



## NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

The New Jersey Shared Services Association (NJSSA) prepared this document on behalf of the New Jersey Association of Counties.

### ***Setting the Stage***

- In 2010, New Jersey taxpayers worked nearly four months (until April 25) to pay their total tax bill, ranking them 2nd highest in the nation.
- Estimated at nearly 12% of income, New Jersey's state/local tax burden percentage is the highest in the country and well above the national average of 9.7%.
- New Jersey property taxes rose 72% from 1999 to 2009 to an average of \$7,281, according to Department of Community Affairs. These are the highest property taxes in the USA.
- NJ has more government per sq. mile than any other state in the Union - 566 municipal governments and over 600 school districts, hundreds of autonomous authorities and commissions, and 21 county governments. This is a distinct local government agency for every 5 sq. miles of land mass in the state. And all of those government entities – more than 1,400 in all – have the power to tax real estate.
- In 2009, NJ had an average of 81 government workers per sq. mile (state=154,500 workers and local=444,000 workers). The national average, according to the Census Bureau, is 6 government workers per sq. mile.
- Municipalities (and school districts) are trying to cope with a nasty “perfect storm” of fiscal pressure: an economic downturn that has lasted longer than anyone would like, reductions in state aid, ever increasing pension and healthcare costs, costly public employee salary increases driven by multi-year union contracts and interest-arbitration awards, and now a 2% cap on their tax levy.
- NJ Taxpayers are begging for relief...
  - High net worth individuals and retirees have been voting with their feet...leaving the state for more tax-friendly environs.
  - The real estate market has been undergoing significant change, e.g., the value of all taxable property in Morris County dropped approximately \$1.3 billion in the past year, with 30 of the county's 39 towns recording drops in their 2010 net valuations — a measure of the value of all taxable property in a municipality.

- The economy is squeezing business owners and workers in the private sector – with fewer opportunities for expansion/growth, lower incomes, and lost jobs.
- Something has to give.....

### ***Shared Services: How It Has Worked***

- NJ Municipalities have long explored and entered into local agreements for the sharing of services.
  - Feasibility studies, with or without outside consultative support, attempt to identify mutual benefit and value; and
  - Elected officials are challenged to balance the demand for high quality service delivery with the demand for a lower cost of government.

### ***Shared Services Legislation***

- The Uniform Shared Services and Consolidation Act, P.L.2007, c.63 (C.40A:65-1, *et seq.*) provided a new shared service statute and more options for local units wishing to achieve local government efficiencies and reduce local expenses.

### ***New Jersey Shared Services Association (NJSSA)***

- Formed in 2008, NJSSA is a non-profit association that proactively promotes increased efficiency in the delivery of services, while reducing the costs of local government. NJSSA members focus in the areas of advocacy, policy development, and education; while offering non-partisan advisory services to all local public entities and selected non-profit associations.
- There are tangible benefits to the networking among NJSSA members, who represent a majority of the 21 Counties in NJ. Affiliate members include Rutgers School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) and Center for Government Research (CGR).
  - Shared services coordinators provide “arms and legs” to local government entities considering sharing arrangements to seek grants, write RFPs, offer consultative advice, and provide administrative support; and
  - Produce ideas for sharing, communicate specifics of successes/failures, share work product such as RFPs and shared service agreements

### ***DCA Funded Grant Support***

- Dept of Community Affairs (DCA) COUNT grant funding has been available for shared services coordinators over the last several years; however...11

grants expire during or at the end of 2010; 5 will end in 2011; and one extends into 2013.

- The SHARE Grant program which provided millions of dollars for funding shared services feasibility studies and implementation support is no longer available from the state.

