

WAUSAU METROPOLITAN COOPERATION,
COLLABORATION AND CONSOLIDATION

By

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Introduction

Government consolidation has been a topic of discussion for many years throughout the United States. The first consolidation of a city and county government in the United States was in 1805 between the City of New Orleans and Orleans Parish, Louisiana. There are many issues and circumstances when considering government consolidation. In the Literature Review chapter, I will elaborate on the most common factors in consolidations such as efficiency gains, overall cost savings, elimination of duplicated services, protection from annexation, and improved economic development.

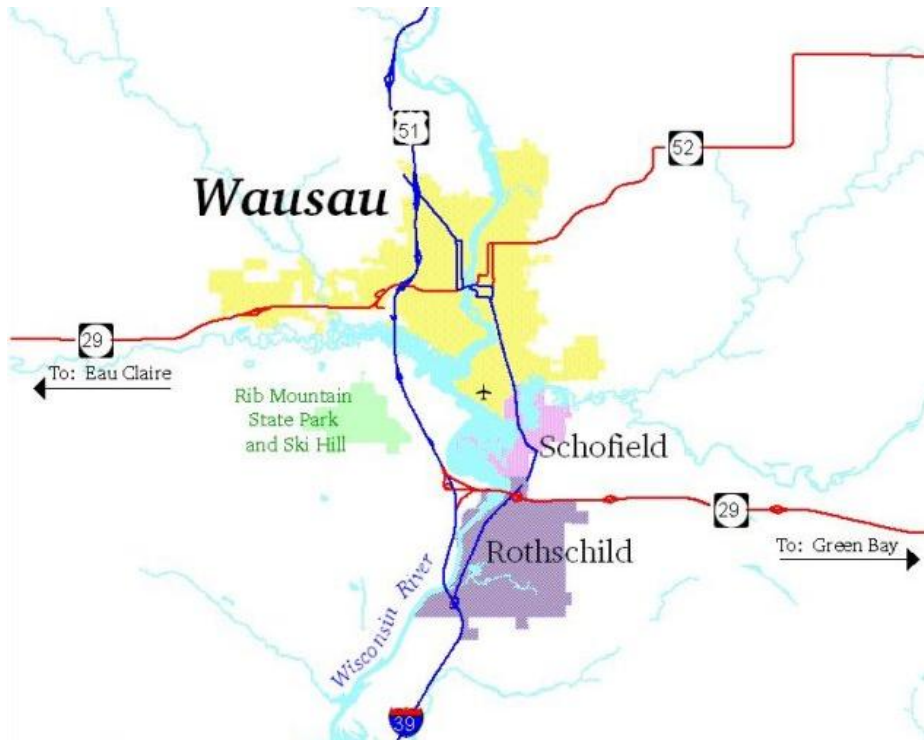
The recent recession that started in 2007 has put greater strains on the economics of funding government services. In Wisconsin, the economic realities have struck all levels of government with deep cuts to revenues. State aid to local government has steadily fallen (League's Legislative Agenda for the 2013-2014 Legislative Session, 2012), and levy limits have put local governments in a very difficult situation to continue to provide services at the same levels as previous years. Wisconsin has the reputation of placing a heavy tax burden on its residents. Wisconsin is ranked ninth among the fifty states in property tax as a percentage of personal income (Alliance, 2009 Tax and Fee Rankings, by State, 2010), while there has been little consideration for service reduction to lower costs. There are no easy

answers to solve the funding issues in the public sector. For these reasons I became interested in exploring cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation of local governments in the Wausau metropolitan area.

Consolidation between the City of Wausau and Marathon County has been discussed for a number of years. The local newspaper, Wausau Daily Herald, recently ran an archived article about these two governments merging various departments back in 1961. So the subject has been on the minds of community leaders and citizens for generations. One factor that would lend itself to consolidation is the compact area the Wausau metropolitan encompasses.

Figure 1 shows the proximity of the communities and the major highways. The Wausau metropolitan area is centered east and west around the Wisconsin River and Lake Wausau while the northern and southern tips extend past the major interchanges of US Highways 51 and 29. Table 1 provides United States Census information including population for each community and land area. Wausau is the county seat of Marathon County with a 2010 United States Census population of 39,106. The Wausau metropolitan area, specifically the Cities of Wausau and Schofield; Villages of Rothschild and Weston; and the Town of Rib Mountain, has grown from 65,148 in 2000 to 68,237 in 2010, about a 4.7 percent increase. The total land area, including water ways, is 73.5 square miles.

Figure 1 - Map of Wausau Metropolitan Area



(Wausau, 2012)

Table 1 – U.S. Census Data for Wausau, WI and the Metropolitan Area

Community	2000 Population	2010 Population	Land Area (Square Mile)
Town of Rib Mountain	7,556	6,825	25.4
Village of Rothschild	4,970	5,269	4.9
City of Schofield	2,117	2,169	2.8
City of Wausau	38,426	39,106	18.78
Village of Weston	12,079	14,868	21.62
Wausau Metro Area	65,148	68,237	73.5
Marathon County	125,834	134,063	1576

(Bureau, 2012) (Committee, 2002)

While a full metro consolidation has not taken place there are a number of different ways local government in Marathon County have and are working together. In this policy analysis, I will review the greater Wausau metropolitan area for past collaborative efforts of community leaders; see what worked, what has not, what was on the table and never got off, and what may be on the table in the very near future. The policy analysis will consider five different options including 1) City of Wausau / Marathon County consolidation, 2) complete government consolidation of the metropolitan communities, 3) hybrid of metropolitan-department consolidation i.e. fire, emergency medical services and police, 4) discontinue any and all collaborative or cooperative agreements, and finally 5) continue with current agreements (status quo). All of these possibilities will be considered by three factors: political feasibility/legality, overall service quality, and efficiency gains/elimination of duplicate services.

Interviews were conducted with past and present community leaders. These interviews provided valuable information and background on the issues at hand regarding consolidation, collaboration, and cooperation between the local government entities. Local government officials were able to identify the various issues and obstacles to cooperative, collaborative, and consolidative agreements. Much to my surprise, there are a multitude of cooperative and collaborative efforts in place amongst the communities. However, when our discussion turned towards metropolitan consolidation, I was met with some resistance and doubt as to the

likelihood a full government consolidation would happen in the greater Wausau metropolitan area.

The initial policy options proposed in this policy analysis were presented with some very difficult obstacles. Consolidation of the City of Wausau and Marathon County governments are not legally possible as the Wisconsin Constitution stands. Another issue is Marathon County is very large in terms of square miles but with such a low population density outside of Wausau, as to make any real savings or service upgrades. Full metropolitan consolidation would also be met with some very difficult challenges and does not seem like a viable option at this time. While Wausau touts itself as a full service community, it also has the highest tax burden among the local governments (Alliance, 2012). In order for communities to pass a referendum, there will need to be an enormous movement of support by local leaders or a blending of the tax burden over a number of years, or perhaps both.

