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# Reimagining Law Enforcement in Tompkins County: Opportunities for the Future of Law Enforcement

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# Summary

It is unlikely that if the communities in Tompkins County were to develop a law enforcement system from scratch that they would create the same system that exists today. The current system of law enforcement was developed in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and while the technology and tactics have changed, the boundaries that they follow has not.

This project identified a range of options from keeping operations along the current path to large scale shifts in operations. The options listed below are a starting point for discussions and there would be many steps before full implementation of the large operational shifts.

- Status Quo
  - Minimal changes to operations
  - Cost of personnel services is about \$18 million a year
  - CHPD is highest and Groton lowest cost per FTE
  - IPD has the potential to have the highest FTE costs with a new contract and retroactive raise
  
- Expanded Shared Services and Collaboration
  - Potential areas for expanded shared services in include training, fleet maintenance, criminal investigations and common policy and procedure development.
  - Both IPD and TCSO are exploring new facilities. The opportunity for colocation has the greatest potential to reduce capital costs in a joint facility, decrease ongoing costs, and increase operational efficiency through smart design.
  
- Contracting for Services
  - Replacement for Existing Services
    - Villages or Towns arrange for services with TCSO. The arrangement would be based on a negotiation of performance criteria. Although there are a variety of operational options, relatively few make fiscal sense because of the differential in existing FTE costs. An argument could be made that CHPD could benefit from contracting with TCSO. TCSO FTE costs are 10 % lower than CHPD.
  
  - Provide New Services

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- Another use for contracting would be the potential for expanded service. The Town of Ithaca is a likely candidate for this service. The costs associated with this service could be segmented to the town outside village budget so that only the properties receiving this service would be responsible for paying for it. If adequate services could be provided by some dedicated staff and the expansion of existing services to a total of 5 FTE, then the costs would range from \$0.7 million from TCSO to \$0.9 million from IPD.
  - County, outside city, agencies merge
    - All or some of CHPD, DPD, GPD (and TPD) could transition into TCSO operations. Under this model, all officers would retain their positions, but certain ranks might be changed to meet new levels of responsibility. The goal would be to improve services while maintaining or reducing cost.
    - The precise cost to the community for the enhanced services would be determined as part of a negotiation, but in theory it could be cost neutral or less for the three villages if there was appropriate statutory changes to allow for the county to capture all sales tax revenue from the villages. In Cayuga Heights, the cost for the same number of FTEs would definitely be less if the service were provided by the county. For Dryden and Groton, the costs would likely be higher for the same number of FTEs, but with changes in work shifts, it might be possible to provide equivalent service with slightly fewer FTEs.
  - Single police agency created
    - There are two ways that the police agency could be operated. First, would be to expand the County Sheriff's Office to encompass all officers and provide the services to each participating community. The second option would be to create a separate County Police Department. The two options share most characteristics including being able to receive all officers via transfer, operational costs would transition to the county, planning would occur across the whole county and closest car would remain with NYSF.
    - In an expanded TCSO, the leader would continue to be elected. In a new County Police Department, the leader would be appointed and a sheriff would continue but only be responsible for corrections and serving civil papers.
    - All officers could transition to the new agency or expanded TCSO all at once or through a gradual merger where a TCSO deputy fills an open position resulting in an incremental transition.
    - If all expenses were funded through property taxes, county property tax could go up an estimated 28 percent, while the city and village rates would

drop by between 42 and 63 percent. Alternative funding mechanisms could substantially reduce the county increase and the city and village decreases.

- The cost model could change if fewer staff were needed because of improved patrolling models and a slightly larger span of control for supervisors.
  
- Next Steps
  - Public Input meetings to gather opinions and share the information with the study committee and elected leaders.
  - Elected leaders will be presented with the final report which will include the baseline, the options and the feedback from the community meetings.
  - Any action will require formal planning and allow for community input.

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## Introduction

It is unlikely that if the communities in Tompkins County were to develop a law enforcement system in the county from scratch that they would create the same system that exists today. The current system of law enforcement was developed in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and while the technology and tactics have changed, the boundaries that they follow has not. New technology in radios, vehicles and computers has made it possible to patrol over a much broader area. The law enforcement agencies have adopted new technology and developed cooperative practices, improved operations and efficiency through a unified communications system, implemented common records management, regular use of closest resources to priority calls, joint specialty teams and shared investigative resources. However, the agencies reflect the unique characteristics of the communities they serve with variable levels of service.