### ***Some Common Examples of Successful Shared Services***

- **Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Funds:** The largest municipal property/casualty risk pool in the country; the MEL provides excess insurance and services to 19 local Joint Insurance Funds (JIFs) representing over 60% of all local governments in New Jersey; saving New Jersey taxpayers over \$835 million to date (from 1985).
- **Cooperative purchasing:** There are many other cooperatives, pooled purchasing units, and cooperative purchasing entities for municipalities and school districts throughout in NJ, including state negotiated pricing contracts. For example, Morris County's Cooperative Pricing Council (CPC) serves over 200 government entities in 8 counties and has saved members more \$13 million. Participating agencies pool their purchasing power to receive discounted prices on a wide range of goods and services and currently have access to 59 active contracts covering everything from road resurfacing, rock salt, and automobiles to sporting goods, uniforms, and office supplies.
- **9-1-1 communications and emergency dispatching:** Faced with high costs for upcoming mandated equipment upgrades and budget shortfalls, officials are increasingly joining consolidated communications centers across the state to route police, fire, emergency medical services and 911 calls.
  - Gloucester County's Police Communications Center provides police dispatching for all 24 municipalities along with the county Sheriff's Department, the Prosecutor's Office, SWAT & Emergency Response Teams. The County has been providing dispatching services for fire departments and EMS since the 1980's.
  - Somerset County also has an advanced communications center and is actively working to bring all of its municipalities on board as a way for those towns to save significant tax dollars and improve the quality of life-saving services. Currently 18 of the 21 communities in Somerset are involved in these services.
  - In Sept 2010, Bergen County opened its \$12.4 million Public Safety Operations Center in Mahwah, on the Bergen County Police and Fire Academy campus. The center will be a dispatch center for police, fire, and ambulance calls and an emergency management office; and there is already a waiting list for the service. Overall savings for participating municipalities are projected in the \$100s of thousands of dollars.

- Other counties such as Morris, Burlington, Camden, and Monmouth have been active in providing regional emergency communications for many years.
- **Public health services:** About 92% of NJ municipalities participate in some form of shared services arrangement for the delivery of local public health services and 9 counties have health departments that support the entire county. Most recently, Sussex County completed consolidation of all local health services from its 24 municipalities into one county-led agency.
- **Animal control and sheltering:** A number of counties, including Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Gloucester, and Ocean provide full or partial services in this area, often in conjunction with a non-profit organization and other contracted resources; others have studies underway.
- **Juvenile detention/youth shelter services:** Morris County's Juvenile Detention Center and Youth Shelter have become the regional facilities for youth in the area, serving the surrounding counties of Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon and Bergen. Morris brings in about \$1.15 million in revenue while making better use of its state-of-the art facilities; while participating counties are saving big bucks – as examples: Warren will save \$4.4 million over the life of the agreement on detention services; and Sussex projects \$800,000 over 2 years for shelter services.

In 2009, Gloucester regionalized juvenile detention services with neighboring and near-by counties. Partnering counties in this effort include Camden, Cumberland, Burlington, and Middlesex Counties. The Gloucester saves over \$1 million dollars annually through this regional effort.

### ***Some Unique Examples of Successful Shared Services***

- Morris County created and innovative Renewable Energy Program, now known as the “Morris Model”, which offers a blueprint for affordable solar electricity. This is a public/private partnership with solar energy provider Tioga Energy and installation contractor SunDurance Energy. The “Morris Model” refers to the innovative hybrid solar financing, whereby the MCIA issued state-approved government bonds guaranteed by the Freeholders to finance renewable energy projects, and the project developer, Tioga Energy, qualifies for the Federal tax incentives that would normally not be available to public entities. There is no “out-of-pocket” expense for renewable energy program participants, thus no referendum for schools, no bonding of debt for local government entities.

Under the terms of the 15-year power purchase agreement (PPA), Morris County will purchase the electricity generated by the systems at a price that is approximately 35% less than that charged by the utility.

During that 15-year period, the combined solar energy systems will generate 51,500 megawatt-hours (MWh) of clean energy, creating a carbon offset equivalent to taking more than 200 passenger vehicles off the road each year.

Initial construction which encompasses 19 local school and county facilities was initiated in June. When completed, the pilot project will have installed over 14,000 solar panels resulting in an energy savings of more than \$3.8 million. To date, the Authority has received expressions of interest from over 44 government entities totaling 7 million square feet of roof space.

This program was awarded a 2010 Innovation Award from the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) for promoting and accelerating the adoption of renewable energy technologies.

