village dissolution, (c) merger of the two Towns, (d) full consolidation involving Village dissolution and Town merger, (e) shared services among any municipalities that do not consolidate or merge.
7. In consultation with the Feasibility Study Committee, incorporate fair and reasonable ways to allocate the costs of providing services in the cooperative or consolidation opportunities that are identified as both viable and beneficial, taking into consideration transition costs;

8. Develop overview templates for potential inter municipal agreements that would likely need to be developed, in consultation with the Village and Town attorneys, for shared service opportunities that are identified in the final report.
9. Identify reasonable, realistic options for sharing physical space, equipment and personnel, and the necessary organizational or service changes for shared services and/or consolidations that are identified in the final report;
10. Recommend, in consultation with the Study Committee and based upon feedback from the public and elected officials, actions the Village and Towns could pursue to implement the options identified in the final report.

CGR is familiar with the legal issues involved in shared services, consolidations, mergers and dissolutions and can provide guidance to the Committee. However, we are not qualified to provide legal counsel as we are not a legal services firm. Per the RFP, CGR understands that legal counsel for this study will be provided by the Village and Town attorneys. This is the approach CGR has followed in similar studies and we have found it works well.

CGR believes it is important to point out that the RFP and the Work Plans in the LGE Contracts noted above do not include a Village Dissolution Plan (subject to Article 19 of Village Law as newly redefined by a new State law to take effective in March, 2010) or call for spelling out detailed processes for dissolving a town (Article 5-A of Town Law), consolidating towns (Article 5-B of Town Law) or potentially annexing municipality property (Article 17 of General Municipal Law). Therefore, CGR's proposal constitutes conducting a study of the feasibility of a wide range of options, including what would happen if voters were to approve dissolution of the Village and/or merger of the Towns, should a referendum to vote on Village dissolution and/or a referendum to vote on Town merger be presented to voters in the future. Such referendum(s) would be subject to certain technical requirements that are not part of the proposed study. However, CGR believes that the details developed for this study can provide the basis for much of the information needed for technical dissolution or merger plans. Thus, the Towns and the Village can build on this study – they will not have to “reinvent the wheel” if they decide to move forward with dissolution or merger referendums.

## THE STUDY COMMITTEE

The LGE Work Plans associated with the State grants received by the Village and Towns each specify a committee – a Dissolution Study

Committee and a Town Merger Study Committee. Based on the RFP and what we believe to be the most effective use of time for the feasibility study (i.e., putting focus on the work elements of the project rather than holding what would be essentially the same meetings with two different committees), we propose to work with a single committee to be known, per the RFP, as the Feasibility Study Committee. For purposes of this proposal we refer to this group as the Study Committee or simply the Committee. We assume that this Committee will include representatives from the Village and two Towns, and be a mix of elected officials and community volunteers.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

A complex project encompassing options ranging from dissolving the Village, to merging the two Towns, to potentially sharing myriad services across multiple boundaries presents significant challenges for a community – but particularly for the Committee overseeing the study. While Committee members receive information and analyses on an ongoing basis, and also have opportunities to have their questions answered as the project unfolds, members of the public interested in studies of this nature are often afforded few opportunities to digest information in understandable, readily accessible “pieces.” As a result, it can be overwhelming for members of the public to “get their arms” around voluminous data and information released in the form of draft or final reports or to feel they are fully prepared to raise questions at public forums.

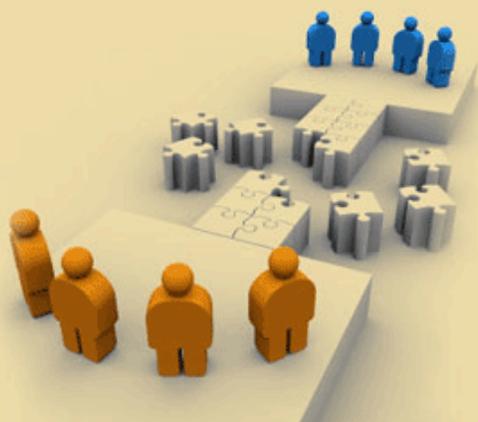
Based on our extensive experience conducting shared service/consolidation studies around the State we have, over time, refined our process of public engagement. Our approach for this study will include a project website, four public informational meetings, a formal community feedback process, and assistance with communication vehicles such as press releases.

### Project Website

CGR will develop and maintain an interactive website for this project, launching the site within approximately six weeks of project startup and maintaining the site for at least several months following completion of the study. The screen capture below shows the home page of the website we created for the complex consolidation / shared services study we conducted recently for the proposed consolidation of the City and Town of Batavia ([www.cgr.org/bataviaconsolidationplan](http://www.cgr.org/bataviaconsolidationplan)).

