



The Future of the Village of South Nyack

A Proposal for Support during Reorganization

August, 2020

Prepared for:

The Village of South Nyack

Prepared by:

Paul A. Bishop, M.P.A.
Project Director



Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Project Understanding	2
Our Approach to Discussing Reorganization.....	2
Project Plan.....	2
Phase One – Impact Analysis.....	3
Phase Two – Developing a Dissolution Plan.....	4
Proposed Price.....	4
Timeline	5
Project Staff.....	5
Paul Bishop, M.P.A., Principal.....	5
David A. Riley, M.U.P., Senior Associate	6
Katherine Bell, Senior Data Analyst / Information Systems Manager	7
References.....	8
Impact and Dissolution Plan for the Village of Forestville.....	8
Evaluation of the Impact of Dissolution for the Village of Sherman.....	8
Impact and Dissolution Plan for Village of Cherry Creek	9
Comprehensive Dissolution Study for the Village of Prospect.....	9
Municipal Restructuring of Village of Medina.....	10
Rockland County Budget Review - 2020.....	10
Kiryas Joel Annexation Evaluation.....	11

Introduction

CGR is pleased to offer this proposal to assist the Village in responding to a citizen dissolution petition. The assistance needed by the Village requires a consultant team with a keen understanding of municipal dissolution and reorganization processes, service delivery, public safety, community expectations and public engagement.

Since 1915, CGR has delivered results to the municipal, education, nonprofit and business-civic sectors through objective analysis, mission-critical data and strategic counsel. We have become a thought leadership partner of choice by empowering innovative solutions in the public interest. Trusted for our independence and breadth of experience spanning a century, CGR delivers expert solutions in government & education, economics & public finance, health & human services and nonprofits & communities. Proudly headquartered in Rochester, New York, CGR has served communities throughout the Northeast and Great Lakes regions. In the core competencies sought by the Village for this engagement – local government services, budget analysis, public safety operations, efficiency improvement and public engagement – CGR has a deeper portfolio of work with more localities than any other similar organization. Our website, cgr.org, provides an overview of our recent portfolio of projects.

CGR has conducted more municipal consolidation studies and delivered more technical assistance to regional and local governments on these issues than any organization in the Northeast, with extensive experience in New York. Our work in the past ten years alone includes dozens of municipal service, budgetary and planning restructuring engagements, as well as service delivery redesign efforts. In addition to directing several village dissolution and municipal service consolidation studies, our project director, Paul A. Bishop, also brings a wealth of experience in public safety matters, with a proven track record of providing practical, data-driven solutions to police departments, fire protection and EMS services across New York State. Mr. Bishop is supported by CGR's team of public finance, public sector management and service delivery experts, who also regularly review public works and highway services as part of our government efficiency work throughout the state. As this proposal demonstrates, CGR is ideally positioned to deliver assistance to the Village with expertise and efficiency.

Project Understanding

The Village of South Nyack has received a citizen's petition requesting a referendum on dissolution under Article 17A of General Municipal Law. While the ballot measure will be a simple "yes" or "no" vote, the issues surrounding dissolution have multiple layers and are deserving of a thorough, objective discussion of the various impacts to residents and property owners. The Village and residents have only a short time to consider the numerous impacts because of the rapid timeline mandated by the state law.

Our Approach to Discussing Reorganization

CGR recognizes that each community is unique and the factors that give rise to the discussion of reorganization vary greatly by community. Our goal is to help the community look at all the facets of reorganization, consolidation, dissolution and shared services to develop a decision that is right for residents. We recognize the critical importance of participation from elected officials, municipal employees, and concerned citizens.

