

City of East Tawas, County of Iosco

Status of prior year proposed Cooperation, Collaboration and/or Consolidation Plans

Tawas Area Regional Electronic Metering System

Estimated savings: \$30,000 yr.

This proposal is on hold at this time because Baldwin Township and the cities of East Tawas and Tawas City were not successful with their application for an Economic Vitality Incentive Program grant to purchase meters and construct the required towers. East Tawas is continuing to purchase the new meters as outlined in our Capital Improvement Plan but funds are not available to construct the towers. All three units of government are still interested in pursuing the cooperative program as funds are available but it does not appear likely that this will happen anytime in the near future due to the lack of funding.

Entities to be involved: Cities of East Tawas and Tawas City, Baldwin Township

Regional Utility Management Plan:

Estimated savings: \$18,000 for East Tawas

The plan was moving forward and we expected that an agreement would be finalized by May 1, 2013. A January 7, 2013 notice from United Water, the firm managing the Tawas Utilities Authority Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Oscoda Township Wastewater Treatment Plant, that they were giving 90 days notice that they were terminating their contract with both entities has effectively stopped progress on this consolidation effort at this time. Both entities are looking at options for operating the plants and will consider the management consolidation effort if feasible. Because of the 90 days notice, we expect to know if the Regional Utility Management Plan will become a reality by mid-April 2013. Since the implementation of this plan is contingent on approval by several units of government, the final decision does not rest with the City of East Tawas.

Entities to be involved: Cities of East Tawas and Tawas City, AuSable Township, Baldwin Township and Oscoda Charter Township

Zoning Administration and Code Enforcement:

Estimated savings: N/A.

No decisions have been made concerning the hiring of an individual to serve as Zoning Administrator and Code Enforcer for the three units of government. At this time all three units of government have part-time staff handling these functions and are comfortable with that arrangement. Because the current arrangement is working for these three units of government, no further efforts will be made at this time to consolidate Zoning Administration and Code Enforcement.

Entities to be involved: Cities of East Tawas and Tawas City, Oscoda Charter Township

County-wide BS&A Software Upgrade

Estimated savings: \$100 yr.

Iosco County currently has eight of the fourteen units of government using BS&A software for their tax collection and all fourteen units use BS&A software for assessing. Although some units of government had been encouraging Iosco County to convert to BS&A software for many years, funding the conversion was a barrier. The County began to seriously consider the conversion in 2012. The County is now in the process of purchasing BS&A software and plans to have the software functional by May 1, 2013. The County will be encouraging the other six units of government to purchase software from BS&A and BS&A is working with those units of government to offer special pricing for tax software. The City of East Tawas already uses BS&A software so the fact that the County is purchasing the tax and assessing software will save the City of East Tawas time and money by not having to manually reconcile the tax settlement and will be able to electronically send the delinquent taxes to the County. Although a slight cost savings will be realized through the software purchase, the savings in time for City staff is the greater benefit.

Entities involved: City of East Tawas, Alabaster Township, AuSable Township, Baldwin Township, Burleigh Township, City of Tawas City, City of Whittemore, County of Iosco, Grant Township, Oscoda Charter Township, Plainfield Township, Sherman Township, Tawas Township and Wilber Township

**City of East Tawas, County of Iosco
Proposed Cooperation, Collaboration and/or Consolidation Plans
January 2013**

East Tawas Branch Library

Estimated savings: None

The City of East Tawas has entered into negotiations with the U.S. Postal Service to lease the upper floor of the existing East Tawas Post Office for an expanded library. The upper floor of the Post Office has been vacant for many years. The City provides financial support for the operation and maintenance of the East Tawas Branch of the Iosco-Arenac District Library. The existing library is located in a building of approximately 3,400 square feet that is owned by the City. Approximately 1,500 square feet of the building are used for the branch library and the remainder of the building is leased by the Iosco-Arenac District Library and houses its administrative offices. The City has been working for many years to find a location for a new or expanded library. Many options have been investigated over the years including building a new library, using the existing building and expanding the library portion of the building, purchasing an existing building to create a new library, and leasing an existing building to create a new library. Numerous locations have been considered over the years. Plans were underway several years ago to build a new library and fund the construction through a capital campaign. However, a feasibility study commissioned by the City prior to initiating a capital campaign indicated that, due to the economic climate at that time, there was not sufficient financial support for the project to make it a reality. Knowing that the second floor of the Post Office was not being used, City officials recently began looking at the building to determine if it would meet the needs of the City. Based on studies and population estimates, a Library Committee has determined that a library that would properly provide service for the population within our service area for the next twenty years should contain 6,000 to 8,000 square feet of usable space. The upper floor of the Post Office building and a vacant mezzanine offer approximately 7,500 square feet so it would be within the target size. The architect that the City used to develop a conceptual drawing of a new library prior to the feasibility study for the capital campaign toured the building and indicated that renovations would be needed but that the space would be suitable for an expanded library. The City is now negotiating terms of a long-term lease with the Postal Service and the City Council will need to decide if pursuing the lease is in the best interest of the City. If the City decides to move the library, the Iosco-Arenac District Library has already indicated that they would like to take over the entire building that they now share with the branch library.

Timeline - January to April 2013 - continue negotiating a proposed lease. If the City Council determines that lease terms are favorable, the City would expect to sign the lease in the Spring of 2013 and begin renovation of the building. The renovation would include the addition of an elevator. Following the installation of the elevator, the City would expect to perform the renovations in phases. If the project moves forward, the City would anticipate that the library could be opened to patrons by the end of 2013.

Benefits - Although no cost savings will be realized by the City for this cooperative and collaborative effort, there will be many other benefits to the City, the Iosco-Arenac District Library and the U.S. Postal Service. The patrons of the library would have expanded services in the larger library. The library will be able to provide space for many library-related activities that are currently not provided because of the severe lack of space in the existing building. The existing library does not have room for enough computers to satisfy the needs of patrons so patrons often have to wait to use the computers and the librarian has to enforce strict time limits on the use of the computers. The Iosco-Arenac District Library would fund the purchase of additional computers, purchase additional books, provide additional resources and would help finance other technological improvements. The District Library is cramped for space in the portion of the building they lease from the City. They are very interested in being able to use the entire building for their administrative offices. Expanding the space that the District Library currently leases would increase the lease payments to the City and would help to offset the additional operation and maintenance costs of an expanded library. The U.S. Postal Service will benefit by having a tenant to lease the upper floor of the building and remodeled accessibility to the upper portion of the building. This will give a financial boost to the U.S. Postal Service and allow them to make use of a vacant floor of the building. As tenants, the City would also be paying a portion of the utility costs for the building which is also a financial benefit for the Postal Service.

Entities to be involved: City of East Tawas, U.S. Postal Service, Iosco-Arenac District Library.