# batavia consolidation plan

*options for the future*

[HOME](#)
[ABOUT THE STUDY](#)
[CALENDAR](#)
[DOCUMENTS](#)
[PRESS RELEASES](#)
[FAQ](#)
[LINKS](#)


## What's New

Updated 7-30-2009

- [Plan for Consolidating the City & Town of Batavia in One Government](#)
- [Final Committee Presentation to Board & Council 7-29-09](#)
- [Consolidation Plan Press Release 7-29-09](#)

[EMAIL STUDY TEAM](#)
[SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS](#)
[FEEDBACK FORM](#)

## ABOUT THE STUDY

### The Plan

Greater Batavia NY includes the [City and the Town of Batavia](#). The City and Town were awarded a NYS grant, appointed a Study Committee and that committee recently presented a plan to create one unified government.

[Learn more](#)

### Study Team

The consolidation plan was developed by a seven - member City/Town Consolidation Study [Committee](#) with assistance from the [Center for Governmental Research \(CGR\)](#), a nonprofit consulting organization with expertise in government management.

### Funding

This website was developed with funds provided by the New York State Department of State under the Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant program. Today these grants are known as [Local Government Efficiency Grants](#).

The proposed website for the Village and Towns will become the place where information and reports are provided to the public at the same time, while offering interested individuals convenient access to the information. The project website will give the Study Committee a way to provide interactive feedback to the community on an ongoing basis (through a Frequently Asked Questions – FAQ area). The website will also provide a standardized process for anyone to submit questions and/or comments throughout the course of the study. We do not propose that this be a blog, however, questions that are important can be thoughtfully addressed either in the FAQ area or by a short paper or presentation of facts in other informational areas of the website.

CGR has extensive in-house experience in developing and maintaining interactive websites and has found them particularly valuable as public engagement vehicles for complex consolidation projects. For example, the Batavia website has had more than 23,000 visits since the site was launched in early 2009. Another website we are hosting for a study involving the potential dissolution of the Village of Johnson City has had more than 29,500 visits since it was launched in spring 2009.

## Public Informational Meetings

CGR proposes holding four informational meetings expressly for the public, in addition to two open meetings we propose holding for joint sessions of the Village and Towns' boards. Within a few weeks of the project startup we will hold with the Committee, we suggest a general public meeting to introduce the project. This will provide an opportunity to describe the study and timetable and solicit input from the community on the services they receive and the issues they would like us to explore related to dissolution, merger or shared services. Soliciting public input will be the main focus of this meeting.

We will hold the second public meeting, accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, following the Preliminary Analysis of Existing Services, which will culminate with what CGR refers to as the "What Exists Report." This is strategically a critical building block of the project since the remainder of the study will flow from decisions made as a result of this key document. Community input is valuable at this point because citizens have the opportunity to understand their government services and how they may be integrated or duplicated. In addition, this is the point where citizens have the opportunity to voice their opinions about what options they consider most beneficial, and to offer suggestions for additions or other considerations that should be taken into account while moving forward. Thus, we have structured this meeting to be separate from one we propose for a joint session of the Village and Towns' boards (see *Proposed Approach*).

Our third and fourth public meetings, which the RFP refers to as the Interim Public Presentation, will be held after we identify, in consultation with the Study Committee, the dissolution, merger and shared service options. We recommend these meetings be held approximately two weeks apart and that one focus on dissolution and merger options and the other on shared service options. These presentations would be separate from a presentation to be made on the overall options to a joint open session of the Village and Town boards. We will develop PowerPoint presentations for the public and assist the Study Committee in answering questions raised at these third and fourth public meetings. These meetings will also include distribution and electronic posting of a community feedback form (see below). In other words, we believe these meetings are the critical

times for the public to provide final input on the governance options. We anticipate this community input will help inform the Committee's final recommendation(s) to the boards of the Village and Towns.

## Community Feedback Process

As part of the third and fourth public meetings where options (e.g., Village dissolution, Town merger, shared services) are presented, we plan to give the public the opportunity to provide written feedback to the Study Committee through a simple written response form distributed at the public meetings, using the same form made available in local public places (e.g., at the Village and Town halls and libraries), by completing the form and submitting it online, or by contacting CGR by e-mail or telephone. This is not intended to be a scientific survey of community opinion, but it does provide every citizen, in theory, the opportunity to weigh in on governance options that will affect their community in the years to come. One community we worked with distributed the feedback form in the local Penny Saver, as a low-cost way to get the form into as many households in the community as possible.

## Communications Assistance

CGR will assist the Study Committee in developing, writing and managing the press releases and media advisories needed to ensure appropriate media coverage for the project. We are skilled media specialists and have provided this service for both the recently completed Albion shared services/consolidation study and Batavia consolidation plan project described under *Project Experience*. Distribution of press releases and media advisories will be the responsibility of the Village and Towns, through usual communication vehicles and media outlets.

