

**ECONOMIC VITALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM**  
**June 1, 2014 Report Update**

Cooperation, Collaboration and Consolidation Plan as of May 25, 2014. Local Unit Name: City of Ecorse. County: Wayne County.

This information will be posted on the City's website at [www.ecorsemi.gov](http://www.ecorsemi.gov) and is available in written form at the City Administrator's Office at 3869 West Jefferson, Ecorse, MI 48229.

**SUMMARY OF NEW ACTIVITIES OR PROGRESS SINCE THE FEBRUARY 10, 2014 REPORT.**

The City of Ecorse hired George Strand as their new City Administrator who started on April 22, 2014. The appointment was affirmed by the State Receivership Transition Advisory Board. A description of the following projects and/or initiatives should be of assistance in evaluating the progress of the City of Ecorse since the last reporting period:

- The Parks and Recreation Plan was completed on March 18, 2014. The Parks and Recreation plan formalizes the concept of the Ecorse School System and the City developing a more comprehensive park and recreation program. Specifically, the plan anticipates \$834,000 in improvements. The State matching funds should be at least \$417,000 or 50%. The project schedule for this effort is the commencement of Fall 2014 with a projected completion of December 30, 2018. The possible barriers include developing a funding formula that the Ecorse High School, City of Ecorse and, if applicable, other participating governmental jurisdictions can agree to. Advocates of joint operations of parks and recreation (school and municipalities) and regional recreational districts believe that an improved parks and recreation program can result from these arrangements.
- The State of Michigan and the City of Ecorse have entered into a new agreement for the grant funding of the Master Plan. The Master Plan was last undated in 2004. The budget for this project is \$16,500. The planned schedule for the project is June 1, 2014 through January 30, 2015. The Envision Ecorse Strategic Plan will be incorporated into the Master Plan where appropriate. The Master Plan isn't expected to result in any savings, improved service and /or efficiency. The Master Plan is more of a visionary document about how the Mayor and Council and Planning Commission would like to see the City developed/redeveloped. However, it should be noted that the City received a State grant in the amount of \$11,830.50 and the City is providing match dollars of \$4,669.50 for a total cost of \$16,500. The grant has allowed the City to update the Master Plan sooner than it would have been without the funding.
- The City of Ecorse has received a proposal from Municipal Consulting Services to conduct an independent study of the Public Safety Implementation Plan. The proposed fee is \$20,500 and a timetable of 170 hours. A representative from the State Treasurer's office had suggested this. As you are aware the creation of a Public Safety Department was a requirement from an Act 312 Arbitration Decision. As reported previously significant progress has been made towards the implementation. The Transition Advisory Board (TAB) had requested that the City prepare a five (5) year budget which was submitted to the TAB Board at their May 6, 2014 meeting. The TAB Board had requested that the General Fund revenues and expenditures be balanced without any

use of fund balance. The five (5) year budget was tabled to allow more discussion and definition of the implementation of the Public Safety Program. Specifically, in the tabled budget it was indicated that in the 2014-2015 fiscal year budget the Fire Service would be primarily provided by Public Safety Officers and the staffing of one (1) firefighter 24/7 to roll the truck out on Priority One Emergency Response Calls. The Fire Union, I.A.F.F., has expressed concern about the elimination of the jobs and has expressed their support for the possible consolidation with River Rouge and Lincoln Park. The City of Ecorse is desirous of finding funding for the independent study of the Fire Services which includes the consolidation component with River Rouge and possible other communities. A meeting is being scheduled with the City of River Rouge and Lincoln Park to discuss their participation in the study. The project timeline is Fall 2014 with an expected completion of Winter 2015. Possible barriers include preferences of retaining the Firefighter and Police Officer form as compared to Public Safety and reaching an agreement with the participating municipalities