- In 2007, Gloucester County became the first in New Jersey to launch a regionalized county-based EMS program. In the 1st year, the original ten participating municipalities saved \$2.6 million in avoided costs, and from its inception, EMS services have been markedly improved through quicker response times, a crucial life saving factor. As of spring 2009, 14 of the 24 municipalities had joined the county service. The County's regionalized EMS program was awarded the 2009 Achievement Award winner for Regionalized Medical Services by the National Association of Counties (NACo). GCEMS was one of only three New Jersey programs to win the national achievement.

***Shared Services: Challenges***

- Shared services facing most resistance:
  - Police and fire services
  - Municipal courts
  - Education services
- What are the barriers?

①	②	③
<u>Thought Process/Behavior</u>	<u>Costs/Service Levels</u>	<u>Other Barriers</u>
Willingness to Consider New Ideas & Delivery Models	Coverage of Start-Up Costs & Other Financial Incentives	Certain NJ Statutes
Short vs. Long Term Focus	Viable Cost Allocation Methodologies	Civil Service/Tenure Regulations
Politics and Personalities	“Win-Win” Agreement Negotiations	Unions / Labor Agreements
“Home Rule” Mindsets	Service Level Expectations / Maintenance of Service Levels	Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Awards
Territorial Leadership / Protectionist Dept Heads /	“Right-Sizing” Personnel	Partner Proximity and Size (Including Cross-County)
Loss of Control Fears	Term of Union Agreements	Existing Management Structures / Fragmented Organization
Jobs Protection vs. Taxpayer		

## ***Shared Services on the Horizon***

- A number of counties this year completed a study to determine whether they could save money and improve coverage by pooling their resources in the **New Jersey Counties Joint Insurance Fund**. The results of the study showed participating counties could reduce their insurance costs by as much as 25%; they could purchase more coverage with less money; and they could reduce their overall risks with comprehensive workplace training and legal case management.
- The Legislature enacted a pilot program under which **Gloucester County** will begin consolidating all of the property tax assessments for its municipalities. In other words, no longer will each town in the county have to staff and supply its own tax assessor's office. The result will be millions of dollars in savings countywide.
- 17 **Essex County** municipalities are currently working together to expand shared services and help shape legislation and policy at the state and local levels through the recently established the **Municipal Council Exchange**.
- A **Middlesex County** initiative has been announced re: development of a **five-year plan to improve efficiency in county and municipal government, focusing in part on regionalization of services**. Possibilities include using county information and technology services to assist the municipalities; regionalizing property tax assessment and collection; creating a regional senior citizen program; the establishment of a joint health insurance fund; and providing a wireless communications network for county agencies and municipalities.
- **Passaic County** and municipal officials held a **Shared Services Forum** in August 2010 with the sixteen municipal Business Administrators/Clerks to explore shared services opportunities. The results of a Municipal Shared Services Efficiency Study identified many small to county-wide shared-services interests and opportunities available for municipalities to consider and use.
- **Salem County** recently formed a 10-member committee, known as the **Shared Services Working Group**, that meets quarterly and will participate, assist, and encourage the expansion of shared services within the county. The group is charged with identifying potential opportunities, creating a framework for governmental units to create durable shared services agreements, and to provide a foundation to ensure long-term viability.
- The **Warren-Morris Council of Governments** has 12 member communities from Warren County, 2 from western Morris County, and 1 from Hunterdon County. This organization recently obtained non-profit status and a COUNT grant from the state to fund its efforts in shared services.
- A "grass-roots", municipality-led initiative in **Morris County**, known as **Government Efficiency Movement**, has undertaken study in 8 different municipal service delivery areas. The goal of this group, made up of current and former elected officials, is to "Rethink Government from the Ground Up".

Recently delivered conceptual recommendations in 5 of the 8 areas identified an opportunity to save between 10% - 20% of the municipal portion of property tax bills by moving to regional services.

- Health Services
  - Regional Police
  - Tax Assessment
  - Tax Collection
  - Municipal Technology Solutions
- The deciding factors associated with successful consolidation or regionalization of local government agencies and reaping the financial and operational benefits will largely fall to:
    - The leadership of elected officials,
    - The willingness of municipal (and school) officials to embrace change, and
    - The desire of the public to demand effectiveness and efficiency in local government operations at lower cost.