## COMPANY PROFILE

As a nonprofit, nonpartisan, independent management consulting firm that provides fact-based analysis and practical counsel, CGR is a unique organization in New York State. Although we serve clients inside and outside the State, we are especially well known across New York, where for the past 94 years we have worked with a wide diversity of clients.

## Nonprofit & Committed to Serving the Public Interest

Founded in 1915 to serve the public interest, CGR provides research, analysis, management guidance and implementation support to

governments and nonprofits. Our mission is to inform and empower leaders driving positive organizational change or public policy action. CGR's annual budget is approximately \$2 million, and as a nonprofit organized under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, we are governed by a Board of Trustees.

We have an 18-member staff of professionals – 16 based at our main office in Rochester and two who work from our Albany office. Our staff members provide expertise on issues spanning government management, economics and public finance, public safety, health and human services, and education. Sixteen staff members are directly involved in research (experienced researchers and MIS and technology specialists) with two whose duties are administrative (chief financial officer and office manager). The proposed project will be directed by Charles Zettek Jr., Vice President and Director of Government Management Services, who oversees our shared service/consolidation projects for local governments. All work for this project will be done by our Rochester office. We invite you to learn more about CGR at [www.cgr.org](http://www.cgr.org).

## STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

CGR has an extensive, and what we believe to be unique experience in assessing and identifying alternative ways to organize local governments in New York to provide effective and efficient municipal services. In recent years, we have conducted studies that have examined in detail every type of service provided by villages, towns and counties and explored more cost-effective service delivery through different combinations of shared services and consolidated or unified governments. We have worked with the entire range of municipal combinations, including a small population located in a large rural area (e.g., the plan for the Village of Speculator dissolution and merger with the Town of Lake Pleasant) and a mid-sized village and town combination (e.g., a shared services/consolidation study for the Village and Town of Cobleskill) as well as high-density communities in the state.

In addition, we have recently completed or are currently involved in three projects in Western New York similar to size and scope of the work for this study. In early 2009 we completed a shared services/consolidation study for the Village of Albion and the Towns of Albion and Gaines – to our knowledge the first study in New York State to explore the issues involved in developing service options for a village (Albion) that is split between two towns (Albion and Gaines). At the end of July, 2009 we completed a study addressing the proposed consolidation of the City and Town of Batavia, the first such combination contemplated in New York in a century. Currently, we are developing a dissolution plan for the Village

of Seneca Falls, as a follow-up to a study we completed in late 2008, which found major tax savings for the residents of the Village of Seneca Falls if the Village dissolves and merges with the Town of Seneca Falls.

The studies noted above, plus many that have not been mentioned, have involved issues that will be important in the Village of Medina and the Towns of Ridgeway and Shelby, including but not limited to service delivery impacts for water, parks and recreation, public works, and public safety services. Our complete list of projects is available at [www.cgr.org](http://www.cgr.org).

## **Project Experience – Selected Samples**

The projects below were selected to show the wide range of shared service/consolidation/dissolution studies completed by CGR since 2007. All four of the projects described below were directed by Mr. Zettek. Additional completed or ongoing projects will be provided upon request.

### ***Consolidation Study for the Village of Albion, Town of Albion and Town of Gaines***

Two predominantly rural towns in the heart of Orleans County – Albion and Gaines – share a common border and the Village of Albion, which is split between the two towns. Concerned about declining resources and increasing costs, the three municipalities engaged CGR to conduct a study to identify viable options for sharing services up to and including full consolidation of two or all three municipalities. As part of the study, CGR gathered extensive data (never previously compiled) on the Village water system and discussed this special sub-report (e.g., findings, options) with key stakeholders. The study was funded with a New York Shared Services Municipal Incentive (SMSI) grant. CGR found there are relatively few services these municipalities can share on a stand-alone basis (through shared service agreements) and limited opportunity to generate significant cost savings. However, if the Village and Town of Albion consolidate, overall property tax savings would be at least 18%, and if all three municipalities consolidate, overall property tax savings would be at least 22%. Consolidation savings would come from cost reductions due to efficiencies and substantial new state consolidation incentive funds.

In December, 2008 a joint oversight committee voted to recommend pursuing dissolution of the village, thereby reducing the number of governments from three to two. The recommendation was subsequently unanimously endorsed by the Town of Albion board. The Village of Albion board recently voted not to pursue dissolution. The Town of Gaines board did not address the recommendation since the Village voted not to pursue dissolution. The full study, including the water system component, is available on the CGR website ([www.cgr.org](http://www.cgr.org), see “Research Areas” and click on “Shared Services/Consolidation”).