Two more policy options were remaining the same with current agreements in place, or eliminating all agreements and leaving each local government to go it alone. Neither of these options seems to make much sense. Change is the world's one constant and neither of these options are moving forward. Both would cost tax payers in the near term or the long run and both would likely give the citizens a lower level of service. For this reason I do not think these options are likely to happen.

This leaves a final option: consolidation of departments among the metropolitan communities. The largest costs and highest demand in service is police, fire and emergency medical services. These three groups seem to be the largest area where each government is providing their own services at some level. Weston and Schofield share a police department and they are a prime example of how a consolidated group of departments can work. My policy analysis recommendation is to move forward with a metropolitan department of police, fire, and emergency medical services.

Cooperation, Collaboration, and Consolidation

It is important to understand the differences between a cooperative, collaborative, and a consolidated government. This chapter will help to explain the differences and similarities of each. Perhaps the best way to discuss a consolidated government is to provide a generalized example. The first part of the chapter will discuss a consolidated government between a city and county. This can be applied similarly between a city, village, or town as well. The second half of the chapter describes in detail the different types of cooperative and collaborative agreements and work that takes place among local governments.

In the most common form of consolidation, city and county elected officials (often referred to as city council and county board, although each region has different terms) will combine to form one governing body. Electoral districts will be redrawn with a delicate balance as a variety of groups will have unique interests. A written municipal charter as to the makeup of the government will be necessary to provide the basic organization of the governing body (Leland & Thurmaier, City-County Consolidation, 2010). Some committees and departments will continue to operate separately, such as the sheriff's department and city police. Others will combine immediately, for instance the city and county parks departments. Some positions on staff or in administration will no longer be required or in some cases

more staff will need to be hired. In order to gain staff approval, personnel are often offered transfers and positions will be eliminated by attrition.

Developing the initial budget can be problematic and oftentimes inaccurate. Utilities such as water, sewer, cable, and telephone may need to be extended and a short term plan should be developed. The budget complexity depends on what types of utilities are under the control of the newly consolidated government. Water and sewer utilities are typical to municipal government but electric, gas, and communications are often a standalone utility or private company.

Finally transfer of services, closing of public buildings and infrastructure development needs to be planned out. Where do residents vote, pay utility bills, or apply for building permits? If public safety departments merge, which stations will stay and which will go? Changes are to be made to websites, letterhead, signs and logos on buildings, equipment, and street poles. There are many various daily activities and functions that will be affected. These activities need to be planned out ahead of any consolidation.

There are alternatives to full consolidation of city and county government. Examples of partial consolidation among cities, towns, villages and counties include merging of similar departments, inter-local agreements, formal and informal cooperation agreements, and collaboration in projects among local counterparts. I will expand further on each of these alternatives.

Departmental consolidation would be an alternative for local governments that do not want to necessarily consolidate fully. Department consolidation would be a consolidation of two community's parks department. Each government has the same needs for labor and equipment. Labor savings may be minimal but if combined, there are potential savings in equipment and administration. Additionally parks and recreation facilities can be planned and located to serve multiple communities. By strategically locating baseball parks, playgrounds and ice rinks, more people can utilize the same facilities so that the overall number of facilities may be lowered but more furnished with equipment and shelters.

Information technology departments are another common department consolidation. Local governments are interacting in various ways, transferring data for assessment and taxing requirements, and being on the same system can help to eliminate glitches. Most of the counties in Wisconsin are operating on different systems of which the aggregate cost is exponentially more than a common system shared between the governments would cost (Sander, 2009). This is a potential opportunity for communities to work together and provide cost savings. Again, there are potential savings in administration, labor, and purchasing equipment and software due to leverage created by purchasing in volume.

Inter-local agreements are another opportunity to help support each government. Inter-local agreements are when two or more governments come to an agreement to share costs in purchasing equipment or agree to provide personnel to

form a specialized team. This is common among fire and police services. Potential inter-local agreement examples include a Special Weapons and Threats (SWAT) team that is composed of personnel from both departments to form a team to serve the entire county or both governments financing an armored vehicle to share.

Cooperation in local government can take many forms. Cooperation can be both formal and informal agreements among local governments, creation of regional districts, or by consolidated municipal governments (Carr & Feiock, 2003). For this policy analysis cooperation will be defined as an agreement between two or more governments. An informal agreement example would be if a piece of equipment is out of service in the city, the county would lend a similar piece of equipment to the city for their use whereas a more formal agreement would be the city agreeing to mow the county park in exchange for the county plowing a street. The benefit to an agreement such as this is each government would help out the other by convenience. The cost savings are minimal but typically there is insignificant investment and either side could opt out without penalty.

Collaboration is another alternative to consolidation. Collaboration is an agreement to work together on a specific goal or project. Local governments often work together in planning and coordinating street improvements. It is becoming more common for communities to combine refuse and recycling contracts, share equipment between public works, parks, fire, police departments, and even share personnel. Additional collaborative examples include transportation planning,

marketing for a business or industrial park, Geographic Information System mapping and aerial photography collaborations, drug task force, and regional storm water management initiatives. Another potential collaboration could involve bidding out a contract or service by joining together for a potential economy of scale that is mutually beneficial. New road work, refuse and recycling services and many other areas can be a cost savings if governments work in collaboration.

Background

Wausau and the surrounding communities, along with Marathon County have partnered in cooperative and consolidative efforts in the past. Wausau and Marathon County have consolidated the Parks and Recreation departments and also the Information Technology department. Metro-ride is a public transportation service primarily in Wausau that also serves Schofield, Rothschild, and Weston. Mutual aid agreements are in place for police and fire services. Everest Metro Police Department (EMPD) was a consolidated effort of the Schofield and Weston police departments. EMPD has been in existence for approximately 20 years. These examples show that there have been some collaboration initiatives to work with other communities with the anticipation of providing cost savings and service improvements.

Not every cooperative, collaborative, or consolidated effort has worked out as planned. Some potential consolidations have since fallen apart such as the Wausau-Marathon County Human Resources department, a metropolitan fire district in 2002, and a discussed merger between EMPD and Wausau Police Department in 2008. Other shared service agreements have been on the brink of collapse. Schofield threatened removing support for EMPD in 2011. In the 2012 budget process, Metro-ride removed services to all non-Wausau communities due to

local budget constraints; however it appears in the upcoming 2013 budget service will be restored in a limited capacity.

Past considerations included creation of a metropolitan fire department that would provide fire protection and emergency medical services to the Wausau metropolitan area. In my research, I have found three studies to consider a metropolitan fire department in the Wausau metropolitan area alone. The most recent study was completed in 2002 (Committee, 2002).