## **ADDENDUM**

Some shared services success across the state includes, but is not limited to, the following examples by County as reported on various County websites, in the media, and by input from NJSSA members:

### ***Atlantic County***

- Shared services agreements have been in place for snow removal, street sweeping, road improvements, and purchasing agreements for many years.
- Further examples of existing shared services include the implementation of a countywide emergency communications system; a regional animal shelter; construction of a regional emergency services training center, police training pistol range, and procurement of an emergency mobile command vehicle; countywide fleet purchasing and maintenance; countywide stormwater maintenance; and county supported record retention for municipalities.
- On the municipal front, Northfield, Linwood and Somers Point each participate on a shared-services committee. The first 2 communities have already collaborated to provide sewer, ambulance (saving \$200,000 annually), school (via a regional high school), court services (saving nearly \$700,000 over 6 years)....and have also broached what is unthinkable in most towns — asking whether police and fire departments could merge.

### ***Bergen County***

- Sharing services in the areas of public health, public works, and records management.
- A Wellness Discount Program, developed by Bergen, is offered to other Counties across the state as part of a shared services agreement. Participating Counties can make the program available to all residents, offering discounts on prescription drugs, hearing exams and hearing aids, vision exams, eyeglasses and contact lenses, diabetic supplies and more. The discount can be used by residents without a prescription drug benefit program or as a supplement for an insurance plan.
- Created the Bergen Municipal Bank allowing municipalities, school districts, and non-profits to finance equipment purchases or minor capital improvements at the lowest interest rates available at any time of the year
- Regionalizing 9-1-1 communications and public safety dispatch
- Exploring a county ambulance transport insurance reclamation program that would allow insurance dollars to be returned to local municipalities and volunteer corps to help defray the growing cost of providing 24-hour local ambulance service.



- Also looking at transportation, air quality, sewage, and public safety which are all regional problems; and require regional solutions.
- Periodically funds shared services feasibility studies (most recently with two studies related to joint municipal court services).

### ***Burlington County***

- Offers regional planning and economic development (including GIS services); provides free in-kind professional services for engineering, property valuation, economic and redevelopment projects; and participates in ongoing analysis of shared services opportunities.
- Sharing services with municipalities in the areas of public health, animal sheltering, vehicle washing facilities, library services, grant writing, and records management.
- Developed and provided—at no cost to their 40 municipalities—storm water management plans to help relieve the significant financial burdens imposed upon municipalities by State regulatory requirements.
- Providing a county landfill, Municipal Apartment Condominium Collection Services (MACCS) for solid waste collection for a consortium of 11 towns, and a countywide recycling program.
- Facilitated Riverside, Delanco, and Delran joining with one another to share a salt storage facility, saving these townships \$350,000.
- Recently hosted emergency response tactical maneuvers under, on, and atop the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge - 75 representatives from 10 police units participated in a swift water rescue using boats and a helicopter and searched for bombs using a K-9 unit.
- Sponsors energy audits of town and school buildings, and applies on the entity's behalf for funding from New Jersey's Board of Public Utilities.

### ***Camden County***

- Spearheaded the Tri-County Economic Development Summit with Burlington and Gloucester counties to promote the region and to conduct feasibility of wi-fi service for tri-county region.
- Some of the shared services currently provided to municipalities include pooled financing; GIS services; recycling grants; animal control and sheltering; regionalized health, social, and senior services; countywide library services; countywide storm and wastewater management planning; 9-1-1 communications for police, fire, and ambulance services; public safety training; and cooperative purchasing program for energy.
- The provision and expense of Medical Examiners Office is now shared by Camden, Gloucester and Salem counties.

- Records management program in conjunction w/ 18 municipalities to inventory, organize, and digitize government records
- Research underway by Camden County College's Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility to identify the cost savings and operating efficiencies that can be achieved through restructuring, centralization, shared-services arrangements or any other new configuration of county government services.
- Five adjacent communities have undertaken a feasibility study to streamline and improve delivery of police services among the local police departments.
- Evaluating the transition to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) from analog for county telephony and possible provisioning to other local government units through cooperative purchasing.