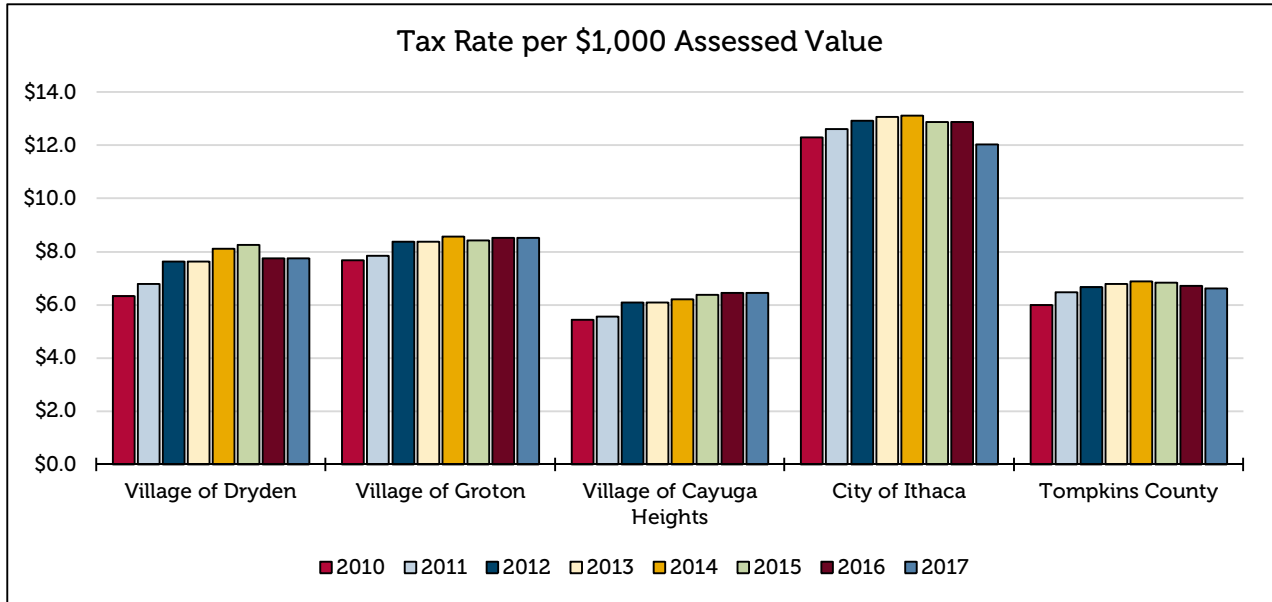
There is a desire among some elected leaders and community residents to explore opportunities for further change among law enforcement operations. The motivation for this exploration includes finding cost savings, improving services to citizens, increasing public safety and enhancing responsiveness to community concerns. This project seeks to explore a variety of changes from the continued evolution of operations to more substantial restructuring.

The options presented will require support from the community, elected officials and law enforcement. Although pressure to reduce the cost of law enforcement will likely rise, the realities of local control, union contracts and the legal complexity of sharing responsibility across jurisdictions make structural change difficult. There is the potential to move toward a new system of law enforcement operations that will improve both public safety and the fiscal situation.

The population is projected to be relatively stable for the next few decades before declining. There will also be similar demands on patrol services in the future as the geography is not changing. While the overall rate of criminal activity is stable or declining, there has been a recent increase in calls related to opioids in the community. The costs of operating a police department have been relatively stable, climbing at about 2 percent average over at least the last 3 years.

## Tax Rates

In the last few years, the property tax rates for the five participating communities have either declined slightly (Dryden, Ithaca, Tompkins County) or remained effectively flat (Cayuga Heights and Groton.)



## Share of General Fund

All the law enforcement agencies are funded through their municipality's general fund. The TCSO expenses make up a small fraction (4%) of the county's general fund budget, while the other communities range from one in five to nearly two in five dollars spent by the community. The large proportion of expenses toward law enforcement in the city and villages could serve to magnify the impact of any changes to the general fund and tax rate.

### Police Expenses as Share of General Fund(2017)

	Police Expenses	Share of General Fund
TCSO	\$ 5,906,049	4%
Cayuga Heights*	\$ 1,168,236	29%
Dryden*	\$ 606,600	37%
Groton*	\$ 319,600	21%
Ithaca	\$ 11,752,497	21%

\* Includes an estimated figure for benefits

## Range of Options for Law Enforcement

This project identified a range of options from keeping operations along the current path to large scale shifts in operations. The options listed below are a starting point



for discussions and there would be many steps before full implementation of the large operational shifts.