- The City of Ecorse reviewed a contract with an Attorney who specializes in City Charters. The City of Ecorse is required to have a new City Charter in order to obtain their independence from the State and the Transition Advisory Board. The Mayor and Council decided to not to hire a specialized attorney. The National League of Cities provides a model charter and the Michigan Municipal League has on their website examples of model charters for the different types of local government is too early to determine if there will be new revenues generated from the Charter revisions. The Charter Commission is allowed ninety (90) meetings to complete the Charter. The savings are approximately \$25,000. The project is expected to start Summer 2014 and be completed by Summer 2017. Possible barriers are reaching consensus on the form of government and having the charter approved by the voters.
- The City of Ecorse has bid out their janitorial services, lawn moving, engineering services and towing services. The bidding has resulted in a change in the janitorial services vendor. In reference to the towing services the City has added an administrative fee for those services initiated by the City. It is anticipated that the administrative fee will generate approximately \$30,000 per year in new revenue. This approval is expected to start Summer 2014 and continue indefinitely. The initial contract is for three (3) years (Summer 2014-Summer 2017). Also, the City is pursuing the implementation of an Emergency Response Fire Fee which can be collected from a homeowners insurance policy, participating in the State's salvage fund program and implementing additional user fees within the Public Safety Department. The anticipated savings of the Emergency Response Fire Fee is estimated to be approximately \$5,000 annually. It is anticipated that these efforts will commence Summer 2014 and be completed by Winter 2014. Additionally, the Department of Public Works is reviewing the lease agreements that they have with the loader and vactor. In an initial review it appears that a more cost effective approach would be to own. Additional research is anticipated prior to a recommendation being made. A start date is Summer 2014 with a completion of Winter 2014. The City is also beginning to research if there is a more cost effective approach with the water service repairs then with the existing vendor. A start date is Fall 2014 with a completion date of Winter 2014. It should be noted that as part of the initial research it has been identified that the annual lease for the loader is \$26,539.40 annually. The purchase price of a used loader is approximately \$30,000. The City would begin experiencing savings of approximately \$25,000 in the second year. In reference to the Vactor the City has been experiencing expenditures of approximately \$158,000 annually with the vactor which includes labor. The purchase price of a used vactor would be approximately \$100,000. The City would

begin experiencing savings the first year of approximately \$32,884.20. Approximately half of the time of the new three (3) part-time DPW workers would be allocated to this effort. In reference to the City water service repairs the City is spending approximately \$225,044 for water service repairs annually. If the City were to hire three (3) part-time Department of Public Works employees to do water repairs the estimated expenditures would be approximately \$50,231.61. Approximately half of the time of the new three (3) part time DPW workers would be allocated to this effort. The City would consider hiring additional workers if the work load required it. A net savings of approximately \$169,928 is expected in the first year. The possible barriers include finding suitable equipment, the limited amount of personnel within the department and finding qualified new part-time personnel to accomplish the work.

- As you are aware the City of Ecorse has contracted with the Wayne County Library System to manage the Ecorse Library. It is my understanding that the Ecorse Library is having meetings to discuss the future of the library. One of the options being considered is for the library to become a district library. A start date is Spring 2014 with a completion date of Spring 2016. It appears that the new millage would relieve the City of approximately \$63,000 in operating millage and could lead to a higher level of service. Possible barriers include obtaining voter approval. In reference to the City's street lighting program the five (5) year budget incorporates in the 2015-2016 fiscal year a special assessment of \$300,000 per year which will be used to offset the approximate \$435,000 per year street lighting expenditure and/or implement improvements to the system. Possible improvements include led lighting or implementing the concept of curfew lighting (a type of timer system to turn off the lights at a designated time). The start date of the project is Fall 2014 with a completion date of Fall 2018.
- In the area of personnel the City has eliminated the human resource position. These responsibilities are being accomplished by the City Administrator and staff. The savings are approximately \$65,000 per year. The City Engineer position has been eliminated at a savings of approximately \$67,000 per year. These responsibilities are now being accomplished by the existing staff and contracted services. These vacancies occurred in the Winter 2014 and Spring 2014.

It is my hope that this summary of new activities or progress since the February 10, 2014 report is helpful in your evaluation of the efforts of the City of Ecorse.

George Strand  
City Administrator  
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