The feasibility study included all of the metropolitan communities of Rib Mountain, Rothschild, Schofield, Wausau, and Weston. The study was basically two-fold; community leaders and fire personnel analyzed existing facilities and equipment, and estimated service times, while the second part was a financial feasibility analysis by Robert W. Baird and Company. The study found that a metropolitan fire and emergency medical services department was not only feasible but highly recommended due to cost savings and service improvement for all participating communities.

The metro fire department never reached implementation as Rothschild vetoed the agreement just prior to implementation. Since 2002 there have been a number a capital and equipment improvements in the area. Schofield, Rib Mountain and Kronenwetter have built new Public Safety buildings. Rib Mountain and Wausau purchased ladder and/or aerial trucks for their service needs and numerous new ambulances have been purchased throughout the communities.

While fire and emergency medical services are not the focus of this policy analysis, it is easy to see how many tax dollars have been spent on these improvements versus the savings that would have been created if a metropolitan department was implemented over a two year period in 2003 and 2004.

One consolidation that has been implemented and seemingly successful is the EMPD. EMPD is a consolidation of the City of Schofield, the Village of Weston, and the Town of Weston. The EMPD was formed in the fall of 1993. The Schofield Police Chief at the time was Dan Vergin while the Weston Police Chief was Dan Martin. Both of these individuals have long since retired and attempts to contact them were unsuccessful. However in my discussions with Mort McBain, former Marathon County Administrator (personal interview 9-7-2012), it took a variety of circumstances for a consolidated police department to fall in place. McBain worked to support the merger in his role. A consolidation made sense for Schofield since the community was landlocked and would have limited growth potential to support a standalone department. Weston was growing and logistically working as one police department made sense. But the key to the agreement according to McBain was the fact that the local elected officials and the police chiefs agreed that Vergin would become the police chief of EMPD. Martin, the Weston Police Chief, was moving on to run for County Sheriff. Therefore, between service improvements, cost savings, and no loss of power, the merger agreement came together and has been thriving ever since.

EMPD and the City of Wausau Police Department discussed a merger as well (personal conversation with Chief Hardel, 10-24-2012). In 2008, Vergin was nearing retirement and approached Wausau Police Chief Jeff Hardel. Between the two police chiefs, key staff members and elected officials there were five meetings to discuss all aspects of a merger; personnel, union contracts, administration, equipment, et cetera. There was even a press conference to discuss the merger plans. However at the last minute Weston officials called off the plans and no further discussions took place (personal interview with Mayor Tipple 8-28-2012). In my research and personal interviews I have found that all the work can be in place to support a consolidated department or community, but a relatively minor issue can stop all discussions immediately. I will discuss further in the Literature Review and Challenges and Realities chapters.

Finally, it is important to understand the composition of each community. The City of Wausau is the largest in both population and area, and one of the oldest communities in the metropolitan area. It is a full service community that has the highest tax burden among the metropolitan cities. Some of the common issues associated with older communities also apply here: urban blight, increased crime and drug problems. Despite some of its problems, Wausau has a beautiful historic downtown, a large business campus, and redevelopment potential along the Wisconsin River.

Weston is a thriving bedroom community with a developing business and industrial park. It is the fastest growing community among the metropolitan cities. A second hospital opened in 2005 in Weston to help serve north central Wisconsin. Weston serves as the eastern section of the metropolitan area while Schofield is the smallest community and also one of the oldest. Schofield is surrounded by Weston, Rothschild, Wausau, and Lake Wausau and makes up the center of the metropolitan area. Rothschild is a larger community in area. It is close to reaching its growth potential as most of the undeveloped area is in the floodplain. Rothschild is also bordered by all incorporated municipalities.

Finally the Town of Rib Mountain is a community that is split in two with the eastern half urban and the western half of the township rural. Rib Mountain is certainly a bedroom community. It has a long commercial corridor along Highway 51 and plenty of recreational opportunities including Granite Peak Ski Resort and Nine Mile County Forest. Rib Mountain has all the amenities of an urban community. Since they are a township, Marathon County, in accordance with state statutes, provide police services. The perception of the other metropolitan communities is Rib Mountain is freeloading off of the residents of Marathon County. Rib Mountain does have a fire department that is partially staffed. All of the communities are distinct and different, rich with community pride. All are connected with local streets, bike and recreation trails, and all have a part in addressing community issues.

Literature Review

Government cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation have recently received more attention from the academic world. Perhaps that is due to the increased interest in municipal consolidation and collaboration (Sander, 2009). In this literature review, I will explore the reasons for local governments to consider working together to provide services, uncover the issues, and explain how consolidations have worked ten years down the road. My findings include both academic literature and case study reviews.

Why should a community consider consolidation with another local government? First, there usually needs to be a compelling interest at the time of consolidation: economic crisis, mutual interest, need for municipal services, or fear of annexation are some of the most common scenarios. Secondly there has to be the ability for consolidation, meaning the law has to provide a process. Does the state authorize city and county consolidation, city and village, or city/village and town, can the local leaders agree to the terms, and will the political environment allow it?

There are a variety of reasons cited as to why a consolidation of city and county government is a positive move forward. Past pro-consolidation supporters have touted efficiency gains, overall cost savings, elimination of duplicated services, protection from annexation, improved economic development, and other criteria

specific to the local effort such as extension of services, cost stabilization, and improved representation for the electorate (Leland & Thurmaier, 2010).

Table 2 – Consolidation Factors and Wisconsin Law

Compelling Interest	Supporter Reasoning	Wisconsin Law	Allowed
Economic Crisis	Efficiency Gains	City/County	No
Mutual Interest	Overall Cost Savings	City/Village	Yes
Need for Services	Eliminate Duplicate Service	City/Town	Yes
Fear of Annexation	Economic Development	Village/Town	Yes

What many researchers have found is a lack of evidence that consolidation of governments actually leads to cost savings. In fact voters often do not accept an argument based on efficiency gains and vote against consolidation (Leland & Thurmaier, 2004). Due to lack of evidence, consolidation supporters have a difficult time gaining the support necessary to pass a referendum. Leland and Thurmaier studied the before and after budgetary effects of a consolidated city-county government versus a similar community in the same state with separate city and county governments during the same time period. In the nine comparison cases, the authors concluded that there was no clear evidence to support efficiency gains (Leland & Thurmaier, 2010). When consolidation is considered for economic development reasons there have been mixed conclusions. Carr and Feiock (2003) found the empirical evidence did not support economic development whereas

Leland and Thurmaier's case study found support for economic development consolidation.