- Status Quo
- Expanded Shared Services and Collaboration
- Contracting for Services
  - Replacement for Existing Services
  - Providing New Services
- County agencies merge, outside city
- Single police agency created
  - Single Police Department created, supersedes TCSO & others
  - TCSO expands services to provide for entire county

## Option: Status Quo

The *status quo* would keep the existing operation model in effect going forward. This doesn't imply that law enforcement would be static, but that the central characteristics would remain in place. The key characteristics are:

- Separate law enforcement organizations with very good collaboration
- SWAT team is a joint operation of the City and County
- Technology and communications are coordinated on a collaborative basis.
- Training is handled primarily by each agency
- Varying levels of service that are reflective of the communities they serve
- Pay scales and costs for operations are decided at local levels

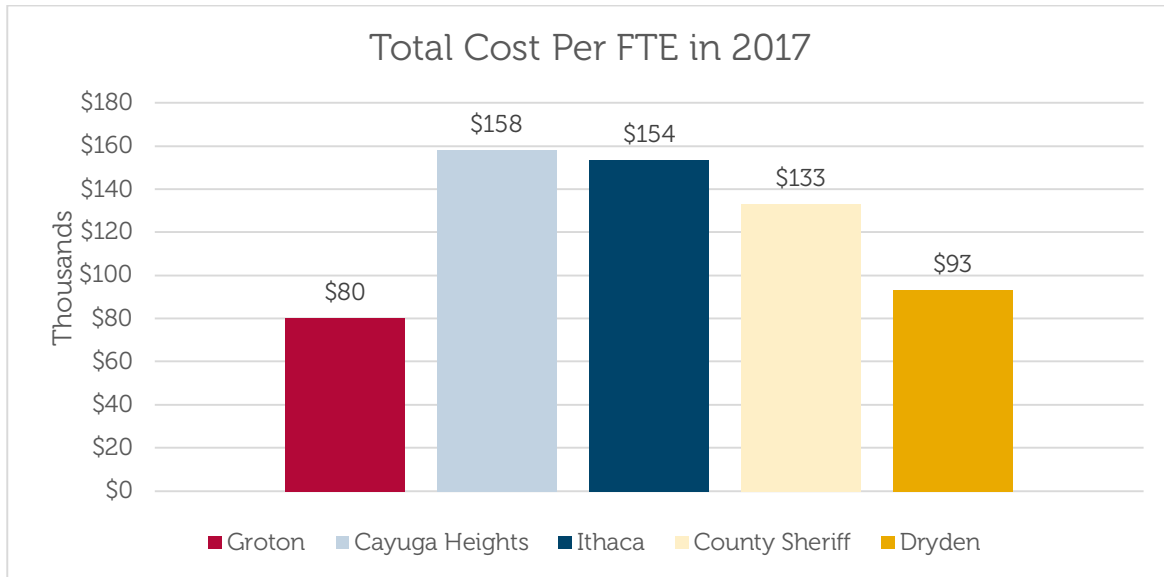
## Operational Impact

There is limited to no change on the existing operations. Each department will operate independently for day to day operations and continue to collaborate with similar activities.

## Fiscal Impact

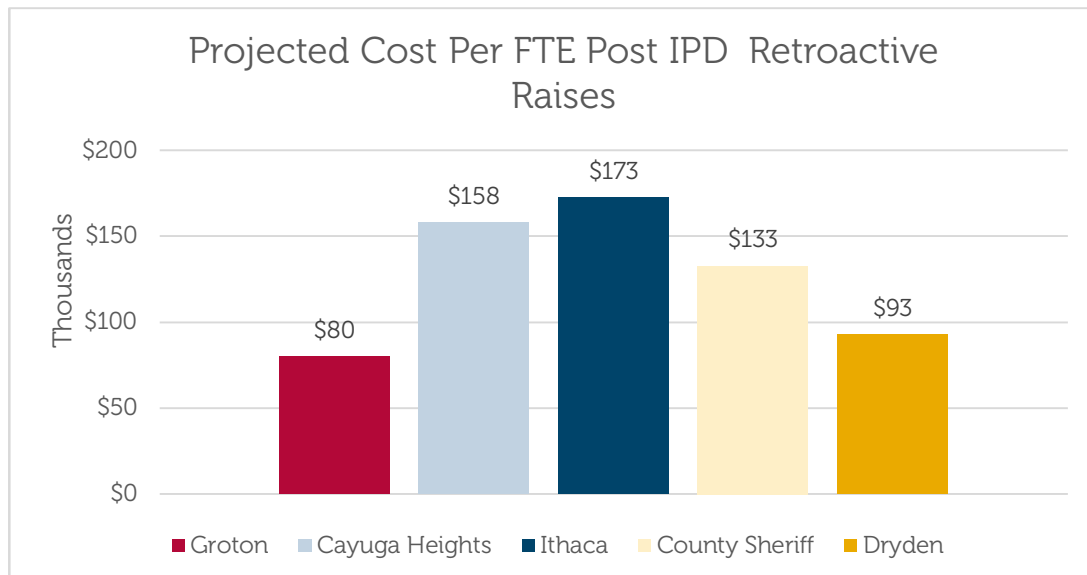
In 2017, the study agencies are projected to spend over \$18 million in law enforcement personnel services including workforce benefits. The costs for the five agencies at the focus of the study have substantial variation in the costs per full time