### ***Cape May County***

- Current county managed regional services include public safety training, animal shelter, health department, and cooperative purchasing.
- Municipally managed regional services include joint construction offices, municipal court services, and consolidated police services for Cape May City, West Cape May, and Cape May Point.
- Studies are underway for solid waste collection (5 municipalities) and consolidation of 9-1-1 communications, and county/municipal electronic connectivity.
- Shared services agreements are pending for records management and facilities maintenance.

### **Cumberland County**

- Records management program to inventory, organize, and digitize government records; including the completion of a records storage facility that can be shared with municipalities.

### **Essex County**

- 17 Essex County municipalities are currently working together to expand shared services and help shape legislation and policy at the state and local levels through the recently established the Municipal Council Exchange.
- Some examples of shared services include purchasing, street sweeper rentals, leaf disposal, joint recreation programs, equipment purchases, electronic recycling, lawn services, animal control, and maintenance of sewer and water systems.

- Also under consideration are alternative health benefit plans for municipal workers, a county pilot of a police data integrated system, and future opportunities to purchase gas and electricity as a purchasing group.
- Essex County has been successful generating new revenue by housing Federal inmates and immigration detainees in the Essex County Correctional Facility; accepting inmates who require medical attention from Union and Hudson Counties at a locked medical unit at East Orange General Hospital; accepting juvenile detainees from Passaic County at the Essex County Juvenile Detention Facility; and accepting patients from Passaic and Middlesex Counties at the Essex County Hospital Center. These initiatives have generated about \$40 million in new revenue for the county.

### **Gloucester County**

- In 2009, Gloucester regionalized juvenile detention services with neighboring and near-by counties, including Camden, Cumberland, Burlington, and Middlesex Counties. The Gloucester saves over \$1 million dollars annually through this regional effort.
- Work is underway on implementing a county-wide Tax Assessors office. Savings, estimated at \$1.5 million annually, will be realized through the sharing of staff and by equalizing the system.
- 14 of the 24 municipalities have joined a regionalized county-based EMS program. In the 1st year, the original 10 municipalities saved \$2.6 million in avoided costs. This program was awarded the 2009 Achievement Award for Regionalized Medical Services by the National Association of Counties (NACo), one of only three New Jersey programs to win the national achievement.
- Gloucester County's Police Communications Center provides police dispatching for all 24 municipalities along with the Prosecutor's Office, SWAT & ERT Teams. The County has been providing dispatching services for fire departments and EMS since the 1980's.
- Since 2001, Gloucester County Special Services School District (GCSSSD) and Gloucester County Institute of Technology (GCIT) have been sharing an administration, equipment, facilities and other staff, saving taxpayers \$1.3 million annually. In 2008, the Freeholders also merged the Boards of Education for the two districts. As published by the NJ Department of Education Comparative Spending Guide, for the last 5 consecutive years, GCSSSD has been ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in New Jersey for the lowest total administrative cost per pupil. Additionally, GCIT is now at its lowest administrative cost per pupil and is now ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- A regionalized program is available where the county and its 24 municipalities work together to eliminate the duplicative efforts of separate stormwater plans, equipment, materials and buildings. This includes the construction of the five regional salt storage sheds, street sweepers for all municipalities to use, a website for public education, and other equipment and facilities. A

recent addition is the installation of a wheel washing system at the Gloucester County Solid Waste Complex in South Harrison Township.

- Gloucester County Animal Shelter (GCAS) provides animal shelter services as well as animal control duties for the 24 municipalities of the County.
- As of 2009, 14 of 24 municipalities are part of the county library system.
- The county has implemented two municipal shared services related to records management – one focused on Law Enforcement, enabling document integration into the Prosecutor’s certified EDMS (electronic document management system) via Infoshare software; and the other organizing and directing a countywide municipal needs assessment for each of its 24 municipalities.
- Health Services are provided through contracts with all 24 municipalities of Gloucester County for a range of public health nursing activities, environmental health services, public health information and health education services to all residents of Gloucester County.

### ***Hunterdon County***

- Current shared services include municipality-to-municipality sharing of tax assessor, recycling, and police services; as well as field maintenance services between a municipality and a school district.

