

**ANALYZING SERVICE DELIVERY
OPTIONS
TOWN OF PORTLAND AND VILLAGE OF
BROCTON, NEW YORK**

Prepared for:

**SUNY Fredonia Center for Rural Regional
Development and Governance**

Kent Gardner, Ph.D.
Project Director

Center for Governmental Research Inc.
37 South Washington Street 826 Broadway 9th Floor
Rochester, NY 14608 New York, NY 10009
(716) 325-6360 (212) 505-9648
[HTTP://WWW.CGR.ORG](http://WWW.CGR.ORG)

February 1999

Center for Governmental Research Inc (CGR)
Mission Statement

CGR is an independent, nonprofit research and management consulting organization that serves the public interest. By developing comprehensive perspectives on issues facing communities, CGR distinguishes itself as a unique professional resource empowering government, business and nonprofit leaders to make informed decisions. CGR takes the initiative to integrate facts and professional judgment into practical recommendations that lead to significant public policy action and organizational change.

Contributing Staff

Joseph Stefko, Principal Report Author

**ANALYZING SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS
TOWN OF PORTLAND AND VILLAGE OF BROCTON,
NEW YORK**

February 1999

Summary

In 1992, the former Rural Services Institute at the State University of New York College at Fredonia began an analysis of municipal services in the Town of Portland and Village of Brocton, New York. Building on the spirit of cooperation which already existed in the community, this effort's goal was to begin identifying "opportunities for delivering services in a more cost efficient manner without jeopardizing the effectiveness of these services." This initial phase of the study developed an overview of Town and Village services and made recommendations toward improving their cost-efficiency.

"More cost effective government" has become a popular buzz-phrase as more communities recognize the need to be as competitive as their component businesses. As companies are challenged everyday to produce a better quality product, the public sector is also challenged to do its work more efficiently. A community must be competitive to maintain economic viability and a positive quality of life for all its citizens.

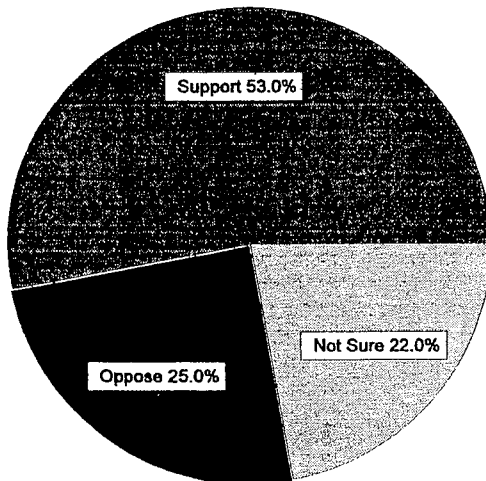
Through the support of the Center for the Development of Rural Regionalism and Governance at SUNY Fredonia, the town and village sought to continue the process of identifying alternative service delivery options. The Appalachian Regional Commission of the Southern Tier Planning Board and the Northern Chautauqua Chamber of Commerce assisted the Brocton-Portland Shared Services Committee in developing a prioritized list of governmental areas to be analyzed for possible shared services or consolidation. The nine-member committee was composed of elected Town and Village officials and other community leaders. The Chautauqua County Industrial Development Agency is currently assisting the Village of Brocton to develop and implement economic development strategies.

This report explores alternative service delivery options for the various governmental service areas identified by the Brocton-Portland Shared Services Committee. Considering a continuum of potentially cost-saving alternatives, the Center for Governmental Research Inc. (CGR) identified the practicality, necessity, and feasibility of implementing structural reforms in the various departments. Where applicable, the savings the community can expect to receive through such alternative strategies are estimated. Depending on the strategies the community chooses, there are opportunities to significantly improve the efficiency of its service provision.

Recommendations are based upon a careful analysis of both the Town and Village budgets. In addition, interviews were conducted with more than thirty elected officials and public-sector employees, various community leaders, and residents from both the Town and Village. We found divided opinions and strong advocates on both sides of the consolidation issue. To measure public sentiment on the issue of shared services and consolidation, a survey was mailed to 1,410 property owners within the community.

741 surveys were returned (over 50 percent). Two-thirds of responses came from Town property owners and one-third from Village property owners, roughly approximating the

Support for Consolidation



Source: CGR Survey of Residents

community's population distribution. An additional 3 percent of respondents failed to identify themselves according to place of residence. Overall, 31 percent of Town and Village residents thought shared services would improve service quality, and 38 percent believed the cost to taxpayers would decrease if more services were shared. Only 14 percent thought that service quality would worsen and 28 percent thought service costs would increase as a result of shared services. More than half of the property owners surveyed support consolidation of the Town and Village into a single political unit, with 54 percent of Town residents and 50 percent of Village

residents supporting such a measure. The survey indicates that residents indeed do support shared services and municipal consolidation as strategies to achieve better service delivery and cost effectiveness.

After exploring all alternatives, CGR recommends that community leaders and residents in the Portland-Brocton community consider consolidation as a primary strategy to improve public services in the most cost effective manner. As an alternative to consolidation, the specific suggestions made in this report can be used as a framework for initiating or furthering the formal sharing of services between the Town of Portland and Village of Brocton.

Table of Contents

Summary	i
Table of Contents	iv
Acknowledgments	vi
Introduction	1
Existing Regional Initiatives	2
A Variety of Service Delivery Alternatives	3
Mutual Aid & Sharing of Buildings and Equipment	4
Contractual Service Arrangements	5
Consolidation of Functions	6
Service Sharing in Portland and Brocton	6
Service Delivery Alternatives in Portland/Brocton	7
Public Works	7
Streets and Highways	7
Utilities	9
Water Supply	9
Electric & Sewer	11
Public Safety	11
Courts	11
Police Protection	14
Fire and Emergency Protection	16
General Services	18
Zoning	18
Facilities	19
Dog Control	20

Survey of Community Residents 21

 Quality of Public Services 22

 Alternative Service Delivery and Consolidation 22

 Concerns Related to Consolidation 24

 Survey Conclusions 24

Conclusion 25

Appendix 28

 Community Officials Interviewed 28

 Shared Services Questionnaire of Portland-Brocton Property Owners 29

 Survey Results 32

Acknowledgments

CGR acknowledges the assistance of the SUNY Fredonia Center for the Development of Rural Regionalism and Governance. In the Center's mission, Len Faulk, Carol Lorenc, and Everett Seastrum have provided invaluable suggestions regarding alternative service delivery and the Portland-Brocton community generally.

As the largest component of the study was dependent on those individuals who play a role in running the Town and Village governments, we are indebted to our interviewees. Each of the thirty-two (32) public employees and community leaders we spoke with lent their knowledge and advice regarding shared services, both as officials and taxpaying residents. Their cooperation and willingness to share their views with us reflects a strong concern for both the community and its residents. Town Clerk Pat Kurtz is also to be commended for her diligent efforts both in scheduling and organizing the interviewing process.

Finally, the work of the Brocton-Portland Shared Services Committee was instrumental to studying the delivery of services and strategies for improving them within the Portland-Brocton community. Committee support and leadership were provided by Southern Tier West and Eric Bridges. The Northern Chautauqua Chamber of Commerce also provided facilitation.

Staff Team

Joseph Stefko, CGR Research Associate, played a leading role in the design, execution, and writing of this study. Patricia Malgieri's input was vital in the crafting of various service alternative recommendations. Jacquie Arcesi and Chaundra Burch facilitated the survey preparation and distribution.

Introduction

The economic well-being of any community depends to a large extent on the ability of municipalities to provide high quality, cost-effective public services. This is of special importance in smaller towns and villages. Now more than ever, municipalities are being forced to do more with less. The challenge to local governments is to maintain dependable, efficient service delivery with a lighter cost burden. In this context, governments across New York State have begun analyzing intermunicipal collaborations and alternative arrangements for service delivery. Without a doubt, intermunicipal cooperation has become the modern equivalent of “United we stand, divided we fall.”

