

**City of Clare**  
**Future/Proposed Cooperation, Collaboration,**  
**Consolidation and Process Improvement**  
**Service Initiatives**

The City of Clare, being physically located within both Clare and Isabella Counties, provides a multitude of public services to the community that are coordinated and provided in concert with a variety of governmental, non-profit, agency, private and other entities in both counties. These cooperative, collaborative and consolidated services have been a part of the City of Clare's basic premise of serving the public in the most efficient manner possible likely all the way back to the incorporation of our municipality in 1897. Being a good neighbor and sharing resources in the more rural areas of the State of Michigan is simply a way of life.

On a continuous, ongoing process the City of Clare seeks, evaluates and implements cost saving measures when it is prudent to do so and when there is benefit for the community served. At the end of 2011 we are evaluating several opportunities and processes which may be implemented in the future after they have been validated to be of benefit to the community and cost effective. These initiatives/processes include the following:

- **Intergovernmental Technology Sharing/Collaboration** - This is an area that the City of Clare along with several other local units of government have been working on for the past couple of years with significant success. To date our efforts have focused on establishing the broadband communications network to allow the various governmental entities in Clare County to be connected and thereby share technological resources. At the present time the City of Clare, the City of Harrison, the Clare County Building including the Sheriff's Department, the Village of Farwell, Arthur, Franklin, Hamilton, Sheridan and Surrey Townships, the Pere Marquette District Library, the Harrison District Library and the Surrey Township Library are all connected through a fiber optics and/or a high-speed wireless broadband communications network. These connections were just recently established and have already saved participating units of government thousands of dollars.

At the current time we are working on expanding the county wide broadband government computer network and are also in the initial process identification and planning stages of increasing the sharing of technological processes to improve the efficiency and decrease the costs of participating local units of government.

An example of this increased collaborative effort is the establishment/installation of a common computer software program for property tax administration. The first step of this implementation has just been completed and has already positively improved the property tax administration process at the local level of government and significantly improved the capabilities and process at the county level of government. Annual savings from this process improvement is estimated to be in the \$5,000 to \$10,000 range for all governmental entities within the county as a whole.

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Additional common computer software application migrations are being evaluated at this time which it is anticipated will benefit all participating local units of government. This evaluation includes the daily computer data backup processing as an integral part of each unit of government's disaster recovery process. The potential savings of just the daily backup process could reduce each participating local unit of governments annual cost for this critical process by between \$500 and \$1,000.

With the establishment of a secure broadband communications network local law enforcement agencies including the Clare City Police Department are currently working with the Clare County Sheriff's Department and also the Michigan State Police to further increase the use of computer programs, processes and services critical to effective law enforcement throughout the county. These process improvements have the potential of saving each local law enforcement agency a significant amount of money in communication costs, technology maintenance and the use of ASA rated, approved and required firewalls. Full implementation of this cost savings initiatives will easily be in the thousands of dollars annually for each participating law enforcement agency.

- **Wide Area Computer Network** - The City of Clare is currently finishing the process of installing/establishing a Wide Area computer Network (WAN) to connect all of its facilities throughout the city. The implementation of this network will allow city staff to utilize technology resources that are physically located at other city locations. This network will also allow the City to utilize a common telecommunication process and equipment using Voice Over IP (VOIP) technology for voice communication needs. Estimated long range savings from full utilization of the WAN could easily be in the tens of thousands of dollars and also greatly increase staff efficiency.
- **Electronic Employee Timesheets** - The City of Clare has completed its evaluation process and will be implementing in early 2012 an electronic employee time clock process at all city facilities using the above discussed WAN. In addition to improving efficiency within the Human Resource function of the City Clerk's Office we estimate that this process improvement will result in annual savings of several hundred dollars in personnel expense. We also anticipate that this process improvement will improve the utilization of human resources by improving data availability for supervisors.
- **City Motor Pool Maintenance Records** - The City of Clare will be completing the process in early 2012 of establishing a common database that will be used by both the Water/Wastewater Treatment Department and also the City Motor Pool. The ability to share a common computer program and database across the City's WAN for these two departments will save the City of Clare approximately \$2,000 annually and also vastly improve our asset management capabilities.