equivalent officer. The variation is driven both by wages and benefits while in the workforce. CHPD officers have the highest cost at about \$158,000 per FTE per year and Groton has the lowest at \$80,000.



### Impact of IPD Contract Potential Settlement

IPD has been working under the same expired contract since 2012. This agreement will eventually get settled and the officers will very likely receive a retroactive settlement and retroactive wage rate increases. This is projected to have a substantial impact on their wages. If they were to receive a 2% increase retroactively for each year, their wage scale would be about 13% higher in 2017. The result is that IPD would



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have the highest per FTE cost of about \$173,000. The graph below illustrates that difference.

## Option: Expanded Shared Services and Collaboration

While there are substantial existing collaborations between the five agencies, there is the potential to expand in a few key areas that may reduce costs but can at the least improve services with similar costs.

### Training

Law enforcement officers are mandated to complete key training on regular basis in topics such as criminal law, firearms, and CPR. Currently, the departments all handle their key training functions separately. Key components of the system involve a coordinating committee from each agency, a single training coordinator that would be funded cooperatively, and instructors drawn from each agency. A potential structure would be:

- Coordinating Committee with representatives from each agency in county
  - Identify topics needed in community
  - Sets general schedule
- Single training coordinator –
  - Employed by one agency, but funded cooperatively
  - Schedules all trainings and handles registrations
  - Identifies and coordinates instructors and training locations
  - Records training activities for officers, with clerical support if needed
- Lead instructor(s)
  - Assigned as needed by home agencies
  - Develops curriculum and appropriate training resources
  - Delivers training
  - Evaluates delivery
- Topic Instructors
  - Assigned as needed by home agencies

- Delivers training

A cohesive and coordinated training program would eliminate the need for each agency to develop their own curricula and would allow the departments to engage a single coordinator who would focus on it primarily. This could also serve as a venue to coordinate the existing training facilities.

The goal would be to provide a higher quality of service at the same cost as today. It might be possible to reduce costs slightly if training were better coordinated resulting in less overtime and larger class sizes. A stronger training program also has the potential to avoid costs related to settlements from police actions.

## **Fleet Maintenance and Management**

The two largest departments have officers that have part time responsibilities of managing their fleets. All agencies purchase their vehicles of state bids and receive a price that is very competitive and not likely to be lowered by much with the purchase of more vehicles. However, there might be some economies of scale with the services for accessory (lights, radios, computers, sirens, etc.) installation. Also, a larger inventory of vehicles might allow for changes in duty assignment that might lengthen the life of the vehicles. A dedicated fleet manager for a larger fleet might also be able to pursue efficiencies related to leasing of vehicles.

## **Criminal Investigations**

The criminal investigators in Tompkins County already work together on the largest cases and on special task forces. This includes the agencies in this study as well as higher education and NYSP. Investigators from the various jurisdictions do meet on a regular basis to discuss trends in criminal activity and open cases. Two areas for potential expansion of cooperation are noted below.

### **Coordinated specializations**

Because of the relatively small size of IPD and TCSO as well as the lack of dedicated investigators in the smaller departments, it is difficult for investigators to develop areas of specialization. While departments do have qualified juvenile and narcotics investigators, there would be benefit to designate investigators in areas such as cybercrime and financial fraud. These designated investigators would have cases from all agencies in their area of expertise referred to them by other departments.