Intermunicipal cooperation takes many forms ranging from shared services to outright consolidation. By cultivating formal cooperative mechanisms, neighboring governments stand to gain potential savings otherwise unavailable to them. Formally analyzing both current and alternative service delivery options affords a municipality the tools it needs for decreasing cost while maintaining (or improving) the effectiveness and efficiency of its service delivery.

The Town of Portland and Village of Brocton, located in north-central Chautauqua County, New York, are neighboring rural municipalities with a combined population of approximately 5,000. Both have recognized the impetus to study alternative service delivery options in a variety of governmental areas. In 1992, an initial study completed by the State University of New York College at Fredonia identified a series of strategies designed to lessen the cost burden on the municipalities while maintaining the effectiveness of their services. Among the areas the 1992 study identified were

- ❖ shared facilities and services by highway and streets departments;
- ❖ mutual municipal facilities and consolidated administrative services;
- ❖ consolidation to a single zoning code enforcement system;
- ❖ a task force charged with facilitating a community dialogue; and
- ❖ the tourism potential of Lake Erie State Park.

In the report which follows, CGR assesses the feasibility of intermunicipal cooperation between Portland and Brocton on a department-by-department basis. This report is designed to facilitate the dialogue necessary for serious consideration of shared or consolidated services. Its recommendations provide the town and village with a strategic framework for moving in the direction of higher cost-efficiency.

Existing Regional Initiatives

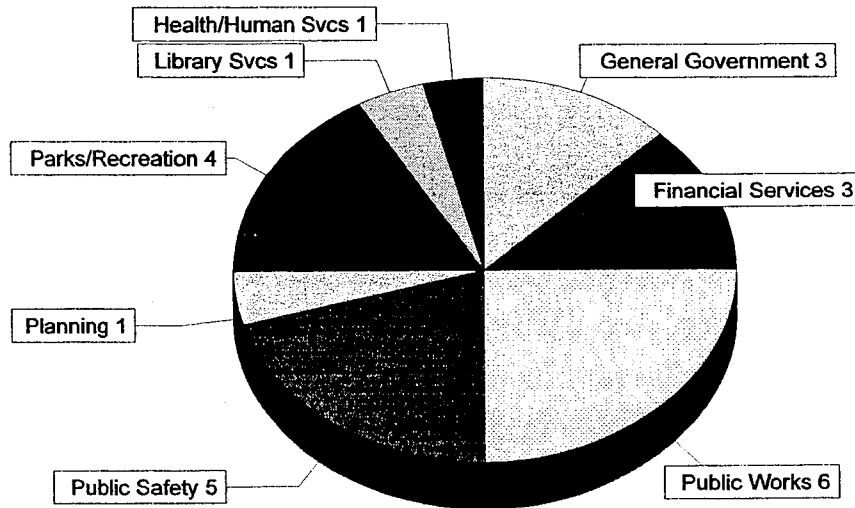
The recent past has seen a renaissance of studies and initiatives aimed at reducing the cost burden of public services while maintaining their effectiveness and efficiency. Throughout Western New York, municipalities are taking steps to streamline the services they provide. A 1997 survey of 278 Western New York cities, towns, and villages reported that municipalities averaged 2.5 collaborative service agreements each.¹

The primary mechanism for moving in this direction has been the sharing or pooling of resources and personnel among individual municipalities. Such a strategy enables smaller towns and villages to apportion the burden of providing public services to smaller populations, while at the same time eliminating the costly duplication of services within a geographically compact area. The recent prominence of such intermunicipal agreements is illustrated by a variety of cooperative ventures:

- ❖ the *Chadwick Bay Region*, a seven-municipality collaboration in northern Chautauqua County which has developed water and sewer agreements, a comprehensive master plan for the region, and unified goals, policies, and action steps;
- ❖ the Jamestown-centered *Metro Six*, a slightly less formal arrangement of neighboring communities designed to bring shared regional concerns to a common table; and
- ❖ the Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew in Erie County have embarked on a variety of shared service and cost arrangements including road maintenance and animal control services. In addition, the Town of Lancaster has formal

¹ Survey by Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth, State University of New York at Buffalo.

Existing Intermunicipal Agreements, Chautauqua County



Source: UB Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth (1997)

agreements with the Town of Alden for public safety, emergency services, and water provision.

These represent a small sample of the types of intermunicipal collaborations undertaken in the Western New York area. As reported in the survey cited earlier, the average Chautauqua County municipality participates in one to two cooperative municipal

agreements each, in areas such as financial, governmental, health/human services, libraries, parks/recreation, planning, public safety, and public works. Public works (highway and streets administration) was the most oft-cited form of intermunicipal cooperation among the 17 responding governments in Chautauqua County. More than 35 percent of Chautauqua County respondents participate in such an agreement with a neighboring municipality. Public works agreements composed more than 30 percent of all municipal collaborations across the nine counties surveyed.² Public safety agreements, especially fire protection, comprised more than 24 percent of all service collaborations.

A Variety of Service Delivery Alternatives

Governments in the Western New York region have begun to recognize the need to examine alternative service delivery options, a situation brought on by the unfortunate reality of financial strain. Communities have begun to seriously consider a variety of ways in which

² Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming counties.

they can cut costs and lower taxes while improving the efficiency of their services. Along a continuum of service alternatives, ranging from the status quo to full consolidation of town and village functions, lie opportunities for mutual aid and grants, contractual service agreements, joint service delivery and administration, shared use of facilities and/or equipment, and select departmental mergers.

Mutual Aid & Sharing of Buildings and Equipment

Mutual aid alternatives present municipalities with collaborative support on an “as needed” basis. Chautauqua County municipalities make extensive use of mutual aid agreements in fire protection, emergency services, and highway/streets administration. Such cooperation can be informal or formal, and afford municipalities the benefit of additional outside personnel, equipment, and expertise when a situation warrants. Municipal political and service control, however, is maintained by each municipality. Most mutual aid arrangements have a procedure for “keeping track” of contributions made by one organization or another, enabling municipalities to accumulate “credits” in a loosely-managed barter system.

Municipalities can also improve their chances of obtaining outside funding by submitting joint applications. Co-application for funding can allow rural or smaller suburban municipalities to capture economies of scale, often a benefit when seeking financial support.

Capital expenditures can be trimmed in cases in which equipment and facilities are jointly used by municipalities. Especially in sectors where capital costs present the greatest financial strain (e.g. fire, highways), an agreement to share expensive equipment can reduce the expenditure burden. An indirect result of equipment sharing is some degree of joint capital planning, providing municipalities with another avenue for cost savings.

Shared facilities also present opportunities for improving the efficiency of services. Given the nature of public services, buildings such as garages and offices are often underused, particularly after normal business hours. A small effort at coordination can eliminate the need to build and maintain two buildings intended for the same purpose within close proximity. The sharing of building space, by bringing employees of two municipalities together, can also stimulate additional formal and informal cooperation.

Despite their benefits, mutual aid and equipment sharing capture a relatively small number of the services provided by municipal governments. These less rigid arrangements are only effective when the administrators of the two programs work well together (making the success dependent on good personal relationships rather than community need). Mutual aid works well for major projects that can be scheduled in advance (such as road maintenance) but is clumsy for frequent, incidental needs. Furthermore, the availability of help from other municipalities depends on the workload of the other community. For critical services, each municipality will want its own personnel on staff. A more robust relationship is required to improve efficiency for routine tasks.