Efforts to consolidate city and county governments have been largely unsuccessful. Over 80 percent have failed to pass referendum. One percent of all 3,043 county governments in the United States are consolidated governments. One and a half percent of all 19,371 city governments in the United States are consolidated governments (Leland & Thurmaier, 2010). Why such low numbers? First, it is difficult to point to similar past successes because there are such a small number of consolidations. Second, it is difficult to prove cost savings because of lack of data, the ability to track data, or agreed upon data factors. Third, state laws often make consolidation efforts complex, especially when requiring supermajority support in both communities via referendum. Forth, it is extremely difficult to gain approval of both governing bodies due to fear of loss of power, loss of identity, loss of position, or parochialism. Fifth, how do the respective employees intermix? Is a supervisor willing to become a subordinate?

As we can see from the one percent of county and one and a half percent of cities governments, there are very few consolidated governments to review for comparison when considering a change in local government structure. Through 2007, there have been forty city-county consolidations in the United States. The first consolidation was New Orleans and Orleans Parish of Louisiana dating back to 1805. From this data there are very few comparisons to be made, and our economic

conditions are drastically different today than when many of the past consolidations were approved.

In Wisconsin, there have been very few consolidations of municipal governments. In fact, there have only been three applications to the Department of Administration for municipal consolidation since 1959. The Villages of Pewaukee, Rochester, and East Troy along with their respective neighboring townships have all been denied consolidation applications by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (State of Wisconsin, 2012). The Town and Village of Rochester were given the ability to consolidate through a legislative act during the 2007-09 legislative sessions, and did so in 2009 (Witynski, 2010).

Why have there been so few consolidations in Wisconsin? The process and limitations for Wisconsin can be found under State Statutes 66.0229 and 66.0230 (Wisconsin Legislative Documents, 2012). State Statutes 66.0229 provides general procedures for consolidation of contiguous town, village or city, whereas § 66.0230 provide additional procedures specifically for a town consolidating with a city or village. As we can see there is no guidance or ability for a city to consolidate with a county in the State of Wisconsin. For this to change, it would require an amendment to the State of Wisconsin Constitution or a legislative act such as the Village and Town of Rochester was provided.

In taking a closer look at the requirements for two or more municipalities to merge, the Wisconsin Department of Administration reviews all consolidation

proposals. State Statutes 66.0229 provides the standards and requirements to be met. These standards have proven to be very difficult. One of the most challenging standards to overcome is the compact and homogenous standard that makes consolidation of rural areas difficult if not impossible (Division, 2008). This standard was cited as the reason that the Village and Town of Rochester, Wisconsin and the Village and Town of East Troy, Wisconsin were denied. If we compare the compact and homogenous standard for municipal consolidation to potential city-county consolidations, there would be an extremely limited number of qualified counties that would most likely meet that standard, Milwaukee County being one of them. If we refer back to Table 1, Wausau and Marathon County would not meet this standard with such a low population density. However, the Wausau metropolitan area would likely meet the standard of compact and homogenous.

The second limitation of the process requirements in Wisconsin is the inability of consolidating governments to blend tax rates over the course of a few years whereas some states have allowed this, such as Nevada, (Leland & Thurmaier, 2010). The League of Wisconsin Municipalities has supported and proposed legislation in 2010 that would allow two communities to blend the tax rate over the course of twelve years (Witynski, 2010) and did so again in the 2012 Wisconsin legislative session. Witynski explained that the immediate burden of increased taxes where a major reason why the Village and Town of Verona and the Village and City of Pewaukee, Wisconsin, could not pass referendum to consolidate.

Another difficulty to gain momentum for consolidation is the respective governing body's interest. First, local government leaders need a level of trust to work towards a consolidation (Feiock, 2004). Often times neighboring communities have distrust between the local leaders. For example, the Village of Rothschild annexed a large portion of the Town of Weston back in the early 1990's against Weston's wishes. After the annexation, most of the urban portion of the Town of Weston incorporated as a village. This left a lot of hard feelings over the years. So it's often difficult just to get to the table for discussion. Secondly, once a consolidation gains conditional approval, two governing bodies will be merged into one. Some elected officials will be eliminated and a new election will occur. Changes, mergers, and elimination of important committee members will occur as well, and each affected person has their own interests to protect or sacrifice. This can lead to resistance among the elected officials.

Lastly, staff considerations are plentiful. There is fear of losing jobs, or reduction in benefits and wages. Often times to gain the support of existing staffs, guarantees to job security and decisions on benefit packages will need to be provided in advance. Internal employee strife can implode consolidation efforts. Another consideration is working with public employee unions as there may be active contracts. In Wisconsin recent legislation, including 2011 Act 10 has crippled public union power and more unions have dissolved. The political fallout of this

recent legislation is still uncertain. However, it is still important to work with and gain employee and union support for the proposal.

Other considerations include the loss of local identity. People have pride and can identify with the emblem on a fire truck or the city logo on City Hall. When governments consolidate, identity can change or outright be eliminated. Another concern is how redistricting during a consolidation will affect representation. Cities are typical to have the most dense populations and neighborhoods. It is important to consider representation of ethnicities and cultures when redistricting.

Even with consolidation of city-county government, there are additional layers of government and processes to follow. Utilities such as gas and electric, school districts, state college and university governing bodies will not be included (Feiock, 2004). These governing bodies have separate decision-making processes and taxing authority. The additional bodies will never allow a government to become one large engine.

Consolidations are very rare. There are a lot of obstacles and procedures working against them in the process of combining. There is a very limited history of past consolidations to compare one community with another. Data for comparison among similar communities is limited and data to compare past history and future projections are very much a guessing game. It will take an enormous amount of time, energy, and determination to persuade two or more communities to come together and form one. That is why cooperative agreements and collaborative

efforts are much more common. There is less of a burden to come to an agreement and less at stake if the partnership fails.

Local Government Official Interviews

The literature review has provided a broad background to ponder when considering local government consolidation. However it is important to gather the thoughts of local government officials for comparison of academic findings to the real world leaders. I set out to interview the various mayors, administrators, and key past elected and appointed officials to gain insight into the issues affecting local government cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation. I completed interviews of all the officials noted in Table 3 except that the Town of Rib Mountain declined my interview request. What I found was that cooperation and collaboration are on the minds of local officials. Most of the interviewees felt that the public perception of local governments working together was not the reality. They professed that the Wausau metropolitan area communities are working together quite well and as often as possible. However, when the topic of metropolitan consolidation came up, it left a sour taste in most of the officials' mouths.