*References:*

Mayor Dean Theodorakos, Village of Albion, 35-37 East Bank Street, Albion, NY 14411, [dtheodorakosmayor@villageofalbionny.com](mailto:dtheodorakosmayor@villageofalbionny.com), 585-589-9176

Town of Albion Supervisor Judith Koehler, 3665 Clarendon Road, Albion, NY 14411, [bonaler@yahoo.com](mailto:bonaler@yahoo.com), 585-749-1515

## ***City and Town of Batavia Consolidation Plan***

The City and Town of Batavia, located in Genesee County, successfully applied for a State grant to study consolidation, acknowledging that the existing governmental structure generates considerable overlap and duplication in the delivery of municipal services. In 2008, the municipalities appointed a city/town steering committee and engaged CGR to conduct the study. After initial work on the project, CGR recommended the committee move from a "study" to developing a "plan" for consolidation. The committee supported CGR's recommendation, and the governing bodies endorsed their decision.

The study team projected cost savings of \$943,000 in year one of consolidation and likely higher in future years; finalized a report of model options for the combined community and posted committee reports and supporting information on a special CGR-developed project website. The committee held community forums in June, 2009 for the public to provide input, and based on that input presented a final plan in late July, 2009 to the city council and town board. The committee recommends that there be a new consolidated government that is a city, rather than a town. As a result, the committee recommends the elected boards approve a joint charter commission and pursue a vote in November, 2011. The committee's "Plan for Consolidating the City & Town of Batavia in One Government" is currently being reviewed by elected leaders. If voters ultimately approve a new charter for the combined entity, Batavia will likely be the first city/town pair in New York to consolidate and will serve as a model for many communities nationwide. For full details see: <http://www.cgr.org/bataviaconsolidationplan>

*References:*

Town of Batavia Supervisor Gregory Post, 3833 W. Main St. Road, Batavia, NY 14020, or 716-474-3216, or email Mr. Post' secretary, Hiedi Librock, [hlibrock@townofbatavia.com](mailto:hlibrock@townofbatavia.com)

Batavia City Manager Jason Molino, One Batavia City Centre, Batavia, NY 14020, [jmolino@batavianewyork.com](mailto:jmolino@batavianewyork.com) , or 585-345-6330

## ***Shared Services/Consolidation Study for the Town and Village of Cobleskill***

In 2008, the Village and Town of Cobleskill asked CGR to identify service sharing/consolidation options that can benefit their communities. CGR found that some options, such as sharing planning, court or code enforcement functions, could be achieved with little change to existing municipal structures. Other options, including pursuing city status, would require sustained effort. The report suggests that, in time, a single entity (achieved either by dissolving the village or becoming a city) will provide the framework for creating a government that is more cost effective and efficient, and has access to more revenues to offset the local property tax burden on taxpayers. CGR assisted the town and village with the public participation process, including presenting at three public meetings at the beginning, middle and end stages of the study. CGR delivered the final report in July, 2008, and in January, 2009 the village board voted to pursue development of a dissolution plan. The full report is available at [www.cgr.org](http://www.cgr.org).

### *Reference:*

Mayor Michael Sellers, Village of Cobleskill, 378 Mineral Springs Road, Cobleskill, New York 12043, [mayor@cobleskill.org](mailto:mayor@cobleskill.org) or 518-234-2550

## ***Plan for Dissolution of the Village of Speculator and Merger with the Town of Lake Pleasant***

In response to a resident-initiated petition to dissolve the Village of Speculator in New York's Adirondack region and merge it with the Town of Lake Pleasant, village leaders were required by New York law to develop a dissolution plan and present it to voters. CGR analyzed all town and village operations, and identified how village operations would be provided by the town, what efficiencies and cost savings might be obtained, and the tax implications of village dissolution on both village and town-outside-village residents. In March 2008, voters rejected dissolving the village. The full study is available at [www.cgr.org](http://www.cgr.org) by searching our reports under the subject "Shared Services/Consolidation."

### *Reference:*

Mayor Neil McGovern, Village of Speculator, % The Inn at Speculator, Route 8, Box 163, Speculator, NY 12164 or 518-548-3811

## **CGR Key Staff**

Overall project supervision will be provided by Charles Zettek Jr., who directed all of the projects described in *Project Experience*. Mr. Zettek

will be assisted by Vicki Brown, Associate Director; Scott Sittig, Senior Research Associate; and Jaime Saunders, Senior Research Associate. Ms. Brown and Mr. Sittig have extensive experience in local government management and organizational studies, and have been principal researchers on shared services/consolidation projects. Ms. Saunders also has local government management consulting experience. Additional CGR staff will be utilized on the project as needed.