Contractual Service Arrangements

Contractual service agreements present a second form of intermunicipal cooperation. Most tend to arise from situations where one municipality has greater resources or ability to feasibly provide a service, and in effect “sells” that service to neighboring municipalities. Numerous examples are evident in the Chautauqua County region presently, including the aforementioned Chadwick Bay Region. Included in the Region’s arrangement is a provision whereby the City of Dunkirk supplies water and sewer services to “commercial developments outside city boundaries in exchange for 20 percent of the property tax revenues generated by the new developments.”³ Other examples include the water provision contracts the Town of Portland currently maintains with both the Village of Brocton and the City of Dunkirk.

Contractual service agreements offer tremendous potential for cost-effective, responsive delivery of public service. Where a municipality already provides the service and the contract would displace public employees, the use of contracts is controversial. This problem is often dealt with through an agreement on the part of the contractor to hire the employees of the contracting municipality. Municipalities also fear that services provided to the home community of the contractor will be either more timely or of better quality than services provided to the contracting community. Just as in contracts with private sector vendors, contractual arrangements between municipalities should include specific language on performance.

³ Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth, State University of New York at Buffalo. *Survey Findings*.

Consolidation of Functions

At the end of the continuum of service delivery alternatives, consolidation implies a merger of municipal governments (and their functions) into a larger governmental entity which replaces them. In their purest form, consolidated governments can take advantage of "economies of scale" that are only available to larger municipal units. At the same time they offer the potential to reduce the cost burden, standardize policies and services, eliminate costly administrative and service duplication, and maintain (or improve) the efficiency of public services.

Consolidation is not, however, without significant obstacles. In addition to legal complexities, a series of community and political aspects, including loss of autonomy and loss of identity, make consolidation politically difficult, even when the fiscal benefits are fairly unambiguous.

Service Sharing in Portland and Brocton

The seeds for expanded service and administrative cooperation have already been sown in the Portland/Brocton community. At the present time, the highway and streets departments from both Portland and Brocton work together on a semi-regular basis, albeit informally. The Town currently contracts with the Village for provision of water to two of its water districts. Both presently share a single town wide assessor and assessor's office. Finally, Portland contracts with the Village for fire protection in the Town's eastern-most portion. A recent history of working together and frequent intermunicipal cooperation is the context in which the current shared services discussion takes place.

Perhaps most importantly, the Portland-Brocton Shared Services Committee, composed of elected officials from both municipalities, has made the issue of service cooperation a topic of conversation in the community. Both governments are interested in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the services they provide.

Service Delivery Alternatives in Portland/Brocton

In this section, CGR assesses the current structure and relationships among various public service departments in both the Town of Portland and Village of Brocton. For each service area, recommendations are made in the interest of maximizing efficiency and effectiveness, and eliminating unnecessary and costly duplication of both service administration and delivery.

To obtain information on each of the following service areas, CGR staff conducted interviews with thirty-two (32) elected officials (see Appendix), public employees, and non-elected community leaders from both the Town and Village. Interviews were open-ended discussions designed to elicit individual opinions on the workings of specific offices and the delivery of services to the community. The interviews lasted one hour on average, and sought to identify particular areas in Town and Village service provision where efficiency might be improved.

Public Works

Streets and Highways

At the present time, both the Town and Village maintain and fund separate departments responsible for highway and street administration. The Town Highway Department (THD) and the Village Department of Public Works (VDPW) are each administered by a single superintendent, each of whom is the highest paid official in his municipality. Both services also represent the single largest financial appropriations among all service areas in the Town and Village. For Town (without Village) roadways, the Town of Portland appropriated \$250,000 in their 1998 budget, with Village appropriations approaching \$140,000 for highway maintenance-related activities. For purposes of comparison, Town roadways total approximately 65 miles and Village roadways slightly less than 6 miles.

Highway administration represents perhaps the best model of current Town and Village service cooperation. The THD and VDPW work together on a semi-regular basis, sharing man-hours and equipment when larger projects warrant. The two departments currently have a good

working relationship and both superintendents get along well. Past experience between the two departments, however, suggests that the informal nature of this arrangement may present an obstacle to cooperation. Personality conflicts in previous years created a situation where little joint work was done. Despite the sharing of crews and equipment which occurs between Portland and Brocton (as well as with Westfield, Fredonia, Pomfret, and Stockton), no formal mechanisms are in place to guarantee cooperative ventures or joint capital planning. While both the Town and Village participate in the Chautauqua County Mutual Aid Agreement, whereby work and equipment is shared across municipalities on an "equivalent payback" basis, nothing formal exists to encourage or guarantee cooperation on a regular basis.

As the most visible model of intermunicipal cooperation in Portland and Brocton, and considering the amount of cooperation which already occurs between the two departments, highway administration presents the strongest argument for actual consolidation. A consolidated highway department would enable a more efficient use of existing personnel, attending to a concern voiced by representatives of both departments. At the current time, the consolidation of the THD and VDPW would not necessarily entail a decrease in staff size. *Over time*, as the consolidated department learns to work together, some positions will be lost through attrition, leading to additional cost savings.

A consolidated highway department has several advantages over the *status quo*. Duplicate equipment purchases would be eliminated and capital spending projections could be made in the best interests of the entire community. A combined effort would make better use of the specialized skills of each member of what would still be a relatively small highway maintenance department. In light of the debate on whether the current Town highway building is sufficient, a consolidated highway department would allow for a more efficient use of building and storage space. Moving the main highway shop to the 5,500 square foot Village highway building would lessen the immediate need to replace the Town's older 5,000 square-foot storage shop. With the main shop and most equipment storage moving to the Village highway building and 1,500 square foot Village storage area, the remaining 7,000 square feet of space at the Town highway building (3,000 square foot main shop and 4,000 square foot storage shed) would be available for overflow equipment storage. Assuming construction costs of \$20 to \$30 per square foot, eliminating the need to replace the Town's older storage shop would save the community between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

Long term savings would come from a more efficient use of capital equipment and a different configuration of staff. We recommend that the Town Highway Department be the surviving entity and that it absorb the staff now employed by the Village DPW, including the VDPW Superintendent. The VDPW Superintendent would assume the post of Deputy Highway Superintendent in the Town department. Were this post vacated, however, the Town Board and the Town Highway Superintendent would have to decide whether the post should be re-filled or, alternatively, if the position should be re-classified or eliminated altogether.

On a related note, CGR would like to point out that most municipalities have changed their charters to eliminate the post of elected Highway Superintendent. While the incumbent appears to be highly qualified, the post of Highway Superintendent is a technical position best filled by appointment and reporting to the Town Board and Town Supervisor.

Utilities

While a consolidation of public works departments at the Town level can be accomplished with highway and streets departments, the Village generates revenues from water. CGR therefore recommends establishing a utilities department at the Village level, which would be responsible for all administration, billing, and service related to the provision of water services in the community. In light of CGR's recommendation that the VDPW superintendent assume a deputy role in a consolidated town wide department, a senior utility employee (e.g. the sewer plant operator, the head filter plant operator, or the line man) should be appointed to oversee utility administration at the Village level with a nominal increase in salary. This employee would supervise all water provision within the Village and the two Town water districts, as well as sewer and electric services within the Village.

Water Supply

The Village presently owns and operates a water filtration plant, water mains, and other associated infrastructure. In addition to providing water to Village residents at \$1.25 per 1,000 gallons, the Village provides water to residences in Town water districts 1 and 3 for \$3.85 per 1,000 gallons. These two Town districts encompass all of the Hamlet of Portland and the area

between the Village's eastern-most boundary and the Pomfret Town line. In addition to contracting with Brocton for service in districts 1 and 3, Portland maintains a contract with the City of Dunkirk for two additional water districts, for which the Town handles all billing.

The reservoir-based system in the Village is currently maintained by two full-time employees (for purification) and the Village DPW crew (for general repairs and meter readings). The total personnel appropriation by the Village for water administration, supply/power/pumping, purification, and transmission/distribution was \$91,500 in 1998. At the same time, despite the fact that it contracts for all of its water provision, the Town also maintains a full-time water employee at an annual salary of nearly \$25,000.