Table 3 – Local Government Officials

Community	Title	Contact
Village of Weston	Administrator	Daniel Guild
Town of Rib Mountain	Administrator	Gaylene Rhoden
City of Schofield	Mayor	Ken Fabel
Village of Rothschild	Mayor	George Peterson
City of Wausau	Mayor	Jim Tipple
Marathon County	Administrator	Brad Karger
Marathon County Board	County Supervisor	Jim Rosenberg
Village of Weston (resigned)	Past Administrator	Dean Zuleger
Marathon County (retired)	Past Administrator	Mort McBain

Local collaborative efforts are in place among most of the municipalities already. For example, the Metropolitan Planning Organization is composed of the chief elected officials among the Wausau metropolitan area that reviews transportation issues and requests assistance from the state. All of the officials vote on priorities in the area and make a recommendation as to which ones to fund. Most of the interviewees viewed the group as a positive and felt that the collaboration provided a better lobbying initiative.

Another group that occasionally meets is the Southern Metro group which includes all of the municipalities in this study except the City of Wausau. From the interviews, I gathered that this group does not meet regularly, perhaps two or three times a year, but was formed to bring the metro communities outside of Wausau together to get out from under the wing of the area's biggest brother. Some of the elected officials perceived that the City of Wausau gets more than their fair share of

state aids for infrastructure improvements and that the Southern metro group could have a larger voice if they came together as a group.

Many cooperative agreements are in place, both formal and informal. There are too many agreements to mention them all and I am sure there are agreements that were not mentioned in the interviews and will be missed. Table 4 highlights some of the larger efforts of cooperation and collaboration in the area and which communities are participating in that effort.

Table 4 – Cooperative and/or Collaborative Agreements

Cooperative or Collaborative Group/Entity	Participating Communities
Aging & Disability Resource Center of Central WI (ADRCCW)	Lincoln, Langlade, Marathon, and Wood counties
Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA)	Marathon, Portage counties
Information Technology	Wausau, Marathon County
Park and Recreation Department	Wausau, Marathon County
Emergency 911 Dispatch (E-911)	All Communities in Marathon County
Everest Metro Police Department	Schofield, Town and Village of Weston
Metro-Ride	Rothschild, Schofield, Wausau, Weston
Municipal Court	Kronenwetter, Rothschild
Municipal Court	Schofield, Weston
North Central Health Care (NHC)	Marathon, Lincoln, & Langlade counties
Rib Mountain Municipal Sewerage District (RMMSD)	Rib Mountain, Rothschild, Weston, Kronenwetter, Mosinee
Rothschild-Schofield Aquatic Center	Rothschild, Schofield
Wausau Wastewater Treatment Plant	Schofield, Wausau

I found the City of Schofield to be the most interesting community when it came to cooperation and collaboration. Schofield is the smallest community in the metropolitan both in land area and population and is also landlocked. Economic

growth will have to come from redevelopment. Mayor Fabel told me that Schofield is always open to discuss cooperative and collaborative agreements (K. Fabel, personal interview, October 1, 2012). He provided many examples: municipal sewage is sent to the Wausau wastewater treatment plant, an aquatic center is shared between Schofield and Rothschild, Everest Metro Police Department provides a shared service between three local governments, and the municipal court is operated through the Village of Weston. Moving forward into next year, they plan to again participate in Metro-ride for public transportation services and are contracting for three years with the City of Wausau for assessment services. The smallest community with the least growth potential seemed like the hardest worker when it comes to cooperation.

The local government official interviews produced a wide variety of obstacles and issues to overcome in working to complete agreements in cooperating, collaborating, and consolidating. One of the main themes was building trust among the group. All of the main players need to be at the table and need to trust each other. Over the years, there have been some battles of personalities and communities as a whole. The Village of Weston and the Village of Rothschild have battled for many years. One of the driving points was back in the early 1990's when Weston was still a township and Rothschild annexed a large portion of Weston. Both communities' chief elected officials have now since moved on. Publicly there are still battles between the communities but in discussions with Administrator

Guild and President Peterson, they are open to working together on collaborations in order to continue or improve services.

Another theme throughout the interviews was the absolute need for data and cost savings projections. Most of the officials wanted to see hard and fast data that they can review and explain to their respective boards and citizens. Mayor Fabel of Schofield wanted to be able to compare future costs versus improved services. On the contrary, Marathon County Administrator Brad Karger put it very bluntly in that he believes data is always available and that some communities can twist the data enough to make it seem like a poor idea (B. Karger, personal interview, October 1, 2012). But in his mind, any efforts to remove layers of government or duplication of services are worthwhile.

I asked each of the interviewees specific questions about Police and Fire protection services. Some of the ideas that are currently being discussed are metro fire protection and metro police protection. Metro fire services have been discussed in the past and will be once again be independently studied over the next year. I expanded on some of the past police and fire service consolidations in the Background chapter. With the most recent push for metropolitan departmental consolidation I received a mix of feedback from local officials on metro fire and emergency medical services. Some of the biggest issues that came out were that all of the communities seemed content with the services they received from their local department today. The second concern revolved around represented personnel

issues since the largest department (Wausau) has a union, while the rest of the communities are non-union. A third issue was the decision making authority. Who would have oversight of the metropolitan departments and how would the representation be decided?

Police services were another interesting topic among local officials. A portion of the Wausau metropolitan area is already served by a consolidated department, EMPD. While none of the chief local officials came out and stated it, there are some indications that EMPD could consolidate with the Village of Rothschild Police Department in the very near future. Why stop there? Mayor Tipple stated he would urge a study of a consolidated police department (J. Tipple, personal interview, August 28, 2012). Marathon County Administrator Karger proposed that all police departments in the metropolitan area merge as one department under the Sheriff's Department (B. Karger, personal interview 10-1-2012). There are many issues and concerns to consider, but one agency for police protection throughout the County is an idea worthy of further consideration. One of the local concerns is that communities that have a local police department are paying taxes to support the police and sheriff's department. In a sense they are paying twice the taxes for a single service.

The role of the media was an interesting discussion. Some of the officials explained that as a community leader you want the media on your side and it is best to bring them in right away. Other officials wanted to keep the media out of the

planning stages and bring them in once the overall plans have been drafted. In this way, they would be a part of communicating the plan to the general public. Still other officials told me that it is best to keep the media out as long as possible and only bring them in if you need to bring pressure on a community or leader. These officials felt the media could never completely understand the nuances of all that is involved in creating a cooperative, collaborative, or consolidative agreement and they would only muddy the waters in the closing seconds.

The local community leaders had a variety of concerns. All were out to find how to best serve their community. All seemed open to discuss cooperative and collaborative efforts to better serve their residents. But Wausau metropolitan consolidation was a topic most leaders would not consider. We will further consider the difficulties specific to consolidation in the Wausau area in the next chapter.

Challenges and Realities

Sometimes personalities do not mesh. Other times, whole communities cannot get along. There had been very famous battles between Weston and Rothschild over the years and Wausau has had battles with almost all of the metropolitan communities and Marathon County. One of the common themes among the interviews I conducted with local leaders, both appointed and elected officials from past and present, was the loss of local identity and fear of power loss as issues that hamper consolidation.