**Charles Zettek Jr., M.S.**, has been actively involved in practicing the art and science of public administration to improve local government operations for more than 25 years. His particular interest is in working directly with clients using strategic planning principles and analytic thinking to identify ways to make operations more effective and efficient. Mr. Zettek's expertise encompasses general administrative management, shared services/consolidation, public safety, public works and human service operations for counties, municipalities and school districts. He helps governments identify efficiencies and improve services by developing strategic management plans, leveraging common purchases and practices, increasing economies of scale, reducing duplication and eliminating non-productive processes. Mr. Zettek joined CGR in 2000, after serving as a consultant for the organization. For the eight years prior to joining CGR, he was president of a consulting firm specializing in identifying cost reduction opportunities in both the public and private sectors through the use of more effective purchasing and management operation principles. His prior career also included serving for six years as Purchasing and Central Services Administrator for Monroe County, New York, where he supervised a staff of 35, managed a budget of \$4.4 million, oversaw annual purchasing of \$100 million in goods, managed the telecommunications system and served as Records Management Officer. In addition, he has 10 years experience in municipal budgeting and planning for the City of Rochester, New York. He holds a B.A. with honors in History and an M.S. in Public Policy from the University of Rochester.

**Vicki Brown** has experience with a range of CGR studies, from shared service/consolidation studies for municipalities to analyses of criminal justice practices. She was the principal researcher for the Village of Albion, Town of Albion, Town of Gaines Consolidation Study and the Batavia Consolidation Plan projects described above. In addition, she has played key roles in other studies of proposed village/town consolidations and analyses for local governments seeking to improve specific business processes. She was also the principal researcher for a study for which CGR won the 2007 Most Distinguished Research Award from the Governmental Research Association, the national organization of professionals engaged in governmental research. The study involved a comprehensive assessment of, and recommendations for, the criminal

justice system in New York's Chemung County. Prior to joining the organization, Ms. Brown owned a consulting firm in Rochester for 28 years. She became a CGR consultant in 2000, joined the staff in 2004, and was named Associate Director in 2008. Ms. Brown holds a B.A. in Journalism and English with honors from Marquette University.

**Scott Sittig, M.P.P.**, has experience in economic analysis, public finance, human services, government management, and shared services / consolidation projects. Mr. Sittig's particular interest is helping leaders, communities and nonprofit organizations identify measures that both save money and better allocate scarce resources. He was the principal researcher for the shared service/consolidation studies described above for the Village of Speculator and Town of Lake Pleasant and the Town and Village of Cobleskill. Currently he is involved in developing a dissolution plan for the Village of Seneca Falls. Prior to joining CGR in early 2007, Mr. Sittig served in a church position focused on strategic change and was executive director for a group of physicians serving the poor and underserved, where he helped guide a strategic planning process. Mr. Sittig holds a B.S. in Business Administration and Sociology from Roberts Wesleyan College and a Master of Public Policy from the University of Chicago.

**Jaime Saunders, M.P.A.**, has experience in local government management, evaluation, decision-making processes and organizational studies. She was the principal researcher for evaluating options to provide planning services to the Town of Canandaigua in order to manage current and future land use and development. Currently she is involved in the assessment of the benefits of creating a central business office serving multiple school districts in Sullivan County. She is also developing community profiles for several New York communities to evaluate progress and identify challenges in critical areas. Prior to joining CGR in early 2008 she was principal of Praxis Point Consulting and provided contract services to New York-based nonprofits in the areas of organizational development and marketing. Previously Ms. Saunders was Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of Operations for an America's Second Harvest food bank serving 550 human service agencies in a 10-county region in upstate New York. She holds a B.A. in Business Administration and Sociology from Whittier College and a Masters in Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

## PROPOSED APPROACH

CGR's approach is designed to inform citizens about the advantages and disadvantages of Village dissolution, merger of the Towns, full consolidation of the three municipalities and a range of other service sharing options for providing more efficient and cost-effective services. As noted earlier, public outreach is a key component of our proposal.

Our detailed work plan, including specific tasks, planned deliverables, scheduled meetings and anticipated time frames are provided below. The final work plan is subject to revisions based upon the initial kickoff meeting with the Study Committee, and CGR's review of the signed LGE contract between the New York Department of State and the Village of Medina and the separate signed LGE contract between the State and the Town of Ridgeway, and other revisions that are required and approved by the Study Committee as the study progresses.

*Note:* CGR has not changed the Task headings listed in the RFP (to conform to the LGE Work Plans and make grant reporting for the municipalities easier) but we note that some of the components listed as part of specific tasks in the RFP may appear under different tasks in our proposed work plan. We have made such changes based on our extensive experience with shared services / consolidation projects and knowledge about how studies should proceed to be most helpful to the communities involved.