CGR does not have a position on the wisdom of dissolution overall – we observe advantages and disadvantages of a dissolution or merger in every situation and maintain steadfast neutrality during the study period. We provided the data and analysis that resulted in the merger of the two Princeton New Jerseys (township and borough) in 2013, as well as the dissolutions of the Villages of Prospect, NY in 2015, Forestville, NY in 2016, Cherry Creek, NY in 2017, and Van Etten, NY in 2018. And we have provided analysis to communities that have chosen to retain the *status quo*, from a proposed merger of the City of Buffalo into Erie County to the suggested dissolution of the Village of Victory in Saratoga County and the potential dissolution of the Village of Medina in Orleans County.

Project Plan

CGR is deeply familiar with the study process required by the Citizen's Reorganization Empowerment Grant and the data and analysis required for successful reimbursement, as well as the necessary community engagement.

The importance of a thoughtful public engagement process cannot be overemphasized. Residents and business stakeholders are understandably apprehensive about structural changes that may change service delivery models, the

level of taxation, the distribution of cost among taxpayers, and the community's identity. No plan can entirely remove uncertainty, but effective public engagement can reduce uncertainty and provide the community with an understanding of the likely outcomes of a merger/dissolution plan or shared services initiative.

The plan we present here is based on the two phases that may occur in the path toward potential dissolution. The Village is obligated to hold a referendum vote in the near future because of the presentation of a petition for dissolution. The first phase is focused on developing an impact analysis and presenting it to the residents of South Nyack in advance of the referendum. The second phase would only occur if the residents voted in favor of dissolution at the referendum and is focused on developing a dissolution plan as required by statute.

Phase One – Impact Analysis

The goal of the impact analysis is to allow residents to make an informed decision on the question of dissolution based on objective information and reasonable, transparent projections for costs and services prior to the dissolution vote.

The evaluation will include:

- Review of Village and the Town Budget documents;
- Review of outstanding Village debts and list of physical assets;
- Interviews with key elected officials and municipal officials;
- Establishment of a potential service provision scenario post dissolution;
- Development of model to project impact on the Town budget and the Village resident's property tax bill and other fiscal obligations of residents;
- Preparation of a "Fiscal and Service Impact of Dissolution Overview" document with information from the above activities;
- Creation of study website to share information about dissolution including all written materials from CGR;
- Regular updates of study progress to dissolution committee and Village officials;
- The above activities will be completed at least two weeks before the date of the dissolution vote; and
- CGR staff will be available to present the study to the Village Board or other suitable organization at a single public meeting.

During this engagement, CGR would work with a designated point of contact in the Village. The staff of the Village and Town would be asked to provide the requested

documents in an electronic format to speed the process. CGR will work with the Village to create a definitive work plan with milestones and timeline as part of the project initiation process. Any materials from the presentations would be made available on the project website.

Given the abbreviated timeframe, the tax and expenditure estimate described in the report will reflect only one scenario for service delivery post consolidation, rather than modeling several different options. For example, there might be several potential options for refuse removal, but we will only model a single, likely scenario in our report.

Phase Two – Developing a Dissolution Plan

The engagement would only move to this stage if the voters of South Nyack vote to dissolve the Village at the referendum. The Village would be required to produce a dissolution plan within 180 days of the vote to dissolve. CGR would be able to assist the Village and its residents in developing a plan. It would meet the requirements outlined in GML 17-A.

CGR would work with a committee of South Nyack residents to evaluate the options identified in Phase One and modify them, if appropriate, to be included in the dissolution plan for the Village. CGR would also identify the action steps needed to implement the options presented in the plan.

CGR would present key findings and the recommended option(s) at public meeting(s), per committee direction. We would collect public comments via feedback forms delivered confidentially to CGR over the Internet, or by calling or emailing CGR. Note: CGR usually presents at two public meetings during this phase of the project: a) initial presentation, and b) subsequent meeting to address questions and concerns raised by the study and initial public meeting. One of the meetings is typically a joint public meeting of the town and village boards.

Following the public meeting(s), we would provide the oversight committee a Draft Dissolution Plan and Draft Final Report in electronic format. Following a comment period, CGR provides the Final Plan and Report in both electronic and hard-copy formats for the committee to submit to the Village Board. CGR would also prepare the required descriptive summary of the dissolution plan to be used to share the plan with the public. CGR provides support to the Village in developing the notices related to the dissolution plan, meetings and, if necessary, permissive referenda. Throughout the study, relevant materials will be posted on the project website.