How can local leaders work to overcome a community's concern with loss of identity? Some people think it's a generational concern. There is a perception that the long time residents are tied to the history of a community. But with a new generation starting to raise their families in Wausau, there are fewer ties to community history and more concerns for the quality of service and bottom line costs for it. It is common for school districts to merge in smaller communities. Often times, the new district has a hyphenated name so as to represent both communities. Other times a new name will emerge such as the D.C. Everest Area School District which serves students from Rothschild, Schofield, Weston and parts of Wausau and area townships. All communities can work to maintain their individual identity but still relate to the newly formed public entity. Community

parks and historical markers or monuments can also help to communicate the past history of a community.

Loss of position, loss of power, and parochialism are some other underlying factors that prevent collaborative efforts. Losses of positions are just a reality of consolidated governments. One ideal condition of combating loss of position and loss of power is when a leader is ready for retirement or is looking to move on to another job or community. This was instrumental in the creation of the EMPD as one of the merging police chiefs was looking to move on. Another way to combat loss of position is having selfless leaders looking out for the long-term stability of a community. These leaders are willing to sacrifice their position to make a consolidation happen.

Loss of power and representation are another challenge to consolidation. For example, if Schofield consolidated with Wausau, the Schofield area would have an aldermanic district that would likely serve part of Wausau (Wausau's aldermanic districts represent approximately 3,500 residents, while Schofield's population is 2,169). In a Schofield/Wausau merger, Schofield would lose most of its power and representation in the newly formed government. There really is no way of getting around that unless the government would want to increase the number of alderman throughout the community. One way of providing representation would be to guarantee that the citizens of Schofield would have its own aldermanic district. Still,

moving from a community with eight aldermen and a mayor to one alderman and one mayor can be intimidating.

Switching back to EMPD, in order to guarantee some level of power, a police commission was formed which gave equal shares of representation to the Village of Weston, Town of Weston and City of Schofield. In this respect, each community had equal power to evaluate the effectiveness of the police department, more specifically the police chief. Each community gave up some power, but were able to have a share of oversight that lessened each community's concern.

Most citizens enjoy all of the services their local government provides. Local services are the most readily available and apparent such as plowing streets, picking up garbage, and parks and recreation facilities. However, the reality is a community may no longer be able to afford the service as currently structured. In Wisconsin, the cuts to the shared revenue programs have been steady and are tougher every year. Local governments in Wisconsin have very limited revenue sources. The most known revenue source is the property tax. The State of Wisconsin has limited local government's ability to raise revenue since 2005 because of limited or frozen levy limits (League's Legislative Agenda for the 2013-2014 Legislative Session, 2012).

Federal and State governments should provide tools for local governments to work together. A positive incentive for communities to work together could be grants and other funding or a warning would be loss of shared revenue. For example, state government could threaten no more shared revenues without

consolidation of two communities' police departments. In some respect, the Federal Government and State of Wisconsin have encouraged local governments to work together. Some mandates are legislated from the state or federal government that more or less requires local municipalities to work together. While not always fully funded or the most pleasant for local governments to work through, mandates can get communities to plan together and work towards a common goal. Results from federal and state mandates include regional storm water plans, comprehensive plans, utilities such as waste water treatment, and regional transportation plans. Stephanie Post's chapter in *'Metropolitan Governance'* found that federal grants are a great way to get communities working together and help to alleviate initial costs (Feiock, 2004).

The initial excitement of working together can fade out. Once the incentives are gone and funds are dried up, too often are the intergovernmental agreements that were developed under the grant (Feiock, 2004). This could be construed as proof that without the financial incentive, the dollars do not add up to making sense for governments working together. In addition, state and federal laws that allow towns to provide services such as water and sewer utilities, solid waste collection and fire protection, are actually creating disincentives for rural areas to consolidate with urban communities (Feiock, 2004).

Paul Jadin, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the recently created Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) had a presentation at the

Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service on the campus of UW-Marathon County. Jadin's presentation 'Cities and Their Suburbs: Working Together on Service Delivery and Economic Development' provided direction to local governments on the State's future vision for local service delivery (Jadin, 2012). He also touched on the issue of parochialism and how it is difficult to overcome.

The portion of the presentation regarding shared services focused on fire and police protection. As former mayor of Green Bay, Jadin spoke about his efforts and challenges with working towards collaboration with neighboring communities. His top factors are to get the right players to the table, show them the potential savings and/or increase in services, and get the media on your side. As Jadin noted, regarding collaboration on fire districts, some of the communities would save a larger dollar amount than others, but all would be benefiting from improved service times and cost savings. Jadin claimed that some of the potential communities did not think it would be fair for Green Bay to have the most cost savings, so they backed away from the agreement.

Jadin identified two ways to get a fire district proposal back on the table. One incentive would be to share Green Bay's cost savings with the other participating communities over a fixed time frame; three, five, or ten years as an example. Secondly, he strongly encouraged the Governor to legislate incentives to collaborate. His suggestion was to create a deadline for communities to collaborate or after 10 years only two police departments could exist per county. This would incentivize

communities to work together to still maintain local control but would create a time frame in which local communities needed to complete their agreements. It would also combat some of the parochialism that is too common among elected officials.

If we look back to the Wausau metropolitan communities, we find that each community has their own departments to provide public safety services (see table 5). Service levels differ in each community. Some departments are fully staffed, while others are volunteers. Some communities provide a paramedic level emergency medical service, while others have base first responder credentials. While each community has individual departments, the reality is that there is a brotherhood among police officers and fire fighters. They want to work together and they are the first to assist each other as the need arises. In Wausau, the Police Department handles most events, but the Sheriff's Department is readily available to assist. Police, fire and emergency services departments all have mutual aid agreements throughout the area. When a large event is taking place, each department provides personnel and equipment to help the neighboring municipality.

Table 5 – Public Safety Departments

Community	Fire Department	Police Department
Village of Weston	10 FT/Volunteer	EMPD
Town of Rib Mountain	4 FT/Volunteer	None (Sheriff's Department)
City of Schofield	Volunteer	EMPD
Village of Rothschild	Volunteer	RPD
City of Wausau	Fulltime/Volunteer	WPD
Marathon County	N/A	Sheriff

For all intents and purposes, why not take mutual aid agreements to the next level and form a metropolitan-wide police department and fire department? With state shared revenues dwindling, the economic slowdown, and property value losses, local governments are going to have two choices: cut services or find a way to provide the service cheaper. Cutting services are the last option for most residents. Providing services at the same level, yet at a cost less than today, leaves local governments with a few options. One option is to contract for services with another government or private sector business, if available, or working cooperatively with another government.