### ***Mercer County***

- Current shared services include a cooperative purchasing system; curbside recycling for residents and small businesses in 11 of 13 municipalities; a Police Academy that provides training and recruitment for all municipal and county law enforcement agencies; countywide records management projects and a centralized Records Storage Facility and Service Center for 10 of 13 municipalities; regional GIS and aerial pictometry services; and an equipment inventory database and sharing program.
- Transportation services for public and private schools through the Special Services School District; Route 130 Bus Service serving 4 municipalities along the corridor; and non-emergency transportation to county residents who are elderly (age 60+) or disabled.
- Emergency Communications System upgrades for municipalities for a county wide APCO compliant digital trunked radio system.
- Emergency Communications providing fire dispatch services to 6 municipalities; and possible expansion to fire/EMS centralized dispatch.
- The “Mercer at Play” program converted a 51-acre airstrip into a shared recreational area serving four municipalities. The program matches municipal contributions for outdoor recreational facilities and doubles the match when municipalities apply for a grant funding support together.

- Consolidated the positions of Superintendent for Special Services School District and Vocational Technical School into one position.
- Vehicle washing facility assessment is underway with municipalities to assess their current vehicle wash facility needs and compliance to DEP stormwater regulations.

### ***Middlesex County***

- The “Common Cents” cooperative purchasing program uses the County's buying power to reduce the cost of goods and services for all 25 municipalities and has been joined with the Middlesex County Education Services Commission buying group to provide new buying opportunities for all Middlesex County School Districts.
- The County is also working with DCA to leverage existing state technology resources to create a pilot Shared Services Portal for use by all municipalities, agencies, authorities, and school districts to explore shared services and benefit from an interactive pricing database for goods and services.
- A number of municipalities and local authorities participate in an electric aggregation overseen by the Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission that offers energy savings on a longer-term basis.
- Other services currently shared include GIS and aerial pictometry services; countywide stormwater management, solid waste management, public health services between the county and 20 municipalities; public records storage; certain shared transportation facilities; and a vehicle washing facility initiative with four municipalities.
- Underway are a number of municipal feasibility studies evaluating the sharing of public safety dispatch for 9-1-1 service; and assisting the Township of Woodbridge and the Borough of Carteret with their sanitation initiative.
- An initiative has been announced the development of a five-year plan to improve efficiency in county and municipal government, focusing in part on regionalization of services. Possibilities include using county information and technology services to assist the municipalities; regionalizing property tax assessment and collection; creating a regional senior citizen program; the establishment of a joint health insurance fund; and providing a wireless communications network for county agencies and municipalities.

### ***Monmouth County***

- The County, as lead agency, has entered into a shared services agreement with 12 of NJ's 21 Counties – Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Mercer, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, and Sussex – for use of an E-filing system that will enable subscribers, such as banks, law firms, mortgage lenders and title companies, to send, receive, and track their

records and real estate filings electronically. This significantly streamlines the recording process for land records.

- A 9-1-1 Dispatch Program is administered through the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office. Currently, 45 Monmouth municipalities, 2 military facilities, 9 police departments, 30 fire departments and 22 first aid squads utilize this valuable and cost efficient shared service. In addition, back up services are provided to 14 agencies through the county.
- In conjunction with the Offices of Emergency Management and Finance, a shared services effort has been undertaken to assist 10 municipalities in developing an Automated Flood Warning System.
- Through the County Coop Purchasing Program, any municipality or school district can purchase the same goods and services being purchased by the County per their contracts and take advantage of County purchasing power for lower rates. Also available is a Commodity Resale System for municipalities.
- The Information Technology Services (MCITS) Department provides valuable shared services technical assistance, training courses and other advisory services to Monmouth departments, agencies, school boards, and municipalities at a greatly reduced cost. Some areas of shared services assistance provided through the department include:
  - Network operations
  - Voice infrastructure and cabling for up to 12 municipal libraries
  - Shared GIS services to 33 municipalities
  - Technical assistance in areas such as engineering, zoning, code enforcement, tax assessment, parks, public health, and so forth.
  - Application development support for websites, payroll, timekeeping, elections
- The County Department of Public Works and Engineering allows municipalities to request various services from the county, such as street sweeping, snow plowing, application and storage of salt, specialized mowing, use of equipment (with operator), guardrail installation, tree trimming, vehicle repair, towing, diesel emission inspection, fueling, and truck washing.
- An Open Public Records shared services program allows for local government entities to scan records electronically into the county master database system. The 38 municipalities currently participating avoid the costs associated with designing, implementing and maintaining their own public records search and management systems and, according to [NJArchives.org](http://NJArchives.org), the cost savings over a several year period is in the multi-million dollar range.
- The County Tax Board offers a MOD IV shared service that currently serves 41 of the 53 Monmouth County municipalities. As all have to utilize state-mandated tax assessment software, municipalities utilizing the county software system can obtain the service at a greatly reduced price compared to outsourcing the service to the private sector.