Proposed Price

CGR is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) consulting firm, and as such we use a bundled rate approach to project budgeting. Bundled rates are set for each position title and include direct expense (salary and benefits) as well as other than personal services (rent, insurance, etc.) and administrative and overhead charges (organizational and fiscal oversight).

CGR proposes to complete this project for a not-to-exceed fee of \$18,000 for Phase One based on an estimated 86 hours of work and a bundled rate of \$210 per hour. A price for Phase Two would be negotiated should the need for that service develop. In the event this cost does not meet the Village's expectations, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss alternative approaches to our proposed methodology. In addition, should the Village need additional meetings related to the dissolution, CGR would negotiate a price for that additional work.

Timeline

CGR would be able to begin work immediately upon contracting. We plan to complete the analysis portions of Phase I in thirty days. We would work with the Village to develop a meeting schedule appropriate for the community and statutory requirements. The work associated with Phase Two would be completed in accordance with statutory guidelines requiring a plan to be developed within 180 days of a vote in favor of dissolution. This timeline and cost proposal is based on the premise that all materials will be provided promptly and are in usable electronic format. Should that not be the case, CGR will notify our project liaison and discuss any timeline extension and/or budget impact.

Project Staff

Our team of experts brings to this project deep experience in municipal operations, public safety coordination, public finance, government efficiency, consolidation, and public engagement. Our key team members' credentials are outlined below. Additional staff may later be assigned to the project to support the main team.

Paul Bishop, M.P.A., Principal



Mr. Bishop is a public policy researcher with a passion for addressing local government and public safety issues. He brings his experience in emergency response, system coordination and thorough analysis to each CGR project on which he works. He also brings the perspective of being a supervisor, educator and care provider to each aspect of analysis. His familiarity with the demands of public service allows him to look at situations from multiple points of view.

Mr. Bishop has led Countywide Shared Service Initiative projects in Allegany and Herkimer Counties in New York, as well as potential dissolution studies for the New York State Villages of Hoosick Falls, Medina, Forestville, Sherman and Van Etten. He led the consolidation and shared services studies for the Town and Village of Cazenovia. He led the EMS Strategic Plan in Essex County, NY. He also was a key team member on a consolidation evaluation for the Western New York counties of Yates and Schuyler. He has led a variety of public safety evaluations, including for the Consensus CNY-Commission on Local Government Modernization for Onondaga County, and led CGR's evaluation of law enforcement operations in Oswego County, Orleans County, Tompkins County, the Village of Watkins Glen and the Village of Dryden (NY). He was also the project manager for CGR's 2015 project for Orange County's Planning Department, *Kiryas Joel's Proposed Annexation of Unincorporated Land in the Town of Monroe*.

Prior to joining CGR in 2012, Mr. Bishop was the Manager of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Education at the Public Safety Training Center at Monroe Community College for 10 years. His work focused on all aspects of education for EMS including initial certification for emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics, as well as leadership development. His expertise includes program assessment, strategic planning and accreditation.

Education

M.P.A., College at Brockport, SUNY; B.A., Political Science, University of Rochester

Career

2018-2019, Principal, CGR Inc., Rochester, NY

2016-2018, Associate Principal, CGR Inc., Rochester, NY

2012-2016, Senior Associate, CGR Inc., Rochester, NY

2009-2012, Manager of EMS Education, Monroe Community College, Rochester, NY

2001-2012, EMS Program Coordinator, Monroe Community College, Rochester, NY

David A. Riley, M.U.P., Senior Associate



David A. Riley is a planner, researcher and former journalist focused on improving quality of life in the communities he serves. He offers a unique mix of experience in urban planning, data and policy analysis, qualitative research and writing about government at the local, state and federal levels. Since joining CGR, he has served as a researcher and analyst for local government engagements across New York State, including studies of municipal reorganization, operations and service delivery.