### ***Task 1: Project Initiation***

CGR will meet with the Study Committee as soon as possible following receipt of signed contracts with the Village of Medina and Town of Ridgeway, as project leads for the respective grants. At this kickoff meeting, CGR will discuss the study approach; potential dissolution, merger and shared service scenarios to be addressed; issues and concerns Committee members may have; and how CGR and the Committee will work together during the study, including identifying the individual who will act as liaison to CGR and the Village and Towns' boards. This meeting will be the basis for CGR to discuss with the Committee how the key objectives of the two LGE Work Plans will be integrated and addressed simultaneously in a single study. In addition, we will discuss the proposed website for the project; identify data and information resources; review the project schedule, discuss a tentative schedule for public meetings, and jointly determine the date of the initial public presentation. The kickoff agenda will also include reviewing/refining the work plan. If materials are readily available we will begin to collect relevant materials and data for review.

*Work Products:* CGR-Committee meeting; revised work plan and timetable

*Time Frame:* Month 1

## ***Task 2: Preliminary Analysis of Existing Services***

This task includes five components: the first public meeting; data collection and interviews, launch of the project website, CGR-Committee meeting on existing services, and the second public presentation.

Component #1: CGR, in conjunction with the Study Committee, will hold the initial public meeting. This meeting will include describing the work plan and study objectives, but will primarily be about obtaining input from the community and answering questions posed by the public. In other words, it will be a structured idea collection meeting with the public. Our intent will be to encourage generation of ideas from the public from the outset of this project. CGR's proposal assumes that logistics (e.g., meeting space, public notice) for this and all other public meetings will be the responsibility of the Village and Towns. CGR can assist, as needed, with the writing of a media advisory or press release to announce the meeting.

Component #2: CGR will create and launch a project website, hosted on CGR's website. The website will accommodate emails to the Study Committee, and allow residents to sign up for e-alerts when new information is posted on the website. For an example of the type of website that CGR will create for this project, please see the website we have created for the Batavia Consolidation Plan (<http://www.cgr.org/bataviaconsolidationplan>).

Component #3: As soon as practical after the project initiation meeting described in Task 1, CGR will undertake primary data collection. We will make on-site visits to the Village and Towns to interview key operations staff and stakeholders; tour operational sites; review budget, personnel and other operating records; identify existing cooperative arrangements; and collect electronic or hard paper copies of key documents – such as, union contracts (if applicable), other agreements, existing fixed assets inventory lists, rate sheets, etc. This hands-on approach will enable CGR to develop a comprehensive understanding of current operations in the Village and Towns. This base of information about “what is” will be summarized in a What Exists Report and also provide the framework for identifying options for the future. This document will address the issues outlined in Task 2 in the RFP as follows:

- Services the Village and Towns deliver.

- General information for each service delivered (e.g., budget allocation, number of employees involved and specialized knowledge required, service complexity, and potential for cost savings).<sup>1</sup> CGR will rely on the Village and Towns to provide budget and personnel information; CGR will keep personnel information confidential.
- Financial assets and debts. For information on municipal equipment and other fixed assets, CGR will rely on information supplied by the Village and Towns, based on available inventories.
- Capital investments and needs. For information we will rely on existing capital plans available from the Village and Towns, or interviews with the municipalities' key consultants, as identified by the Village and Towns. (For example, in the Village of Albion dissolution study CGR met with the engineering consultant for all three communities involved in that study to discuss needs related to the water plant, water distribution system, and wastewater treatment facility.)
- Pros and cons voiced by the public at the initial public meeting or via the website about consolidating service(s), and perceived impact on quality.

Component #4: CGR will meet on-site with the Committee to present the What Exists report, answer questions, and discuss any needed revisions.

Component #5: CGR will develop a PowerPoint presentation highlighting key aspects of the What Exists report, and present at a public informational meeting. Along with the Committee, we will answer questions from the public about this initial report. In addition, we will begin to solicit input from the public about possible options based on the findings of the What Exist report.

*Work Products:* Initial public meeting, project website (with updates posted throughout the study as approved by the Committee), What Exists Report, CGR-Committee meeting, PowerPoint on What Exists Report, Public Meeting on the What Exists Report

*Time Frame:* Months 1 - 4

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<sup>1</sup> CGR will provide cost on a per-resident served basis if requested by the Committee and provided the detailed information required to develop these figures is readily available from the municipalities, although we note that these comparisons have not proved particularly useful in similar studies.