## ***Morris County***

- Morris County created an innovative Renewable Energy Program, now known as the “Morris Model”, which is a public/private partnership for solar energy. Electricity generated by the systems is purchased at a price that is approximately 35% less than that charged by the public utility and creates a carbon offset equivalent to taking more than 200 passenger vehicles off the road each year. The initial project, which encompasses 19 local school and county facilities, will install over 14,000 solar panels resulting in an energy savings of more than \$3.8 million. This program was awarded a 2010 Innovation Award from the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) for promoting and accelerating the adoption of renewable energy technologies.
- The County and 36 of its 39 municipalities are participating in a shared records management program.
- The Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council, managed by Township of Randolph as lead agency, provides members with the ability to pool their purchasing power to receive discounted prices on a wide range of goods and services, covering everything from road resurfacing, rock salt and automobiles to sporting goods, uniforms and office supplies. Participants include municipalities, counties, police departments, school districts, sewerage authorities, housing authorities, and municipal utilities authorities from 8 different Counties —Morris, Essex, Hunterdon, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren. Since its formation in 1974, the MCCPC’s shared services effort has saved taxpayers more than \$12.7 million.
- Morris County’s Juvenile Detention Center and Youth Shelter have become the regional facilities for youth in the area, serving the surrounding counties of Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon and Bergen. Morris brings in about \$1.15 million in revenue while making better use of its state-of-the art facilities; while participating counties are saving big bucks – as examples: Warren will save \$4.4 million over the life of the agreement on detention services; and Sussex projects \$800,000 over 2 years for shelter services.
- A 5 year shared services agreement for medical examiner services was recently signed between Warren and Morris counties.
- 33 of the 39 municipalities have consolidated into their welfare operations into the County’s Office of Temporary Assistance (OTA). Of the 6 remaining, 3 are in the process or are in discussion with OTA.
- The Educational Services Commission provides school districts access to shared services in the areas of health and environmental safety, professional and computer support services, business office services, coordinated regional transportation, and so forth.
- The Public Safety Communications and Emergency Operations Center currently serves 15 Municipalities with full dispatching & 9-1-1 service and 2 Municipalities with 9-1-1 service only. The Center is currently in contract

discussion with 10 additional municipalities to provide full services. Municipal savings are significant, estimated at up to \$6.6 million, for current and future participants.

- A new program is being implemented to share GIS service capabilities, personnel, and other resources with all 39 municipalities. As examples, savings from 3 recent municipality projects: 1) 10 plate master plan mapping – savings \$12,000; 2) municipal open space/land management online – savings \$10,000; and 3) digital tax map production and maintenance – savings \$80,000. This GIS program provides high value to participating municipalities and, best of all, is *budget neutral* for the County.
- Morris County's Human Services Department in partnership with a variety of non-profit entities are working together to provide the ultimate in non-profit shared services, with the goal to provide clients with a one-stop center for their human service needs at the former Greystone property, now known as Central Park of Morris.
- County public works equipment and operating personnel are shared with all 39 municipalities, as requested. The program provides participants the ability to rent a variety of DPW equipment with experienced operators using a standard fee schedule.
- Various municipalities have entered into joint purchase and usage agreements for specialty equipment in order to reduce overall capital expenditures.
- A 5-town joint municipal court was established in February 2009, saving an estimated \$2.65 million over the life of the shared services agreement.
- A grass roots, municipality-led initiative, known as Government Efficiency Movement, has undertaken study in 8 different municipal service delivery areas. The goal of this group, made up of current and former elected officials, is to "Rethink Government from the Ground Up". Recently delivered conceptual recommendations in 5 of the 8 areas identified an opportunity to save more than \$40 million or between 10% - 20% of the municipal portion of property tax bills by moving to regional services.