### **Expand inter-departmental sharing**

While investigators work together on high profile cases, lower level offenses are handled in individual agencies. It is possible to share information on cases using the

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joint records managements system, but it is not always a practice to check if other jurisdictions are handling similar cases or might have information on a suspect. Formalizing a method of sharing information on open cases between all investigators may help lead to an improved closure rate.

A further step would be locating both large investigative sections in a common space. If all investigators worked out of the same office, they would be able to share their open cases and seek outside suggestions more easily. Without substantial renovation, neither agency would have enough space for all the detectives or storage for their equipment and active evidence.

## Unified Policy and Procedure

Each department maintains separate policies and procedures that provide guidance to their officers. There is a cost associated with developing and maintaining a robust set of procedures. In general, the agencies all operate in a similar manner, with some minor local variations. In fact, many policies already align with each other. Adopting a set of common policies and procedures could reduce cost. These could be customized to match each jurisdiction, but the overall policies would be consistent. This would reduce cost in the development and improve the ability to interact with each other. This also has the potential to improve officer safety if all agencies approach high risk situations, such as traffic stops and domestic disturbances in the same manner. Currently, they already provide mutual assistance on a regular basis on these incidents and a cohesive policy (and training) across the county would improve operations.

## Colocation and Collaboration of Some Services

As outlined above, there are several opportunities for expanding shared services and collaboration. One barrier to those opportunities is the workspaces for the two largest departments are separated by about five miles and a fifteen minute drive. IPD is actively evaluating space needs and TCSO may consider relocating law enforcement operations from their current locations.

A joint IPD and TCSO facility would lead to the potential for numerous shared and collaborative services. Above we outline the possibility to collaborate in the areas of training, fleet management and investigations. Additional areas of collaboration that might lead to improved operations and reduced ongoing costs includes:

- Shared booking and holding facility - A shared facility would reduce the costs associate with equipment for photographing, fingerprinting, breath analysis, and holding of unarraigned prisoners. Currently, each department must maintain

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separate systems for processing their prisoners which can lead to a substantial cost.

- Evidence storage – the standard regarding evidence storage have changed significantly in recent years, particularly due to the need to maintain DNA evidence properly and provide appropriate ventilation for organic material. Neither agency has a modern facility and a building a single larger one would be less expensive than two smaller ones.
- Common reception and public lobby – Both agencies have public lobbies that are staffed and provide services such as background checks, records release, found property and pistol permits. While the agencies provide different services, it might be possible to cross train or share employees to increase efficiency of operation and provide a single stop for the public.
- Modern interview rooms – While both departments have interview rooms, they marginally meet modern standards. With a joint facility, shared interview rooms could be constructed that meet current standards for space, separation, lighting and recording.
- Shared ancillary spaces – Locker rooms, equipment storage, and training spaces all could be shared between the two agencies.

Through a collaborative design process, it is likely that other shared spaces and services could be developed.

### **Fiscal Impacts**

Shared services and collaboration have a long history in the county. They are usually undertaken with the goal of improving services or eliminating specific costs. Outside of an agreement for dispatch services between the city and the county, there is not an expressly financial arrangement for these services. Both the training and fleet management options could be structured where the position is jointly funded by some or all the departments, but the employee works for a single agency.

The opportunity for colocation has the greatest potential to reduce capital costs in a joint facility, decrease ongoing costs, and increase operational efficiency through smart design. Since both the city and county are exploring new facilities for law enforcement operations, this would be an excellent time to consider a joint facility.

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## Option: Contracting for Services

One option for law enforcement services is for a municipality to contract with another to provide the service through an Intermunicipal agreement (IMA). IMAs typically specify the service including the number of officers and the hours that they will work. There is often a clause that allows the municipality hiring the service to specify the officers that will work the contract and to require reports of activities. In Tompkins County, the village of Freeville has been contracting with the village of Dryden for many years for patrol services. Across the state, all variety of counties, towns, villages and cities work together to provide law enforcement services.

### Replacement for Existing Services

Any of the villages could contract with another agency to provide law enforcement services. Reasonable scenarios include the villages of Cayuga Heights, Dryden, or Groton contracting with Tompkins County for patrol services that would replace their existing service. Also, because they share a border, it would be reasonable for Cayuga Heights to contract with the City of Ithaca if adequate services could be provided at a cost below the current CHPD budget.

