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Memorandum

TO: CWSSI Panel Members

FROM: Tim Boyde

DATE: January 29, 2018

RE: CGR Announcement

Allegany County is pleased to announce that it has entered into a contractual agreement with the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) to finalize the County Wide Shared Services Initiative (CWSSI). CGR possesses a wealth of experience in service to counties. They have prior experience with Allegany County and have served several of our neighboring counties in a range of capacities with varying scope. Most recently, CGR served as the consultant/facilitator for the Chemung County CWSSI plan. CGR's prior experience in this arena coupled with their vast knowledge of county program operations will prove to be an invaluable asset in this process.

The County, in collaboration with its 29 towns and 10 villages began the process in June 2017 in hopes of identifying opportunities to share services that would directly result in local and county property tax rate reductions. The CWSSI Committee unanimously declined to submit a proposal within the 2017 timeline so they would be able to clearly focus on a variety of shared service opportunities in hopes of developing a meaningful and effective plan of action.

The CWSSI group focused on several key elements to be explored in greater detail. Those efforts were primarily directed at shared services within the town and village arenas. The four targeted options included shared code enforcement, shared assessors, shared water/treatment services, and shared tax collection. Other areas identified but not fully investigated included shared judicial options, shared health care options, and bulk purchasing options. These services were of heightened interest but would require some legislative action at the state level before taken into serious consideration. By delaying our plan, it appears there may be a window of opportunity to address some of these issues in our 2018 plan.

CGR will review the compiled information from our most recent efforts and begin the process of reconvening our larger group settings. It is anticipated that a smaller steering committee will be established by CGR to guide the efforts forward. The activities to be undertaken by CGR include one on one discussion with participating town/village leaders. Also, identifying shared service opportunities with the highest chance of success that will also meet the CWSSI criteria for property tax reduction. That will form the basis for our plan to be submitted to the Budget Office on or before October 15, 2018.

We look forward to re-engaging the key participants in this process in the very near future. The Governor has proposed making the CWSSI process permanent. While we have enjoyed and continue to enjoy, a longstanding history of collaborative, cooperative, and cost saving efforts, the expectation is that we will need to continue to dig deeper into other areas for potential cost saving opportunities.