Mr. Riley earned his master's degree in urban planning at the University at Buffalo, where he focused on community development and neighborhood planning. While completing his graduate education, he researched innovative approaches to public engagement and worked on projects that focused on revitalizing neighborhoods and vacant urban land, affordable housing, and geographic information systems (GIS) analysis. In both professional and volunteer capacities, Mr. Riley also has served as a facilitator for various public engagement processes, including design charrettes.

Prior to joining CGR, Mr. Riley worked as an independent consultant and analyst on both planning and data analysis projects. Previously, he was an award-winning journalist with extensive experience reporting on government and public policy in upstate New York and Massachusetts, from town hall meetings to congressional elections.

Education

M.U.P., University at Buffalo; B.A., English (journalism), University at Albany

Career

2019-present, Senior Associate, CGR Inc., Rochester, NY

2018-2019, Research Associate, CGR Inc., Rochester, NY

2016-2018, Independent Consultant, Rochester, NY

2013-2016, Government Reporter, Democrat & Chronicle, Rochester, NY

2005-2013, Reporter and Editor, GateHouse Media New England, Framingham, MA

Katherine Bell, Senior Data Analyst / Information Systems Manager

Ms. Bell is a skilled analyst with more than 15 years of experience across CGR's portfolio of projects for local governments, nonprofits and foundations. Her expertise includes data collection, analysis and visualization; geographic information systems (GIS); web design; and database design and management.



Ms. Bell plays a central role in projects across CGR's practice areas. Her portfolio of GIS work includes building GIS datasets, creating interactive online maps, and performing network analysis for various public safety and highway projects. For over a decade, Ms. Bell has played a pivotal role in CGR's work on community indicators websites, managing nearly 300 indicators and about 200 data sources, improving site updates and functionality, and incorporating maps, dashboards and infographics into each website. She has created and maintained more than 40 websites informing the public about CGR's projects with local governments.

In addition, Ms. Bell manages information technology for CGR and brings firsthand IT knowledge to our project work. She is CGR's key contact for the U.S. Census, as we are an affiliate of the New York State Data Center and support its work to improve access to U.S. Census data for the public, local governments and businesses in our state.

Education

B.S., Management Information Systems, Rochester Institute of Technology

Career

Ms. Bell joined CGR in July 2004. She was named Manager of Information Systems in 2008 and Senior Data Analyst / Manager of Information Systems in 2018. Prior to joining CGR, she worked in technology-related positions in the Rochester, NY area.

References

The references below include both references for village dissolution and consolidation studies as well as for projects CGR has conducted recently in Rockland and neighboring counties that help to demonstrate our experience.

Impact and Dissolution Plan for the Village of Forestville

In 2015, the residents of the Chautauqua County Village of Forestville presented their government with a petition to dissolve. CGR was engaged to provide the Village with an impact analysis to help inform citizens before the vote to dissolve. After a referendum indicated a desire to dissolve, CGR was again hired to assist the residents in developing a plan to dissolve the Village and arrange for a continuity of operations with the Town of Hanover. In November 2016, the residents again voted in favor of dissolution and the Village dissolved on December 31, 2016. Information on the process can be found at www.cgr.org/forestville.

Reference:

Senator George Borrello
Former County Executive for Chautauqua County, County Legislator for Forestville and
Committee Chair
borrello@NYSENATE.GOV, 716-913-8885

Evaluation of the Impact of Dissolution for the Village of Sherman

In 2016, to address the concerns of their residents, the Village of Sherman contracted with CGR to conduct an evaluation of the impact of dissolution on the Village and

Town of Sherman. Over the course of four months, CGR conducted a review of municipal operations and worked with a citizen committee to identify the potential impact of dissolution and how services might be performed after dissolution. Subsequent to the completion of the project, the Village received a petition for a referendum on dissolution. The measure failed and the Village remains in operation. Information on the process can be found at www.cgr.org/sherman.