### ***Task 3: Overview of Fiscal Impact and Potential Organizational Structure***

This task will include two components. The first is the development of what CGR refers to as the “Options Report.” This is the document that will address the various alternative scenarios identified at the kickoff meeting that the Committee seeks to investigate (e.g., Village dissolution, merger of the Towns, full consolidation, service sharing). The second component will be a CGR-Committee meeting to discuss the Options Report.

Component #1: For the Options Report CGR will identify and evaluate viable alternatives for delivering the services/functions provided by the Village and Towns. These options will be developed based upon work done in earlier tasks, and our experience with Village dissolution, Town merger, shared services arrangements and cost-sharing models in other municipalities. We anticipate making projections that are likely to fall in the following categories: (a) status quo, (b) Village dissolution, (c) merger of the two Towns, (d) full consolidation involving Village dissolution and Town merger, and (e) shared services among any municipalities that do not consolidate or merge.

We will compare the benefits and disadvantages of each option we identify as both viable and beneficial, and also identify obstacles based on the results of our research. For each option, CGR will conceptually demonstrate how services may be provided, and document the potential cost savings, improved efficiencies or service enhancements.

For each of the identified options, the report will provide, at a level of detail sufficient for planning purposes, the anticipated cost impacts to the Village and Towns, and estimated impacts to the budgets and tax rates for each. To the extent that we believe it is possible, CGR will estimate the costs of transitioning services.

For the viable, beneficial options we identify, we will overview the potential intermunicipal agreements that may be needed (in consultation with the attorneys for the Village and Towns), discuss with the Committee reasonable options for sharing physical space, personnel and equipment; recommend an organizational structure (if appropriate); and identify an equitable means of funding the options. We will give special consideration to the question of fairness of the potential shift in costs from one municipality to another, and also the means by which this can be mitigated or avoided.

The end result of the work described will be the written Options Report.

Component #2: CGR will meet with the Study Committee to discuss the report and make any needed revisions before it is presented to elected officials and the public.

*Work Products:* Options Report, CGR – Committee meeting on Options Report

*Time Frame:* Months 4-7

## **Task 4: Interim Public Presentations**

This task will consist of three components: the presentation of the Options Report by CGR and the Committee to a joint session of the boards of the Village and Towns, and two presentations on the Options Report to the public, which are our third and fourth public presentations in our proposal.

Component #1: CGR will prepare a PowerPoint presentation to deliver to the joint board meeting. Along with the Committee, CGR will answer questions. Although this will be an open public meeting, the purpose of the meeting will be to present to the elected leaders, answer their questions, and receive their input. The presentation, as is the case with all presentations and key documents described in this proposal, will be posted on the website. In addition, CGR will encourage the Village and Towns to print out hard copies of all documents to date from the website and compile hard-copy notebooks that can be available for on-site reading at convenient locations by members of the public who do not have ready access to the Internet.

Components #2 and #3: CGR and the Committee will present key information from the Options Report over the course of two public meetings, scheduled approximately two weeks apart, and answer questions from the public. We anticipate that one meeting will focus on dissolution of the Village and Town merger options and the other on shared service options. Questions asked at the initial public meeting will be addressed in the follow-up public session. In addition, we will solicit feedback via the community feedback form described earlier under *Public Engagement Approach*. The feedback will be summarized and presented to the Study Committee.

*Note:* For all three of these presentations, the information will be presented at a fairly high level but with enough detail to describe the options and cost and tax impacts.

*Work Products:* PowerPoint presentation to elected officials on the Options Report, two PowerPoint presentations covering key highlights of the Options Report, two Meetings with the Public, Feedback Form

*Time Frame:* Month 8

## ***Task 5: Final Analysis of Dissolution & Merger***

This task consists of only one component – a CGR-Committee meeting. Based on the input received from elected leaders and the public, CGR will meet with the Study Committee to discuss the feasibility of total dissolution of the Village and/or merger of the Towns, and/or full consolidation of the three municipalities into one. The discussion will focus on the net fiscal benefits of the potential scenarios, their impact on the desired level and type of services, and the equity in cost changes to taxpayers of the Village and Towns. Based on all work done to date, CGR and the Committee will discuss recommendations the Committee wishes to make to the boards of the Village and Towns and the related actions associated with their recommendation(s).

*Work Products:* CGR-Committee Meeting

*Time Frame:* Month 9

## ***Task 6: Final Report***

This task consists of two components: development of the final report document to complete the study, and the final presentation to a joint session of the boards of the Village and Towns.

Component #1: Based on the outcome of Task 5, CGR will prepare a report outlining the recommendations of the Study Committee to the three boards and the associated next steps. This document, along with all other documents published on the website throughout the study process, will constitute the final report to be known as the Shared Services, Town Merger, and Village Dissolution Feasibility Study.

