

Benton Charter Township**Shared Services Summary**

December 2011

Department & Service	Description	Communities / Others Involved	Estimated Savings
Police & Fire			
Dispatch Services (911 & other urgent calls)	2 years- The Township outsourced its dispatch services to Berrien County. The County now takes all emergency calls and dispatches to our Police and Fire Departments accordingly.	Berrien County & Other municipalities within the County.	\$375,000 annually
Berrien County Police & Fire Mutual Aid	35 years- We are part of a County wide agreement to provide Police & Fire services to other communities within the County. We primarily provide services to our neighboring communities but have assisted other communities in the County as well. We have also received services from other communities.	Berrien County & Other municipalities within the County.	Value Added
Police			
Benton Harbor Violent Crimes Task Force	10 years- We have two police officers that are formally assigned as part of the VCTF. Any overtime expenses incurred for detection , investigation and prosecution of crimes are reimbursed by the FBI up to a \$1,433.52 per officer per month.	FBI, County & Other Municipalities	Value Added/ \$34,400 annually
Fire			
Bainbridge Township	25 years- Our Fire Department provides fire protection services to a portion of Bainbridge Township. We charge an annual fixed fee and then a variable rate per fire call. Bainbridge receives fire protection services while we receive additional revenue to offset a portion of the cost of our full time Fire Department.	Bainbridge Township	\$12,500 annually

Public Works			
Benton Harbor- St. Joseph Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant	10 years- The Wastewater Treatment Plant is owned by the City of Benton Harbor and the City of St. Joseph. We purchase sewage treatment and processing based on flow. Our annual treatment costs are approximately \$1.3 million.	Benton Harbor City, St. Joseph City, Benton Twp, St. Joseph Twp, Lincoln Twp, Royalton Twp, Village of Shoreham, Village of Stevensville	In excess of \$1 million annually
Hagar & Sodus Township Water Agreements	Hagar and Sodus Townships purchased water from the City of Benton Harbor and the water was transmitted through our water lines. Upon the opening of the Benton Township water plant, Hagar and Sodus now purchase water from us. We perform their billing and collection services as well as distribution services.	Hagar Township and Sodus Township	\$20,000 annually

General Government			
Southwest Michigan Regional Airport Authority	5 years- The Airport Authority is partially funded through millage levied by five communities. Four of the communities levy .1 mills and one community levies .25 mills. The City of Benton Harbor makes a fixed rate general fund contribution. The Airports other funding comes from fuel sales and rents to those who use the hangars and runways. The Airport helps the communities to retain and attract business which provide additional tax base.	Benton Harbor City, St. Joseph City, Benton Twp, St. Joseph Twp, Lincoln Twp, Royalton	Value Added
Medic 1 Ambulance	20 years- Medic 1 provides emergency ambulance service to surrounding communities. The service is primarily funded through patient billing but is also funded through municipal subsidies. We contribute approximately \$95,000 annually to Medic 1.	20 Communities	Value Added
Berrien County Emergency Worker Decontamination Site	1 year- BCT Fire Station #1 has a designated area within the fire hall to provide decontamination services.	Berrien County	Value Added
Benton Harbor Public Library	20 years- The library is in the City of Benton Harbor and is made available to both City and Township residents. The Township contributes \$115,000 annually to the Library.	City of Benton Harbor	Value Added

General Government Cont.			
Benton Harbor-Benton Township Senior Services	10 years- The County levies .15 mills for the Senior Services. The Senior Center provides a variety of activities for seniors. They provide lunch for a small donation and they also perform vital testing free of charge.	City of Benton Harbor	Value Added
Southwestern Michigan Planning Commission	The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) serves Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties as one of fourteen regional planning and development organizations in the State of Michigan. The SWMPC specializes in providing data, information, maps, and technical assistance for planning and grant writing in Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties. The major program areas include transportation, economic development, community planning, and natural resource protection. We contribute approximately \$9,000 annually.	Communities in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties	Value Added

Estimated Savings Note

Many of our collaborative efforts cannot be quantified in terms of cost savings, but are viewed by the communities involved as “value-added” services for their residents. We can offer an increased level of service because of this cooperation.

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<i>Planned Local Initiative</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Communities / Others Involved</i>	<i>Estimated Savings</i>
Water Agreement with St. Joseph Charter Township	Our recently constructed water plant was built with the intent to provide water to other neighboring communities. We are currently in negotiations to provide water to a portion of St. Joseph Charter Township. We would also provide billing and collection services and distribution maintenance. Increasing the amount of water produced could ultimately assist us in lowering water rates for our residents and St. Joseph Charter Township.	St. Joseph Charter Township	Lower water rates for residents
Building Department Staff Consolidation	We are currently reviewing options for consolidating the finance administrative staff with the building department administrative staff. We currently have one admin staff in the building department. Consolidating the admin staff would provide crossing training and would allow the Township to maintain the level of service in the absence of an admin staff. We are also currently reviewing options of sharing inspectors with other municipalities as a way to save money. Our mechanical and electrical inspectors are currently contract employees paid per inspection.	Internal	Value Added
Information Technology	We currently outsource our IT to a third party. We are currently looking for a neighboring municipality that would be interested in sharing a full time employee.	St. Joseph Charter Township	Value Added/ \$15,000