Local governments, if they are not already, will need to review all of the services that are currently being provided. First, identify state required services that must be provided. Second, they will need to identify core services required by their citizens. Finally, the rest of the services currently being provided will need to be reviewed as to their necessity. No longer will the battle cry of 'trimming the fat' or 'pick the low hanging fruit' apply to making a local budget work. Times have changed so drastically that we are truly at a cut services or work together crossroads. For that matter, loss of local identity will be the least of a community's worries.

Policy Evaluation and Recommendation

In this policy analysis, I have provided background on the communities and issues in the Wausau metropolitan area. I have also identified cooperative and collaborative efforts currently in place. Finally, I have broached the topic of municipal consolidation. The Literature Review and Local Government Officials Interview chapters have identified some of the challenges to municipal consolidation. What is the best option for the Wausau metropolitan communities moving forward?

There are few options to consider. Consolidation of both the City of Wausau and Marathon County is one possibility or another option is for the consolidation of all metropolitan communities: Rib Mountain, Rothschild, Schofield, Wausau, and Weston. A second option would be the consolidation of metropolitan departments including Police and Fire/EMS services among all of the Wausau metropolitan communities. A third option would be to continue with the current agreements and make no changes (status quo). The final option would be to eliminate all agreements and provide services individually. Table 6 summarizes the options.

Table 6 – Policy Options

Option #	Type	Communities / Departments
1	Consolidation	City of Wausau / Marathon County Metro Communities
2	Department Consolidation	Police Fire/EMS
3	Continue Current Agreements	
4	Discontinue / Individual Service Providers	

These policy options will be considered against three evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria are political feasibility and legality, service quality, and efficiency gains/elimination of duplicate services. Political feasibility and legality will consider the short term feasibility of the four policy options. Short term is defined as five to ten years. Service quality would be based off of current services offered versus what a consolidated community or department would offer. Finally, efficiency gains and elimination of duplicate services would consider what the metropolitan communities as a whole would potentially save.

Consolidation of the City of Wausau with Marathon County is the first policy option to consider. In Wisconsin, city and county consolidation is not an option to legally consider. It would take a change to the Wisconsin Constitution to allow a full consolidation. As it currently stands, there are several departmental consolidations between Wausau and Marathon County. It would behoove both parties to continue to evaluate all departments to see if continuing departmental consolidation is

beneficial to both parties. However, full consolidation does not seem like a viable option moving forward. Political feasibility may be difficult to gauge. There have been some hard feelings in the past, but the current chief officials seemed open to discussing any and all options. Services are fairly distinct between the city and county and it is hard to envision duplicate services other than policing. This leads me to believe it would be best for both governments to invest their energies in other areas.

In my discussions with local government officials, it was very clear that no one would consider consolidating governments with the City of Wausau. There is a fear of being swallowed up due to Wausau's population size and fear of losing power and electoral representation. There is also the perception that service gains would not be significant enough to warrant increase cost burdens. The City of Wausau will need to provide data to alleviate the concerns of increased costs. Wausau leaders argue that communities need to compare costs similarly, meaning Wausau includes storm water utilities and garbage collection within the levy, whereas other communities have shifted the costs off the tax levy and placed them as a separate item. This creates a significant difference in tax rates. Wausau will need to communicate this difference or work to create an even comparison. If the Wisconsin legislature would allow blending of tax rates over a 10 year period for instance, it would help alleviate the concerns of immediate tax burden increases for

smaller, less serviced communities. Consolidation may be legal, but in the current state of politics, I do not see metropolitan consolidation as a viable option.

Wausau will need to explain and quantify improved services when aiming for consolidation with another community. Local leaders in my interview failed to see significant service improvements by consolidating with Wausau. This will be a task for Wausau leaders to identify and communicate service improvements. There is no doubt that metropolitan consolidation would provide opportunities to increase efficiency and eliminate duplicate services. However, these same opportunities can also be obtained in the next policy option.

Metropolitan department consolidation would be the combination of police departments and/or fire departments among the metropolitan communities. There are a wide variety of options when considering public safety consolidations since a consolidated police department already exists in a portion of the metropolitan area. Police and fire departments could be consolidated separately or a larger public safety department could be formed that combines police, fire, and emergency medical services. The major benefit this option has over consolidation of local government is that costs can be shared evenly while each community continues to have its own identity and other individual services. A public safety taxing district is legal in Wisconsin. This ability allows the costs to be evenly spread throughout the participating communities on a user basis and would avoid the fear of dealing with “Wausau’s problems” as one local official claimed.

There are major issues to work through including changes in administration, determining the composition and authority a utility commission would have, union contracts, equipment, main office and satellite office locations as well. Service response times would also need to be evaluated. These are items that can be worked through if local leaders and appointed officials are determined to make them happen. If we look at the evaluation criteria, costs and taxation should remain relatively the same if not lower. The one exception will be the Town of Rib Mountain, which does not directly provide policing services. Service quality should improve as well. The entire metropolitan would be served by full time personnel with the highest expertise. A larger department can afford specialized training and specialized equipment versus several smaller departments providing similarly basic services. Finally, efficiency gains and elimination of duplicate services is readily visible. Police routes and fire stations do not directly follow community boundaries. When there is no concern for jurisdiction, each public safety station will be able to serve the public uniformly.

The third policy option is continuing current agreements, the status quo. This option does not provide any changes and would likely rank low on the evaluation criteria. As we discovered throughout the Local Government Officials Interview chapter, there are many cooperative and collaborative efforts already in place. However, to think that no new options should be considered is not moving one's community in a sustainable direction. This option should not be considered.

The final policy option is to eliminate all current cooperative and collaborative efforts and provide services on an individual basis. This option speaks to the local identity and local control theory. However this option seems to increase costs and taxation, reduces the potential in service quality and actually would decrease efficiency and create more duplicate services throughout the Wausau metropolitan area. This option should be the last considered.

Table 7 – Evaluation Criteria

Policy Option	Political/Legal	Service Quality	Elimination of Duplicate Service
Full Metro Consolidation Wausau/Marathon County	Difficult	Increased	Yes
Metro Department Consol.	No	Same	Minimal
Status Quo (Null)	Yes	Increased	Yes
Eliminate Agreements	Yes	Lowered	No
	Yes	Same	No

It is my opinion, that there are some tough, yet viable, options to maintain services and save tax dollars in the future. Municipal consolidation at this point in time is not feasible. The discrepancies in costs and services of government among the Wausau metropolitan area are too big. A full City of Wausau and Marathon County consolidation would not significantly stabilize the total cost of government nor improve services. Wausau and Marathon County have already consolidated departments that were a duplication of service and provided the largest cost

savings. Most of the remaining services are different and unique to the citizens they serve.