Administration, service, and billing related to the water distribution system represent the best opportunities to improve efficiency and cut costs. Both the Town and Village presently perform billing. This produces unnecessary confusion among residents as to exactly who their billing entity is, where that bill should be paid, and where they can obtain water-related information. A single town wide billing office would eliminate the disjointed nature of this aspect and make a single office responsible for all billing-related matters. We recommend that the Village assume billing for the entire community, including Town water districts 2 and 4. In addition, the duplication of service and repair personnel between the Town and Village appears to be unnecessary. The Town water employee, despite being salaried out of the water budget, spends much of his time with the Town Highway Department.

At this time, CGR would recommend that all responsibilities related to the provision of water be handled by the Village of Brocton. Considering that the Village owns and operates the related infrastructure and has several water employees at its disposal for administration, repair, and service, the Village is best equipped to be the vehicle for this service within the community. Such a structural modification would bring all billing and water-related service under a single administrative roof, eliminating the division of tasks between Town and Village offices. It would also enable the current Town water employee to join the Highway Department, where he already spends much of his time. The Town would continue to contract with the Village for water provision in districts 1 and 3. The Village would also assume control of contracting for Town water districts 2 and 4, and would reserve the right to provide its own water to those districts if it was willing to provide for the necessary infrastructure.

Electric & Sewer

Electric and sewer represent two service areas where consolidation is an impractical alternative to the status quo. The Village, by nature of having its own electric department and a renewed PAsNY contract, provides relatively low-cost electricity to Village residents. The Town outside of the Village is serviced and billed by Niagara Mohawk. The Village also has its own sewer system, which is used by Village residents and the prison. Town properties in the Greencrest and Van Buren Point areas are serviced by the Pomfret/Portland/Dunkirk sewer district. The remainder of the Town relies on private septic systems for its sewage needs.

Public Safety

Courts

At the current time, the Town and Village each have a municipal court. In the Town of Portland, two part-time justices and a full-time court clerk administer a court which handled approximately 1,500 cases between July 1997 and July 1998. Vehicle and traffic-related violations composed about 15 percent of the total caseload. During this same time period, the Town court had a citation intake of over \$42,500. General appropriations in the 1998 Town budget for court-related costs (including justices, clerk, and attorney) are approximately \$60,000. In the Village of Brocton, a single justice administers a court which is appropriated nearly \$15,000 for 1998. As of 1995-1996, NYS Office of Court Administration figures estimated the annual Village caseload to be slightly more than 400, over 300 of which were motor vehicle-related citations.

Man-hours in both courts are not extremely high, with total court hearing time not likely to exceed a combined 15 hours on a weekly basis. The acting Town justice has approximately 10 hours of court-related responsibilities on a weekly basis. It is noteworthy that these man-hours for Town justices are for only one justice on a weekly basis. The two justices work an alternating-week schedule, while the full-time clerk works a 35-hour per week schedule. In total, man-hours in the Town court are not likely to exceed 45 hours in any one week.

The recent relationship between the two courts has already fostered some sharing of resources. As the justice system is structured between the two courts, the Town's acting justice in a given week serves the backup role for the Village justice, as necessitated by state law. In addition, the Village court is granted use of the new Town court room within the Town Hall building for its monthly calendar calls.

The most efficient use of community facilities and finances would entail a consolidation of the Town and Village courts. Considering that the Town court has two justices, a larger caseload, a full-time court clerk, and a spacious new court room, the community's court-related services should be handled exclusively by the Town court. The present caseload in the Town and Village is such that a single town wide court could legitimately handle a slight increase in responsibility. Since a large percentage of the total caseload in the Village involves motor vehicle citations which are generally not time consuming (nearly 80 percent in 1995)⁴, the increased responsibility on a consolidated Town court would probably not be dramatic.

The total caseload size for a consolidated court would still be smaller than those of other Chautauqua County communities. A combined Portland-Brocton court would handle approximately 2,000 cases annually, fewer than the courts in the Towns of Hanover (3,600), Pomfret (3,100), Ellicott (3,000), Dunkirk (2,800), and Busti (2,700).⁵ As each of these other courts have two justices, we would anticipate a combined Portland-Brocton court requiring only two justices. Both of these would remain elected positions. While the Village justice position would be eliminated, the present Village justice could run for one of the two remaining positions if he chose to. It should be noted that since the Village justice position is an elected one (4-year term), the elimination of the position is subject to referendum.

Despite the contract the Village maintains with the County Sheriff's Department, the Village court is not a money-producing entity. On average the court breaks even, generating through citations and fines approximately what it costs the Village to operate it. As a result, the Village should not be concerned that the elimination of a Village-level court would result in a loss of revenue. Monies generated from citations and fines in the Village would remain in the

⁴ New York State Office of Court Administration (NYSOCA).

⁵ 1995 Municipal Court Caseloads, NYSOCA.

Town court to cover the increased costs and responsibilities of the consolidated court. Savings therefore would be shared by all Town taxpayers.

At the same time, the justices of a single Portland-Brocton court should not require an increase in salary. The present salaries of both the Town justices (\$9,700) and the Village justice (\$9,300) are above average when compared to other

municipalities both per capita and when measured by caseload. When compared to other municipal justices, those in Portland and Brocton are paid the highest both per capita and per case. If the current Town justice salaries were to be maintained for the two justices of a consolidated court, the salary per case would still be relatively high (nearly \$10). As a result, the consolidation of the Town and Village courts would not necessitate an increase in salary.

Support staff and office/court space represent additional reasons for merging the Town and Village courts. While the Town court maintains a full-time clerk, the Village does not. The full-time Town court clerk would assume the responsibility of handling the paperwork for a consolidated court. While this may entail additional part-time support staff in the short-term, it would be likely to generate improved record-keeping. It would also be more convenient for community residents to have a single court and court office handling all town wide citations.

A final reason for combining both courts is facility and office space. While there was concern for the lack of true court facilities at the Village level, the Town court operates out of a large modern court room. In addition, the Town court has private conference space and a large court clerk's office. A consolidated court would have little difficulty being accommodated within the presently underused Town court facilities.

Municipal Court Justice Salaries

	<i>Salary Per Case</i>
Brocton	\$19
Portland	\$13
Pomfret	\$8
Dunkirk	\$6
Ellicott	\$5
Busti	\$5

*Source: NYS Office of Court Administration
(According to 1995-1996 Caseload Information)*

Police Protection

Provision of police services is a contentious issue between the Town of Portland and Village of Brocton. At the present time, both the Town and Village rely on the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Department and the State Police for protection. This protection level consists of occasional patrols through both the Town and the Village. In addition to the regular protection paid for by County taxes, the Village has contracted with the County Sheriff's Department for "enhanced" police protection for the past 14 years. For an approximate cost of \$60,000 per year, the Sheriff's Department stations a deputy at the Village offices each night between 7 p.m. and 3 a.m.

The Village is generally protective of their contract and the enhanced protection it provides. In times covered by the contract, Village officials are adamant about Village-only protection. As the Village pays a significant cost each year for enhanced protection, the general sentiment is for evening and overnight patrols to occur only within Village boundaries. The Sheriff's Deputy charged with the enhanced Village protection will respond to emergency situations in the Town, but is to remain within the Village most of the time.

Since the contract between the Village and the County Sheriff's Department is the only non-general police protection measure taken at the present time, it is useful to assess both its effectiveness and alternatives. First, even in the absence of the contract, there is a good possibility that the Sheriff substation would be located at the Village Hall. It is an ideal location for the Sheriff's northern county cars and officers. There is little reason to believe that the enhanced coverage contract is the sole purpose for the substation being where it is.