*Note:* The LGE Work Plans associated with the State grants awarded to the Village and Towns require two separate final reports – “Village of Medina Dissolution Feasibility Study” and the “Town of Shelby and Town of Ridgeway Consolidation Feasibility Study.” Our proposal for the final report follows the requirements of the RFP. We believe, based on our experience with the New York Department of State’s LGE program that the Village and Towns will need to amend Appendix D in both contracts signed with the State to accommodate the single report format. We recommend this be done early in the study process to ensure grant reimbursements flow to the communities in as timely a manner as possible. If CGR is selected on the consultant, we will advise, at the kickoff meeting, what steps should be taken to streamline grant paperwork processing for the Village of Medina and Town of Ridgeway, which are serving as project leads.

Component #2: The members of the Village and Town boards will receive a copy of the final report document. In addition, CGR will prepare a

PowerPoint presentation summarizing major findings, the Committee's recommendation(s) to the boards, and the next steps associated with the recommendation(s). We will present the report, along with the Committee, at a joint session of the three boards. This meeting will be open to the general public, but will focus on answering the questions of elected officials.

*Note:* The RFP suggests that the consultants will, in the final report, draft a framework for consolidation and dissolution of the Village and merger of the Towns. The work envisioned for this task per the RFP will previously have been completed as part of the Options Report, based on our proposal. Task 6 of the RFP also says that "the Village and Towns boards will have an opportunity to review and edit the report, such edits to be incorporated in the final version." We note that we will have already solicited input from the elected board members, and that Task 6 will result in a document that the boards will be asked to separately endorse. It will be the boards' prerogative at that point to accept or reject the recommendations made by the Committee.

*Work Products:* Final recommendations and associated actions report, final PowerPoint presentation, CGR-Committee presentation to a joint session of the boards of the Village and Towns

*Time Frame:* Month 9

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

CGR anticipates that the project will commence as soon as possible after the final contracts are signed. From that point, the project will be completed in approximately nine months. There are many variables that will influence this time frame. First, the schedule is dependent on the Village and Towns providing information and scheduling interviews requested by CGR on a timely basis. Second, our experience suggests that difficulties in scheduling public meetings may lead to delays in the proposed timeline. Third, CGR has found, at times, that there may be the need for additional CGR-Committee or other public meetings depending on what we find during the study process. Our proposal includes significant focus on presentations to the public and boards, however, if it is jointly decided by CGR and the Committee that more meetings are desired, we will accommodate these needs within reason given the scope of the budget. Our overall goal is to work with the Village, Towns and Study Committee to complete the project in the requested time frame barring unforeseen circumstances and in a manner that effectively meets the communities' key objectives.

Project Schedule									
Project Task Deliverables	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9
<b>Task 1</b>									
<b>Project Initiation</b>									
Initial CGR - Committee Meeting	X								
<b>Task 2</b>									
<b>Preliminary Analysis of Existing Services</b>									
Initial Public Meeting		X							
Launch Project Website		X							
Primary Data Collection & What Exists Report	X	X	X	X					
CGR - Committee Meeting - What Exists				X					
Public Meeting - What Exists				X					
<b>Task 3</b>									
<b>Overview of Fiscal Impact &amp; Org. Structure</b>									
Options Report				X	X	X	X		
CGR - Committee Meeting							X		
<b>Task 4</b>									
<b>Interim Public Presentations</b>									
Presentation to Joint Boards Session								X	
Public Meeting #1 on Options								X	
Public Meeting #2 on Options								X	
<b>Task 5</b>									
<b>Final Analysis of Dissolution &amp; Merger</b>									
CGR - Committee Meeting									X
<b>Task 6</b>									
<b>Final Report</b>									
Final Report Document & Recommendations									X
Presentation to Joint Boards Session									X

## COST SUMMARY

CGR offers to complete the project for an all inclusive fixed fee of \$97,600, with 50% billed to the Village of Medina and 50% billed to the Town of Ridgeway, as project leads for this feasibility study. CGR expects to invoice for the work on the following basis: Completion of Task 1 – 10%, completion of Task 2 – 20%, completion of Task 3 – 30%, completion of Task 4 – 20%, completion of Task 5 – 10%, completion of Task 6 – 10%. This all-inclusive fee (covering all consultant fees and miscellaneous expenses) assumes that the village and towns will pay all costs for legal advertisements and public notices and all mailing and/or duplication or publication costs for any public information released by the Committee during the project, and will arrange for public meeting spaces.

CGR reserves the right to negotiate a different fee and/or time frame should the Study Committee request work not anticipated in our proposal, or if the final Local Government Efficiency (LGE) agreements between the Village and New York State and the Town of Ridgeway and the State contain work or project components not identified or inconsistent with this proposal.

## LEAD CONTACT PERSON

The lead contact person for this project is:

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