### Operational Impact

The arrangement would be based on negotiation with performance criteria such as one officer on patrol at all times inside the village (or a reduced time frame to match current services). There would also be a designated supervising officer (sergeant or lieutenant) that would work on a regular basis in the community. An investigator could be assigned to work in the community on a regular, albeit part time basis. The officers would work out of a station in the village. The providing department could be a "staffing service" with vehicles, uniforms, stations still labeled as the village, although the employees would follow their chain of command. The goal would be to provide a service that is equal to or better than they are receiving today at a similar or reduced cost.

### Fiscal Impact

Although there are a variety of operational options, relatively few make fiscal sense because of the differential in existing FTE costs. IPD has a higher cost than CHPD<sup>1</sup> and the city would not likely provide the service to the village at a loss. Although, effective service could be provided with fewer officers, but it might entail curbing some services. TCSO has a substantially higher cost than both DPD and GPD. Those two

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<sup>1</sup> The cost per FTE in 2017 is lower for IPD, but that will increase when the contract is settled and retroactive raises are applied.

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villages have a lower cost per FTE because of their use of part time officers, their lower pay scale and more limited benefits. There would be indirect cost savings associated with hiring new employees and lower risk management costs to the villages.

An argument could be made that CHPD could benefit from contracting with TCSO. TCSO FTE costs are 10 % lower than CHPD. Therefore, Cayuga Heights could contract the TCSO for the same level of service (7 FTEs) and the cost for personnel services would be about 10 percent less than they pay today. Other costs would remain roughly the same, although they could see reduced costs if prisoners were processed at a central location eliminating the need for fingerprinting and other equipment.

## **Provide New Services**

Another use for contracting would be the potential for expanded service. For example, Town of Ithaca could hire either Cayuga Heights or IPD to provide new patrolling services to the town outside the village of Cayuga Heights. They could also seek to contract with the TCSO to provide dedicated services to the town.

There is a perceived demand from some for this service as the town of Ithaca has grown 12 percent in population in the last 20 years and that trend is thought to continue into the future with planned developments<sup>2</sup>. The 911 call volume in the town is about 8.5 calls per day. Many of those calls and other police activities are in areas immediately adjacent to the City.

The arrangement would be based on negotiation with performance criteria such as the number of officer hours spent in the town and response times for key types of calls. The costs associated with this service could be segmented to the town outside village budget so that only the properties receiving this service would be responsible for paying for it.

A model for service provision would be 2 officers on duty at all times (requiring 7.5 FTE), a supervising officer (1 FTE), a dedicated investigator (1 FTE) and a part time investigator (0.5 FTE) for a total of 10 FTEs. The projected cost if the service were provided in 2017 would have ranged from \$1.3 million if provided by TCSO to \$1.7 million if provided by IPD. If adequate services could be provided by some dedicated staff and the expansion of existing services at a total of 5 FTE, than the costs would range from \$0.7 million from TCSO to \$0.9 million from IPD.

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<sup>2</sup> While Tompkins County as a whole is projected to have level population, the town is expected to grow.



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## Option: County Agencies Merge (Outside Ithaca)

All or some of CHPD, DPD, GPD (and TPD) could transition into TCSO operations. Under this model, all officers would retain their positions, but certain ranks might be changed to meet new levels of responsibility. The new operating model would focus on creating an improved level of service. Key characteristics would include:

- Maintain village “sections” but they would be staffed by TCSO;
- Assign officers to be in the sections on a long term basis;
- Shift changes would occur in the villages and there would be office hours maintained by sworn and civilian staff;
- A supervising officer (sergeant or lieutenant) would be assigned to be responsible for each of the villages;
- Investigative staff member would be assigned to be responsible for cases originating from each village and would work part time in each village; and
- Response and patrol zones would not be limited by village borders.

This doesn't need to be an all or nothing shift from the villages to the county. It could be done by one village at a time. Additionally, village elected leaders would still have the ability to strongly influence how law enforcement is conducted in their community through agreements with the sheriff.

### Operational Impact

The goal would be to improve services while maintaining or reducing cost. For example, deputies assigned to a village would still be expected to perform checks of businesses, properties where the owner is on vacation, and village properties. This model would enable an improved patrol model by not having officers stop at village borders for calls just outside the village. This last factor might reduce the service for village residents, but if the TCSO uses the village sections as substations for broader zones, there will actually be an increase in the number of officers working out of each village section and therefore likely to respond.