Second, the per capita cost of the enhanced protection within the Village, while average across all municipalities in the County, is high for Brocton's size. The Town of Pomfret's service arrangement illustrates the disproportionately high cost of coverage currently being provided to the Village of Brocton. Pomfret, a Town of more than 14,000 residents, has an enhanced protection contract with the County Sheriff's Department which provides for additional summer-months coverage. From April 15th to October 15th, the Town receives supplemental coverage between 7 p.m. and 3 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights, and 4 p.m. to 12 a.m. on Sunday evenings. The cost to Pomfret for this 24-hour per week coverage during half

of the year is \$20,000. In comparison, the Village of Brocton pays \$60,000 for nightly year-round coverage. While the total costs are proportionate (with some "bulk pricing" reduction in Brocton's favor), the communities have chosen a very different level of protection. The Town of Pomfret, despite having more than 8 times the population of Brocton, perceives that it has satisfactory service at a significantly lower cost and coverage rate.

As crude measures of service coverage, per capita police protection expenditures in other Chautauqua County municipalities also suggest that Brocton spends about \$40 per capita for the coverage it receives, disproportionately more than other comparable towns and villages its size. The Town of Busti and Village of Lakewood, for example, consolidated police forces and resources in 1982. At the present time, the Town contracts with Lakewood to provide coverage to more than 8,000 residents town wide at a per capita cost of about \$87 (the highest of those municipalities sampled). The Town of Ellicott, with upwards of 10,000 residents surrounding the City of Jamestown, spends \$73 per capita on police protection. Among municipalities more comparable to Brocton's population of 1,600, the Town of Carroll (pop. 3,600) spends \$14 per capita, and the Town of Dunkirk (pop. 1,500) spends about \$10. Both the Town of Poland (pop. 2,600) and the Town of Charlotte (pop. 1,500) receive no coverage in addition to the basic service provided by the county and the state.

The contractual arrangement with the Sheriff's Department is likely the most cost-effective means of achieving the level of service now enjoyed by the Village of Brocton. A review of spending by other communities suggests that the level of service enjoyed by Brocton is unusual. Both the spending figure and anecdotal information suggest that the existing coverage contract could be expanded to include the Town of Portland without a discernible loss in service quality. Were the Town to participate, the per capita cost for police protection would decline to a more realistic \$10. At the present time, even during contracted hours, the Village Sheriff's car will respond to emergency situations as needed anywhere in the Town or surrounding area. To the best of CGR's knowledge, there have not been instances in the 14 year-old enhanced coverage contract where response to a Village emergency was delayed because the Sheriff's Deputy was attending to an emergency in the Town. By maintaining the contract with the Sheriff's Department, and apportioning its cost based either on population proportions in the Town and Village or the number of incidents which occur in either per year, 1) the Village will reduce its per capita police protection costs to a more reasonable level, and 2) there would be a

community-wide enhanced protection benefit. We do not believe that this would compromise safety within the Village and recommend that the Village, Town and Sheriff's Department conduct a one-year trial, with a public meeting at the end of the trial period to assess the effectiveness of the change in service.

Fire and Emergency Protection

Fire protection is another contentious issue within the Portland/Brocton community. Both municipalities presently maintain volunteer departments which do not engage in extensive cooperative or joint planning efforts. Within Portland, the fire department is taxed separately and is governed by a board of commissioners. The Village department, on the other hand, is funded through Village taxes.

At the present time, the eastern-most portions of the Town (Town Fire Protection Districts 1 and 2) are contracted to the Village Fire Department for annual costs of \$12,500 and \$16,270 respectively. For the remainder of the Town outside of the two fire protection districts, the Town raised a 1998 budget in excess of \$81,000 through special district taxes. The 1998-99 Village appropriation for fire-related expenses was \$27,000.

The vast majority of calls either department responds to are emergency-related. Approximately 300 calls are made in each department annually, but fire-related emergencies are rare. The town has not had a true fire-related incident in two years, while the Village averages fewer than two annually.

In interviews conducted by CGR, both departments indicated that they faced two problems. First, both departments acknowledge that their "backup" tanker-pumper truck should be replaced within the next few years (at an estimated cost of \$200,000 or more for each department). Second, the shift toward emergency calls and away from fire calls has created a personnel problem for both departments. As more local residents work at some distance from the community, it has become more difficult to find volunteers. Furthermore, the volunteers are required to become more and more highly trained as NYS regulations continue to become more rigorous. This is a particular problem with the emergency calls, now the mainstay of the departments' activities. A loss in the number of volunteers across both departments has placed

an additional strain on the ability of each to provide effective service. Steps to improve the cost-effectiveness of fire and emergency services, therefore, must also take into account this concern.

One solution to the problem would be to consolidate the departments. CGR was told repeatedly that this would be very unpopular and might erode the sense of comradery that keeps the volunteers involved and committed.

There are steps that could be taken short of consolidation that might help both departments meet the needs of the residents who depend upon them. First, the departments should move toward tying all volunteers into the same response network. Each fire and emergency call could be communicated to the members of both departments, with the Town or Village department noted as the source of the call. Second, once both groups of volunteers were part of the same response network, the departments could agree to send the primary truck from each department to all serious fire calls, thus eliminating the need for either department to replace its aging backup truck. Between the two departments, five trucks are maintained. Joint response to fire calls would enable the Town and Village to make more efficient use of their two newest trucks, the Town's 4 year old pumper-tanker and the Village's 3 year old tanker. With these two newer trucks shouldering the bulk of the response load town wide, both departments would be able to maintain their older vehicles (including a water hauler in the Village and an additional pumper in the Town) for additional backup.

To facilitate this cooperative response scenario, CGR recommends that all volunteer members of each department be registered members of the other. This dual membership in both the Town and Village departments would help eliminate insurance concerns for cooperative responses by both. In addition, it would permit members of one department to operate equipment of the other during a mutual response emergency.

CGR recognizes the importance of both companies to their respective municipalities, as well as the reluctance to eliminate either. In this light, we are confident that the strategy outlined above provides a method for solving the volunteer shortage expressed by both departments, while having both continue to operate. The strategy also eliminates the immediate need for replacement of Town and Village trucks (which could approximate \$400,000 total). While both

departments should consider consolidating into a single unit, the dual-membership cooperative-response strategy improves efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the immediate term.

General Services

Zoning

Zoning is another service area which presents promising opportunities for inter-municipal cooperation. Prior to this year, both municipalities shared a single zoning office staffed by a single individual who performed these services only for Brocton and Portland. This officer was paid a salary of approximately \$16,000 annually. Of this cost, the Town paid two-thirds and the Village one-third. During the four years of joint zoning, the full-time position was filled with a qualified applicant from the Chautauqua County Civil Service listings. However, as a result of a salary disagreement between the Town and Village boards in 1998, the Town and Village have gone their own way with respect to zoning code enforcement.

Under the joint system where costs were apportioned between the Town and Village, the Village was responsible for approximately \$5,000 in annual zoning salary costs. Under the new split structure, the Village employs an individual who provides zoning and building code enforcement services to a number of Western NY municipalities at an hourly rate. By appropriating \$1,100 in its 1998 budget for zoning expenses, the Village has saved almost \$4,000 by contracting out this function to a private contractor.

The Town chose to keep a dedicated, in-house zoning and building code enforcement officer. At the present time, the Town zoning position is filled by a salaried zoning officer plus a consultant on retainer. The zoning officer salary is \$14,500, while the retained consultant is paid at an hourly rate of \$15. As the Town employee who is designated as the zoning officer is inexperienced, the Town will be assuming the cost of training. The former zoning officer has been providing services on an "as-needed" basis at an hourly rate during the period of training. Through the first ten months of 1998, the Town has spent about \$21,000 on zoning, roughly double the cost of the services as formerly provided.