Reference:

Mark Persons
Supervisor of Town of Sherman
MArkathy@fairpoint.net, 716-761-6474

Impact and Dissolution Plan for Village of Cherry Creek

The subject of a dissolution petition under General Municipal Law 17A in 2017, the Village of Cherry Creek secured CGR's services to conduct a rapid assessment of the implications of dissolution and to support the village as it conducted a referendum as dictated by the 17A process. CGR also planned and facilitated a public meeting with village residents and supported discussions between the Town of Cherry Creek and the village over the possible outcome of the referendum. The referendum supported dissolution; CGR continued to advise both the town and the village on procedural and substantive matters as both prepared for the village to dissolve. Information on the process can be found at <https://www.cgr.org/cherry-creek/>

References:

Bill Young, Supervisor, Town of Cherry Creek, 716-296-8050,
cherrycreek8050@yahoo.com

Bruce Hendricks, Mayor, Village of Cherry Creek, 716-296-5681,
brucehendricks@gmail.com

Comprehensive Dissolution Study for the Village of Prospect

In 2014, officials in the southern Adirondack Village of Prospect engaged CGR to assist in a comprehensive dissolution study after being confronted with substantial new financial burdens from workers compensation claims. The study evaluated a series of options to respond to the financial crisis, including dissolution. In June 2015, the Village voted overwhelmingly to dissolve. Information on the study process can be found at www.cgr.org/prospect. The Village dissolved in December 2015 and services are now provided by the Town of Trenton.

References:

Mary Zacek, Chair, Dissolution Study Committee
Village of Prospect
maryzacek@yahoo.com

Joseph Smith, Supervisor
Town of Trenton
supervisor@town.trenton.ny.us

Municipal Restructuring of Village of Medina

In 2013, officials in the Western New York Village of Medina launched an effort to analyze the potential efficiency of dissolving the Village of Medina. The study considered the impacts of dissolving the village government while maintaining appropriate levels of service for municipal services including the Police Department. Cost savings and changes to operational structures were modeled for the public to consider relating to the impact of dissolution. The Village Board chose not to act on the study committee's proposal to dissolve. A petition effort resulted in a referendum in January 2015 that recorded a majority of voters as opposed to dissolution. Study materials are available at <http://archive.cgr.org/medina>.

Reference:

Andrew Meier
Former Mayor of Medina
(585) 798-2250, andrew.meier@wsmlp.com

Rockland County Budget Review - 2020

For the third consecutive year, CGR conducted a comprehensive review of the County Executive's 2020 Budget at the behest of the County Legislature. CGR identified several areas where assumptions could be adjusted to either reduce property taxes or to expand other programs. However, in whole we found that the county executive presented a balanced budget, the level of speculation in the budget was reasonable, the sales tax revenue estimates were conservative, that the positions in county government were adequately funded with a minimal reduction from previous years, the debt service was appropriate and recent state criminal justice reform had the opportunity to substantially impact staffing levels in several departments. CGR found few line items in the budget to adjust and noted that the financial health of the county has improved in recent years, but lags behind peers in certain regards primarily related to paying of a debt bond.

Reference:

An extension of this engagement is currently subject to a competitive procurement process. Please contact Paul Bishop for additional information on this engagement.

Kiryas Joel Annexation Evaluation

CGR was engaged by Orange County, NY to evaluate the impact of annexation of unincorporated land in the Town of Monroe into the Village of Kyrias Joel. Kyrias Joel, a Hasidic Jewish community, has a very high birth rate, leading to issues with insufficient housing and infrastructure to support its growing population. CGR considered the effect that the village's annexation of surrounding land would have on: land use and development; county services and programs; county assets and facilities; and town and village residents. CGR's work culminated in a report that presented a fact-based and unbiased review of baseline conditions and options for annexation.

Reference:

Legislator Michael Amo
Study Committee Chair
mamo46@optonline.net