The next best option is to consolidate the public safety departments among the Wausau metropolitan area. Each community provides fire, emergency medical and police service (except Rib Mountain relies on the Sheriff's Department for policing). Studies have shown the feasibility and financial savings a metropolitan fire department could provide (Committee, 2002). Perhaps a metropolitan police department study should be next on the agenda of local leaders. The metropolitan area has a density to support a consolidated public safety force, the communities are well connected with local roads and major metropolitan highways. To make the proposition even more feasible, there are a few police and fire chiefs nearing retirement.

Finally, any option that would eliminate cooperative, collaborative, or consolidative efforts is not thought out and is really moving government backwards. To keep the status quo is likely moving government backwards as well. The one constant in this world is change and even the slow and steady pace of government changes over time.

Summary

Local governments are working hard to maintain service levels with the tools they have been given. The 'go it alone' government is not sustainable anymore. Local government structures will need to change substantially. It will take a big carrot or a big stick for full consolidation to happen among the Wausau metropolitan area. Wausau is an older community facing older community problems (aging infrastructure, blighted inner-city housing), while the suburban bedroom communities have yet to face these issues. There is too big a difference in service levels and tax burdens for the local communities to approve a referendum for metro-consolidation.

The research has not conclusively found that city-county consolidation is absolutely effective. Leland and Thurmaier could not support their hypothesis that cost savings was found in consolidation. (Leland & Thurmaier, 2010). Each consolidation effort should be case specific. If there is mutual interest, mutual need, or if there is an overwhelming growth problem where infrastructure and government cannot keep up, full consolidation should be a strong consideration. Regardless, there are smaller, less game changing and earth shattering options available.

In the immediate future, state and federal budget crises are going to continue to crash down and fall on the shoulders of local government. It should not only be a consideration, but in all realities an absolute for municipal governments to enter into some form of sustainable and lasting cooperative, collaborative or consolidated service agreement in order to continue providing services at the same level. The alternative is to drastically cut services which lowers the quality of life for citizens. This alternative is unacceptable when the potential to cooperate among either city-county or city-metropolitan governments will provide opportunity to continue services. Local government leaders will have to stand up to parochial conflicts and childish politics and work with other local leaders to build trust between communities.

In Wisconsin, while it may not be necessary to amend the State Constitution to provide opportunity for a city and county to consolidate because most of the Wisconsin counties are isolated and rural, it is imperative for the state legislature to find ways to encourage local municipalities to work together for service deliveries. This is not to imply that communities are not already considering or involved in cooperative, collaborative or consolidated efforts among each other. Local officials told a different story (see the Local Government Officials Interview chapter and Table 4). If they look a little closer, I am sure most citizens will be surprised at how many inter-local agreements are in place. Let's share ideas, what is working and

what is not working, and find out how improvements can be made to make cooperative efforts sustainable.

There is a need for some constitutional or legislative changes. As I already noted, city and county consolidation is not legal in Wisconsin. It may be an option for some local governments in Wisconsin. A second change that should be debated very soon is to relax the standards to which city, village, and townships are held to when consolidating. If Wisconsin truly wants less overall numbers of local government, the legislature will need to reconsider the compact and homogenous standard as well as the requirements for supermajority approval via referendum. An additional incentive, which may be the biggest challenge to referendums passing, is the inability of local governments to blend tax rates overtime. Blending tax rates will help to ease the burden on citizens and will also allow local governments to extend services over a longer period of time. As a final point, a thorough review of state law in regard to the necessity of a sheriff's department and local police departments may be in order. With advances in equipment, communication systems, and transportation systems, it may be time to eliminate duplication of services via the state constitution.

Future studies should consider consolidation of the southern metropolitan area. Some issues of parochialism still linger among the community leaders particularly towards Wausau. There are also concerns over dealing with "Wausau's problems" as one official phrased it. Lastly, the differing tax rates from Wausau to

the surrounding communities can be a large burden to overcome. However, several of the southern communities could have an easier transition due to similar tax burdens.

It is imperative for communities to start tracking data. Community leaders need to figure out the true cost of services. There seems to be a battle among the local ambulance providers to see who can subsidize services the most to the neighboring townships. This creates an injustice to the community tax payers who support that service. In addition, data tracking should analyze what services are lost and the cost savings lost by 'going at it alone.' If true costs are found, the loss of local identity will become a lesser concern. Local leaders should be consistently reviewing statistics and data to give them the best knowledge to consider what is the best and most sustainable government structure for their community moving forward.

APPENDIX A

Human Informed Consent Form

Human Informed Consent Form

Student Researcher(s): William D. Hebert

Title of Project: Policy Analysis: Wausau Metropolitan Consolidation

I am asking for your voluntary participation in my field project as part of my master's degree requirement at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Please read the following information about the project. If you would like to participate, please sign in the appropriate box below.

Purpose of the project: Provide a policy analysis on government consolidation of the greater Wausau metropolitan area (Rib Mountain, Rothschild, Schofield, Weston, and Wausau).

If you participate, you will be asked to: Answer a short series of questions to gather background information.

Time required for participation: 30 minutes.

Potential Risks of Study: Minimal. I would like to use some answers in my analysis.

Benefits: Gaining a better understanding of the challenges and potential advantages of some form of consolidation in the Wausau metropolitan area.

How confidentiality will be maintained: It will not be maintained unless requested.

If you have any questions about this study, feel free to contact:

Adult Sponsor: Dr. Karl Nollenberger Phone/email: 920.424.2213 nollengk@uwosh.edu

Voluntary Participation:

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to participate there will not be any negative consequences. Please be aware that if you decide to participate, you may stop participating at any time and you may decide not to answer any specific question. By signing this form I am attesting that I have read and understand the information above.

Adult Informed Consent

Date Reviewed & Signed:

Printed Name of Research Participant:

Signature:

APPENDIX B

Local Official Interview Questions

William D. Hebert
MPA 790 – Field Project
August 1, 2012

Interview Questions Outline

Informed Consent

Read informed consent
Does the interviewee have any questions
Sign form

1. Background
 - a. Name/Title:
Length of Service:
 - b. Past related experience

2. Consolidation/cooperation/collaboration
 - a. General thoughts
 - b. Past attempts
Future possibilities

3. Obstacles
 - a. What are the challenges
 - b. How to overcome?

4. Specific questions
 - a. Metro – Fire Department / EMS District
 - b. Metro – Police
 - c. Other potential metro service deliverables?

5. Regionalism
 - a. Municipal Planning Organization (MPO)
 - b. McDEVCO
 - c. NCWRPC – is it underutilized?
 - d. Multi-County Cooperation and/or Collaboration

6. Any other thoughts / comments / suggestions

Debriefing Statement to follow.

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