CGR suggests that the Town return to the practice of sharing the services of a zoning and codes enforcement officer with one or more Chautauqua County municipalities. Given the cyclical and seasonal nature of the need for this position, hourly reimbursement from a skilled professional is more cost-effective than maintaining a permanent staff member on salary. By employing an officer whose principal business is zoning and code enforcement, the Town will be better able to keep its code up to date and be aware of approaches to zoning and code enforcement being adopted by other municipalities.

It is also worthwhile to note that harmonizing codes throughout the Town and Village has the potential of making the community more attractive and available to developers. Close coordination in zoning and building code planning between the two municipalities is advisable. In this light, the Chadwick Bay group may consider embracing coordinated zoning as a promising economic initiative for the entire region.

Facilities

The Town of Portland presently operates out of a newly constructed Town Hall, while the Village continues to maintain offices at a small, much older building within the Village proper. While CGR understands that there is some sensitivity on the part of the Town regarding the building, the residents of both the Village and the Town will be better served by co-locating Village and Town offices in the Town Hall. As the Town has prudently reduced staff over the previous few years, there is more than enough space to accommodate Village staff in the Town's building. While some space—particularly that of the Clerk—would need to be re-configured, an expansion of the building would be unnecessary. Most of the space of the Town Hall is used by part-time staff. With advance planning and a cooperative spirit, the existing space can be easily shared to the benefit of all the community's residents.

Combined offices would improve services to taxpayers by providing convenient, one-stop access to local government. Water bills, electric bills, licenses, and general service information would be accessible from a single place. The sharing of office equipment (e.g. copy machines) would reduce cost to all taxpayers in the two municipalities. An increase in the number of municipal personnel in one government building would also serve to reduce the strain on the

staff of each municipality. Town and Village support staff would be better able to help each other during inevitable busy periods and able to cover for one another during vacations.

The consolidation of Village and Town offices into the newer Town Hall would also eliminate the upkeep costs attached to the current Village offices. While the structure housing the Village offices is rent-free, future maintenance costs are likely to be significant, despite the fact that several improvements to the building were recently completed. The added burden on the Town Hall from Village use would be far less than the anticipated cost of maintaining the Village Hall. Some argue that the Village offices are cost-free as the Village electric department does not explicitly charge the taxpayer for power nor does the VDPW charge for water and sewer. Yet even if the Village does not charge itself for these public services, the real cost of these services is being passed onto the village ratepayer.

Dog Control

While the Town is the official licensing agent for dogs, both it and the Village maintain dog control officers. The Town and Village each have a part-time officer, and appropriated \$12,250 and \$1,600 in 1998, respectively. The main reason for two separate offices, as in the case of zoning, is a dispute between the Village and the Town over an appropriate fee for dog control services.

The current system seems inefficient and disjointed. Both boards are reluctant to combine this service, with the Village refusing to allocate additional money toward it and the Town refusing to cooperate until the Village does so.

Considering the scope and budgets of the service in the Town and Village, it makes the most sense to combine them into a larger town wide dog control office. CGR recommends that the dog control officer position be paid at an hourly rate or a "per incident" rate, with costs charged to the Town and Village according to usage. A single officer, still part-time, would probably be able to assume the responsibilities for dog control town wide. In addition, a merged department would make further use of the Town animal holding center and solve the problem of the Village's lack of one.

The capital equipment costs of the office could be jointly borne by both municipalities according to the share of incidents across the municipalities in the prior year. While the Village would possibly have to increase its spending slightly (dependent on the number of Village incidents), a single town wide service would be more efficient and probably provide a higher level of service across the board.

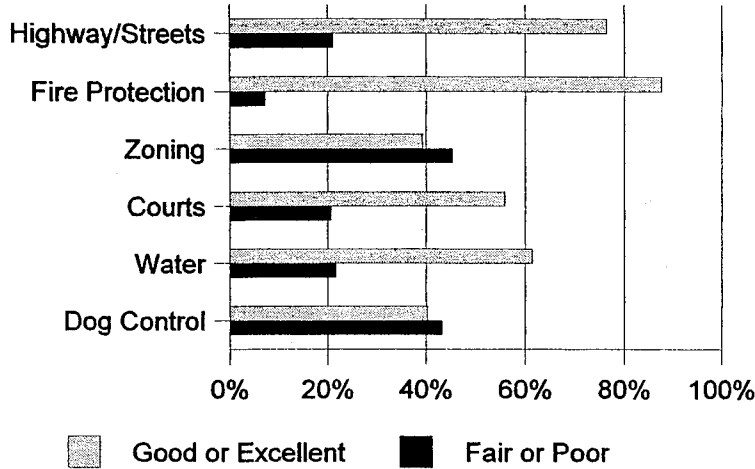
Survey of Community Residents

Questions related to structural and departmental changes within municipalities directly effect residents. As the primary consumers of public services within a municipality, residents are often in the best position to identify areas in which current service delivery is poor, as well as the concerns the community has regarding shared services and consolidation. CGR's experience indicates that the attitude of municipal residents toward merging public services can be either the single greatest catalyst or obstacle to undertaking such a process. For this reason, CGR designed a questionnaire to test popular opinion on the issue and solicit additional suggestions regarding the improvement of service delivery.

The survey (see Appendix) was sent out to 1,410 property owners within the Town of Portland and Village of Brocton using the town wide assessor's address listing. Residents were prompted to evaluate a variety of services, including highway/streets, fire and police protection, zoning, the court system, and water provision. Next, residents were asked their opinions on shared services within those same categories, as well as on the general consolidation of the Town and Village into a single political unit. Finally, respondents were prompted to rank their level of agreement with a series of common concerns related to shared services and consolidation.

741 surveys were returned, a rate of slightly under 53 percent. Of those, 63 percent were Town residents and 34 percent were Village residents. An additional 3 percent of respondents failed to identify themselves according to place of residence.

Quality of Service



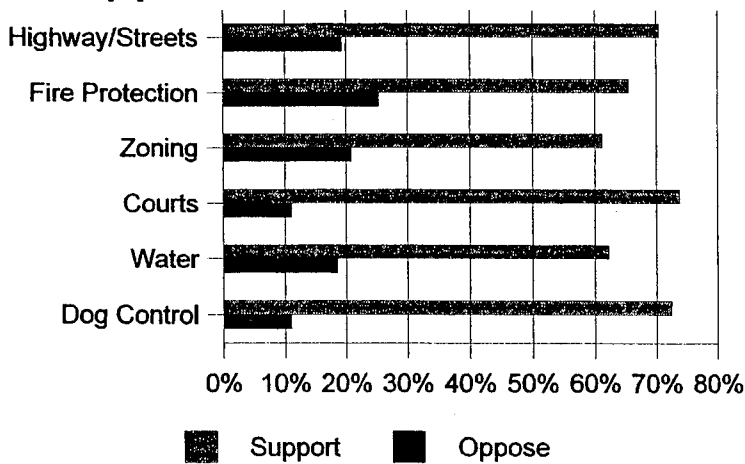
Source: CGR Survey of Residents

The first set of questions prompted residents to rate the services they receive across six service areas. Residents of both the Town and Village gave highest marks to fire protection services, with nearly 90 percent feeling that the service is “good” or excellent.” Town and Village residents also gave high ratings to the highway and streets service they receive. More than three-quarters of respondents considered it to be “good” or “excellent.” The categories where differences between Town and Village residents were most pronounced were water provision and dog control. With respect to water, three-quarters of Village residents considered it “good” or “excellent,” while slightly more than half of Town residents did. For dog control, Village residents were twice as likely than Town residents to consider the service poor. Negative evaluations outnumbered positives in two service areas, zoning and dog control.