### ***Ocean County***

- County government and 25 of its 33 municipalities are participating in a shared records management program.
- The Northern Ocean County Recycling Center is a premier public/private partnership between Ocean County and Waste Management Recycle America that allows municipalities to take advantage of an easier, single stream recycling program. Nearly all communities have adopted this program and initial reports indicate that recycling tonnage has increased by 20%.



### ***Passaic County***

- Closing the juvenile detention center, as part of a shared services agreement with Essex County, is estimated to save Passaic County taxpayers \$128 million over 10 years.
- County and municipal officials held a Shared Services Forum in August 2010 with the sixteen municipal Business Administrators/Clerks to explore shared services opportunities. The results of a Municipal Shared Services Efficiency Study identified many small to county-wide shared-services interests and opportunities available for municipalities to consider and use.
- Other opportunities such as interconnectivity utilizing the county's fiber optic system; and baselining municipal financial performance to establish per-capita service costs are under discussion.

### ***Salem County***

- Agreements have been developed for wastewater management, IT broadband services, mental health administration, and public health services with 3 counties sharing a Public Health Officer.
- The County recently formed a 10-member committee, known as the Shared Services Working Group, that meets quarterly and will participate, assist, and encourage the expansion of shared services within the county. The group is charged with identifying potential opportunities, creating a framework for governmental units to create durable shared services agreements, and to provide a foundation to ensure long-term viability.
- This group is exploring a redesigned Emergency Medical Service that works with volunteer ambulance squads to provide a quicker response time for ambulance coverage; as well as a countywide Local Enforcing Agency for fire inspectors; and cooperative purchasing.

### ***Somerset County***

- A 2007 summit hosted by the county identified 12 areas that should be explored for shared services with focus on finding ways for municipalities to jointly provide one or more municipal services to others, while maintaining their municipal identity.
- Law enforcement, tax assessment, municipal courts, and construction code enforcement were selected for study because of the similarities among municipalities and potential savings, with law enforcement moving ahead first.
- The completed law enforcement study will be released shortly to the public. The study collected information about the county's 19 departments and introduces the concept of a countywide police department with northern,

central and southern precincts, as well as substantiating projected savings, detailing benefits and detriments, and identifying legislative hurdles.

- The county dispatches police on a full-time basis for the Prosecutor's Office, the Sheriff's Office, and six municipalities; handles all 9-1-1 calls with the exception of those in four towns, and dispatches 30 to 40 different fire companies.
- The county also handles health department duties for 5 municipalities.
- Three communities share ownership and responsibility for a skate park.
- Several local entities (municipalities and school districts) have agreed to share maintenance for various facilities.
- Studies are underway for the possible consolidation of Public Works Facilities (several towns and county are assessing the feasibility of combining their public works departments, functions and assets).

### ***Sussex County***

- Has been very active in the area of shared services. Some of the county-provided municipal shared services include countywide health services, winter road maintenance, fueling agreements, salt/grit storage and loading, GIS services, senior programs, employee assistance programs, a cooperative purchasing system in conjunction w/ Morris County, library services, and DPW equipment usage.
- Other county-to-county sharing includes meals-on-wheels (Passaic) and youth shelter (Morris).
- Municipal-to-municipal sharing includes animal control (3), tax assessment, tax collection, CFO personnel (2), joint court services, construction officials (2), zoning enforcement officers (2), and regional Public Safety Answering Points (6)

### ***Union County***

- Regularly hosts meetings for education, municipal, and county government officials to formulate a series of new cost-savings ideas and offers participating entities the services of a shared services consultant free of charge. Areas explored have included information technologies, emergency communications/911 dispatching, shared DPW equipment and manpower, purchasing, animal control, and parks and recreation.

## ***Warren County***

- The Warren-Morris Council of Governments has 12 member communities from Warren County, 2 from western Morris County, and 1 from Hunterdon County. This organization recently obtained non-profit status and a COUNT grant from the state to fund its efforts in shared services.
- Currently, there are agreements in place among various members to share street sweeping, salt purchase and storage, local police services, the joint purchase of paving equipment, housing rehabilitation, municipal court services, and construction offices.