### Fiscal Impact

The expenses related to the officers would move when their position shifted to the county. Since these expenses would be dedicated to the village it would be reasonable that the costs should be the responsibility of the village. One potential method for

paying for the additional law enforcement service would be for the county to capture more of the sales tax for the villages receiving the enhanced services.

<b>Police Budget and Sales Tax 2016</b>		
Village	Police Budget <sup>3</sup>	Sales Tax Dist.
Cayuga Heights	\$ 774,808	\$ 698,332
Dryden	\$ 376,882	\$ 353,942
Groton	\$ 231,377	\$ 442,521

The precise cost to the community for the enhanced services would be determined as part of a negotiation, but in theory it could be cost neutral or less for the three villages if there was appropriate statutory changes. In Cayuga Heights, the cost for the same number of FTEs would definitely be less if the service were provided by the county. For Dryden and Groton, the costs would likely be higher for the same number of FTEs, but with changes in work shifts, it might be possible to provide equivalent service with slightly fewer FTEs.

## Option: Single Police Agency Created

Under this option, all public law enforcement officers would ultimately work for a single police agency. There are two ways that the police agency could be operated. First, would be to expand the County Sheriff's Office to encompass all officers and provide the services to each participating community. The second option would be to create a separate County Police Department. Some of the characteristics are outlined below.

### Expanded Sheriff's Office

The existing police agency would expand its operations to be the lead provider to all communities in Tompkins County. Key characteristics include:

- All officers can transfer from their current positions to TCSO;
- The TCSO would maintain operations and perform desired services in each of the villages and the city;
- Agencies could transfer all their responsibilities at once or transition over a period of time through attrition and incentives;
- The existing leadership, including an elected sheriff would remain in positions;

<sup>3</sup> Police budget doesn't include benefits.

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- All costs for law enforcement would transition to the county;
  - County could rebalance sales tax distribution to limit the impact on county outside village and city areas that would receive less services;
  - Planning for law enforcement would be done across the whole county, with areas of responsibility that combine municipal borders with logical borders based on geography, transportation grids and commercial centers; and
  - Closest car concept with NYSP would remain in certain areas.

## New Agency

A single new law enforcement agency could be created by the county to take over the responsibilities of all law enforcement agencies in the county that wanted to participate. Under this model, a sheriff would remain for corrections and civil papers. This model with a county police agency and separate sheriff exists in several counties in New York including Westchester, Suffolk and Nassau. However, in each of those counties, some areas remain patrolled by local city, town and village departments. Some key characteristics of this model are:

- All officers can transfer from their current positions to department;
- The TCPD would maintain operations and perform desired services in each of the villages and the city;
- Agencies could transfer all their responsibilities at once or transition over a period of time through attrition and incentives;
- The department leader would be appointed by the county legislature;
- All costs for law enforcement would transition to the county;
- County could rebalance sales tax distribution to limit the impact on county outside village and city areas that would receive less services;
- Planning for law enforcement would be done across the whole county, with areas of responsibility that combine municipal borders with logical borders based on geography, transportation grids and commercial centers; and
- Closest car concept with NYSP would remain in certain areas.

## Operational Impact

This option has the opportunity to improve service by redesigning the law enforcement delivery in the county. A single countywide jurisdiction would remove the municipal borders as a factor for deployment, patrolling and investigations. There would still be bases of operations in each village and the city. Areas with dense

population, higher traffic and sources of commerce would still have the greatest demand for services and would receive the greatest number of resources. Additionally, villages would retain the ability to influence operations through agreements for service with the TCSO or TCPD.

## Fiscal Impact

During the implementation of this model, there would be a complete shift of operational expenses from the local departments to the county agency in either form. Using 2017 expenses as an example, the cost for law enforcement in the county's budget would more than triple with an increase from \$5.9 million to \$19.8 million.

However, the costs for the individual communities would decrease as these cost move to the county. The county could redirect some sales tax revenue from the municipalities receiving services to help pay for that increase. If more sales tax revenue was kept by the county for the municipalities with higher demands for service, then the added cost to other communities could be softened. Alternative funding mechanisms could substantially reduce the county increase and the city and village decreases.

The table below explores what the property tax impacts could be using 2017 as a model year for a new county wide department if all the expenses were TCSO expenses, all the costs were funded by the county tax levy and if the city and villages reduced their property taxes by the amount saved. The result is county property tax would go up an estimated 28 percent, while the city and village<sup>4</sup> rates would drop by between 42 and 63 percent. All the city and village residents involved would see a net savings on their property tax bill. Residents in areas of the county that do not have police departments would see a net increase of just more than a dollar a day on a median value home (\$210,000).