Quality of Public Services

The first set of questions prompted residents to rate the services they receive across six service areas. Residents of both the Town and Village gave highest marks to fire protection services, with nearly 90 percent feeling that the service is “good” or excellent.” Town and Village residents also gave high ratings to the highway and streets service they receive. More than three-quarters of respondents considered it to be “good” or “excellent.” The categories where differences between Town and Village residents were most pronounced were water provision and dog control. With respect to water, three-quarters of Village residents considered it “good” or “excellent,” while slightly more than half of Town residents did. For dog control, Village residents were twice as likely than Town residents to consider the service poor. Negative evaluations outnumbered positives in two service areas, zoning and dog control.

Support for Shared Services



Source: CGR Survey of Residents

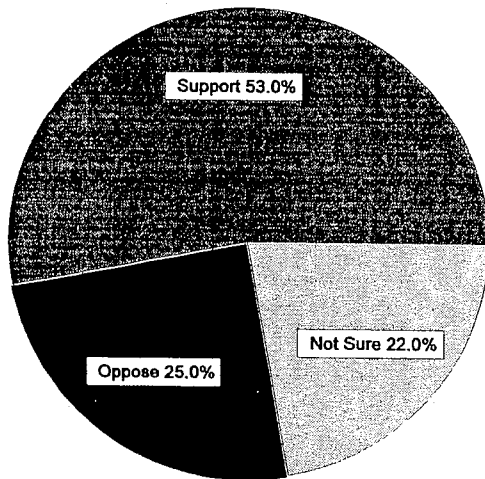
Alternative Service Delivery and Consolidation

Next, the survey asked residents to share their opinions regarding shared services and consolidation alternatives generally and in various service areas. On the issue of the cost and quality of shared services, Town and Village residents were in fairly high

agreement. Overall, 31 percent thought service quality would improve while 38 percent thought the cost to taxpayers would go down. By contrast, only 14 percent and 28 percent thought that the quality would get worse and the cost would go up, respectively.

In which service areas do residents support shared services between the Town and the Village? In each of the six service areas considered, town wide sentiment was in favor of shared services. Highway/streets is one area in particular where residents support shared services. Over 70 percent of residents town wide support the idea of shared services between the Town and Village highway and streets departments, while less than one in five oppose such a notion. A high degree of support was also evident for shared services between Town and Village court and dog control services. This general support for shared services was voiced by both Town and Village residents, except in the cases of fire protection and water. While shared services in both received support from a majority of respondents, 32 percent of Village residents opposed shared services between fire departments and 28 percent of Village residents were against shared services in water provision.

Support for Consolidation



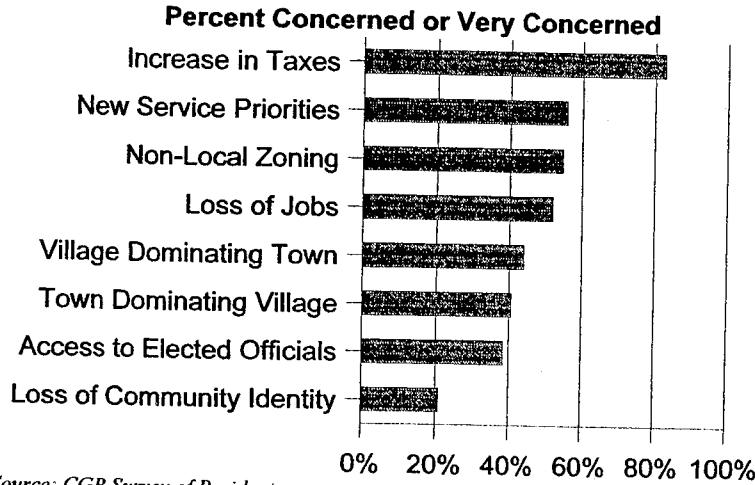
Source: CGR Survey of Residents

respondents, however, were not sure of their support or opposition regarding the notion.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their opinions regarding the consolidation of Portland and Brocton into a single political unit. The Town and Village were in general agreement in supporting such a notion, with more than half indicating that they “approve” or “strongly approve” of combining the Town and Village to form one government. 54.3 percent of Town residents supported consolidation, as did 50.4 percent of Village residents. More than one-fifth of

Concerns Related to Consolidation

Consolidation Concerns



Source: CGR Survey of Residents

Finally, the survey asked respondents to indicate how worried they were about a variety of concerns related to the consolidation alternative. Taxes, new service priorities, non-local zoning decisions, and the loss of jobs were the three issues for which respondents expressed the most concern. Logically, Village residents were much more inclined to be concerned about the Town dominating a consolidated system. Similarly, Town residents were

more concerned about the Village taking a dominant role in a consolidated system. In addition, the Village residents were slightly more inclined than Town residents to be concerned with the loss of community identity.

Survey Conclusions

From this survey of most property owners within the Town of Portland and Village of Brocton, we find that the community generally is receptive to alternative service delivery opportunities including shared services and consolidation. All six service areas identified in the survey received majority support for shared services between the Town and Village, with zoning and dog control receiving the lowest quality evaluations from residents. More than half of the residents surveyed support consolidation of the Town and Village into a single political unit, with 54 percent of Town respondents and 50 percent of Village respondents supporting such a measure. In all, the community supports shared services and consolidation, and views both strategies as means to improving service efficiency while lowering costs to both municipalities and taxpayers.

Conclusion

The Town of Portland and Village of Brocton have taken the necessary step of examining the delivery of public services within their community, and the effectiveness and efficiency thereof. In the context of much recent regional debate, Portland and Brocton have joined a long list of smaller municipalities seeking to identify both the costly duplication of services and various delivery alternatives to remedy it.

Much informal and de facto cooperation already occurs between the municipalities, in the form of joint highway crews on larger projects and contracting for both water and fire protection. There are, however, valid opportunities for the Town and Village to formalize much of this cooperation in the interest of reducing the public service cost burden while improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided to residents.

After exploring all of these alternatives, CGR believes that the needs of residents in the community would be most efficiently served by consolidating into a single government. The recommendations offered here would be considerably easier to implement if the Town and Village became a single municipality. The suggestions made in this report are designed to further formal cooperative mechanisms between Portland and Brocton. In addition to considering the consolidation alternative, CGR hopes that its recommendations provide the community with a valuable tool toward improving its cost-effectiveness.

By recognizing the need to work together in an era of limited public finances, the Town of Portland and Village of Brocton are in a position to reap the benefits of cost-efficiency which only cooperation can yield. In this spirit, we make the following recommendations:

Public Works

Highway and Streets

- Consolidate Town Highway Department and Village Department of Public Works
- Move current DPW head into Deputy Superintendent role in joint department
- Begin single capital planning strategy

- Eliminate positions through attrition

Utilities

Water, Electric, and Sewer

- Establish Village utilities office to handle all billing, administration, and service of water provision in Village and two Town water districts
- Select a senior utility employee (e.g. sewer plant operator, head filter plant operator, or line man) to oversee utility administration at the Village level with nominal salary increase

Public Safety

Courts

- Consolidate Town and Village courts into a single court at the Town level
- Leave citation intake at Town level to cover the additional cost of the combined court, with the Village neither increasing its costs nor losing citation revenue
- Maintain full-time court clerk at Town level to handle the consolidated court
- Maintain two elected (town wide) justices for the consolidated court, with no increase in salary

Police Protection

- Add Town to enhanced contract with County Sheriff's Department to spread both cost and benefit (one-year trial basis)

Fire Protection

- Dual membership of volunteers in both Town and Village companies
- Joint response to fire calls within Town or Village
- Joint capital planning strategy
- Identify further options to consolidate

General Services

Zoning

- Have Town contract with a zoning officer in a fashion similar to the Village
- Encourage coordination between Town and Village zoning plans

Facilities

- Create a joint Municipal Building by relocating Village offices to new Town Hall

Dog Control

- Merge Town and Village offices into a single one
- Apportion costs on the basis of previous year's incidents in Town and Village

Appendix

Community Officials Interviewed

Dale Abram (Village Trustee)
Michael Ames (Town Council Member)
Karen Ardillo (Village Clerk's Office)
Ken Becker (Town Highway Department)
David Beehler (Brocton-Portland Development Corp.)
Michael Bolender (Village Attorney)
Alan Cave (Town Council Member)
Kathy Cave (Town Court Clerk)
Edward Czysz (Town Justice)
Luther Dean (Town Fire Commissioner)
Jim Farrell (Town Zoning Officer, Town Dog Control Officer)
DeLana Gilbert (Village Clerk-Treasurer)
Robert Grazulewicz (Village Zoning and Building Codes Officer)
David Hazelton (Brocton-Portland Development Corp.)
Al Kawski (President of Brocton-Portland Development Corp.)
Charles Kelley (Town Highway Superintendent)
Patricia Kurtz (Town Clerk)
Dan Laurito (Town Accountant)
Charles Loveland (Town Attorney)
Fredora Manzella (Town Tax Collector)
Charles Meder (Town Assessor)
Gary Miller (Town Supervisor, Village DPW Superintendent)
Robert Myers (Village Justice)
Harry Pugh (Village Fire Chief)
Ronald Scaccia (Town Justice, Village Acting Justice)
Daniel Schrantz (Town Council Member)
Dustin Scott (Village Dog Control Officer)
Lavern Scott (Village Trustee, Village Deputy Mayor)
David Travis (Brocton-Portland Development Corp.)
Harry Watters (Village Mayor)
Tom Webb (Town Assistant Supervisor)
Jeanne Wolcott (Village Clerk's Office)

Shared Services Questionnaire of Portland-Brocton Property Owners

Question 1:

Here is a list of services that people in Portland and Brocton receive from their local governments. For each, tell us whether you think the service you receive is excellent, good, fair, or poor.

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NOT SURE
1) Highway & Streets	A	B	C	D	E
2) Fire Protection	A	B	C	D	E
3) Zoning	A	B	C	D	E
4) Courts	A	B	C	D	E
5) Water	A	B	C	D	E
6) Dog Control	A	B	C	D	E

Question 2:

If Portland and Brocton provided more services together, do you think the quality of services would improve, stay the same, or get worse?

- Improve (a)
 Stay same (b)
 Get worse (c)
 Not sure (d)

Question 3:

Do you think that the services you receive would cost more, the same, or less if Portland and Brocton provided more services jointly?

- Cost more (a)
 Stay same (b)
 Cost less (c)
 Not sure (d)

Question 4: *Right now, the Portland and Brocton governments provide the following services separately. How would you feel about the delivery of these services being shared?*

	STRONGLY SUPPORT	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	STRONGLY OPPOSE	NOT SURE
1) Highway & Streets	A	B	C	D	E
2) Fire Protection	A	B	C	D	E
3) Zoning	A	B	C	D	E
4) Courts	A	B	C	D	E
5) Water	A	B	C	D	E
6) Dog Control	A	B	C	D	E

Question 5: *Some have suggested that Portland and Brocton consolidate to form a larger political unit. What do you think of this idea?*

	A	B	C	D	E
	<i>Strongly Approve</i>	<i>Approve</i>	<i>Disapprove</i>	<i>Strongly Disapprove</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>

Question 6: *Here is a list of concerns that have been raised about consolidating the Town of Portland and Village of Brocton. Indicate how you feel personally. Are you very concerned, concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned?*

	VERY CONCERNED	CONCERNED	NOT VERY CONCERNED	NOT AT ALL CONCERNED	NOT SURE
1) My community may lose its special identity.	A	B	C	D	E
2) Land use & zoning decisions may no longer be made locally.	A	B	C	D	E
3) People may lose their jobs.	A	B	C	D	E
4) Access to local elected officials may be made more difficult.	A	B	C	D	E

5) Town interests may dominate Village interests. A B C D E

6) Village interests may dominate Town interests. A B C D E

7) Taxes may go up. A B C D E

8) Service priorities (like snow removal) may change and hurt my area. A B C D E

Question 7: Are you a resident of the Town or Village?

Town (a) Village (b)

Question 8: How long have you been a resident of the community?



A	B	C	D
<i>Less than 10 Years</i>	<i>10 to 25 Years</i>	<i>25 to 50 Years</i>	<i>More than 50 Years</i>

Survey Results

Responses from the survey of community residents are presented in the following section. Note that where town wide responses are listed, Town and Village residents did not have significantly different feelings. *Response break-downs are presented in this section for only those survey questions on which Town and Village opinions differed significantly.* (Note: Those indicating "Don't Know" or no preference are excluded from the tables).

QUALITY OF SERVICES

	Excellent or Good	Fair	Poor
Highway and Streets	76%	16%	5%
Fire Protection	88%	6%	1%
Zoning	39%	29%	17%
Courts	56%	18%	3%
Water	TOWN 52% VILL 77%	TOWN 11% VILL 15%	TOWN 9% VILL 8%
Dog Control	TOWN 45% VILL 32%	TOWN 16% VILL 24%	TOWN 17% VILL 38%

IF PORTLAND AND BROCTON PROVIDED MORE SERVICES TOGETHER, DO YOU THINK THE QUALITY OF SERVICES WOULD IMPROVE, STAY THE SAME, OR GET WORSE?

Improve	Stay the Same	Get Worse
31%	38%	14%

DO YOU THINK THAT THE SERVICES YOU RECEIVE WOULD COST MORE, THE SAME, OR LESS IF PORTLAND AND BROCTON PROVIDED MORE SERVICES JOINTLY?

Cost More	Stay the Same	Cost Less
28%	21%	38%



**HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT THE DELIVERY OF THE FOLLOWING SERVICES BEING SHARED
BETWEEN PORTLAND AND BROCTON?**

	Support or Strongly Support	Oppose or Strongly Oppose
Highway and Streets	71%	19%
Fire Protection	<i>TOWN</i> 67% <i>VILL</i> 64%	<i>TOWN</i> 22% <i>VILL</i> 32%
Zoning	61%	21%
Courts	74%	11%
Water	<i>TOWN</i> 64% <i>VILL</i> 60%	<i>TOWN</i> 13% <i>VILL</i> 28%
Dog Control	72%	11%

**WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE IDEA OF PORTLAND AND BROCTON CONSOLIDATING INTO A
SINGLE POLITICAL UNIT?**

Approve or Strongly Approve	Oppose or Strongly Oppose	Not Sure
53%	25%	22%

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU ABOUT CONSOLIDATION AFFECTING THE FOLLOWING ISSUES?

	Concerned or Very Concerned	Not Very Concerned	Not At All Concerned
My community may lose its special identity	TOWN 28% VILL 36%	TOWN 34% VILL 31%	TOWN 34% VILL 30%
Land use and zoning decisions may no longer be made locally	55%	21%	17%
People may lose their jobs	52%	22%	18%
Access to local elected officials may be made more difficult	38%	31%	24%
Town interests may dominate Village interests	TOWN 31% VILL 58%	TOWN 33% VILL 20%	TOWN 28% VILL 16%
Village interests may dominate Town interests	TOWN 47% VILL 40%	TOWN 26% VILL 30%	TOWN 20% VILL 23%
Taxes may go up	83%	7%	6%
Service priorities (like snow removal) may change and hurt my area	56%	22%	18%

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS:

Town Property Owners n = 464
 Village Property Owners n = 255
 Not Identified n = 22

Length of Residence in Community:

Less than 10 Years n = 125
 10 to 25 Years n = 202
 25 to 50 Years n = 289
 More than 50 Years n = 120
 Not Identified n = 5