Potential Changes to Property Tax Rates of Single Agency				
Community	Existing Rate (per 1000)	Potential Rate (rounded)	Change	Net Annual Impact on \$210,000 Property
County	\$ 6.62	\$8.50	28%	\$ 395
Cayuga Heights	\$ 6.49	\$ 3.60	-45%	\$ (212)
Dryden	\$ 7.90	\$ 2.90	-63%	\$ (655)
Groton	\$ 8.52	\$ 4.90	-42%	\$ (365)
Ithaca (City)	\$ 12.04	\$ 5.70	-53%	\$ (937)

<sup>4</sup> Village residents also pay town taxes that would not be impacted by these changes.

A substantial hurdle to this model would be equalizing the labor contracts if all officers worked for the same agency. The partners in a merger can consider a variety of ways to harmonize labor contracts, including leveling-up some or all elements of the contracts. As noted, IPD FTE costs will likely be the highest in the county by a significant margin after their contract is settled. While there is limited precedent in the areas of law enforcement, when other municipal employee positions have been transferred to another municipality, the process may include “leveling up” of pay and benefits. The result is that after a merger, the per-FTE cost of a law enforcement officer is likely to be closer to the highest cost than the lowest cost.

An alternative model is the preservation of two different labor contracts during a slow-motion merger by attrition (i.e., hiring a new TCSO deputy every time a city or village police officer retires), at the end of which the TCSO contract could plausibly be the only contract remaining.

There are currently 125 law enforcement FTEs deployed to serve the county. Using the costs of 2017 as an example, the grid below shows the impact of different staffing levels and FTE costs on total cost of law enforcement in the county. The current cost of the 125 FTEs is about \$17.9 million. It would be reasonable to be able to reduce staff with a unified department through elimination of some leadership positions and working with a slightly increased span of control for road officers. Additionally a unified staffing and patrol model across the whole county could improve efficiency and allow for reduced long term staffing needs. Any changes to staffing levels would be accomplished through attrition.

Potential Personnel Costs of Unified Department (millions)			
FTEs	125	120	115
Current IPD Rate	\$19.2	\$18.4	\$17.7
Potential IPD Rate	\$21.6	\$20.8	\$19.9
Current TCSO Rate	\$16.6	\$16.0	\$15.3

## Next Steps

This project involved representatives from Tompkins County, the City of Ithaca, the Villages of Cayuga Heights, Dryden and Groton. Their role was to help guide the process and share information back to their communities. No decisions will be made on any of the presented options until a few more steps are completed.

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## Public Input Meetings

Any change to law enforcement would be done only with substantial local involvement. As part of this project, three public meetings will be held to gather opinions from the public on the general options that are suggested as part of this document. The project team will gather the information from the meetings and incorporate it into a final report. If changes are considered at the local level, there will be additional opportunities for input.

## Elected Official Consideration

The CGR Project team will present the final report, which will include all the options and the feedback from the community, at designated legislative meetings. The project team will answer questions and clarify materials to provide clear information to the elected officials so that they can consider possible actions.

## Formalization of plans

Implementing the options outlined above or similar changes will require significant effort from the involved organizations. This formal planning process will be driven primarily from the involved organizations, although outside consultants may be involved. During this stage of the process, the public will be able to express their concerns and help shape the process so the eventual operations best meets community needs. Also, at this stage of the process appropriate legal activity can be undertaken to create necessary agreements or develop empowering legislation. Some key factors to consider:

- Decisions on law enforcement operations are made at the local government level.
- If a village were to dissolve its police force, it would be subject to referendum.
- Tompkins County and City of Ithaca might need charter revisions for substantial changes.
- The New York State Police will remain a substantial law enforcement force in Tompkins County regardless of other changes.
- Cornell University, Ithaca College and Tompkins Cortland Community College will not substantially change their operations as a part of this process.
- Labor unions and collective bargaining agreements will have strong influence on any large scale changes in staffing.
- Issues related to post-employment benefits would need to be negotiated in any merger discussion.

- If a slow merger is pursued, additional planning around chain of command and work rules will need to be addressed.

### **Implementation**

The final stages of the change would be implementation and the changes would only move to this stage after completing the above steps. Any implementation plan should include performance targets and feedback processes to ensure that they are meeting the goals of the plan and also the public is receiving the appropriate levels of service. Strong leadership inside the agencies and among political leadership will be essential for any change.