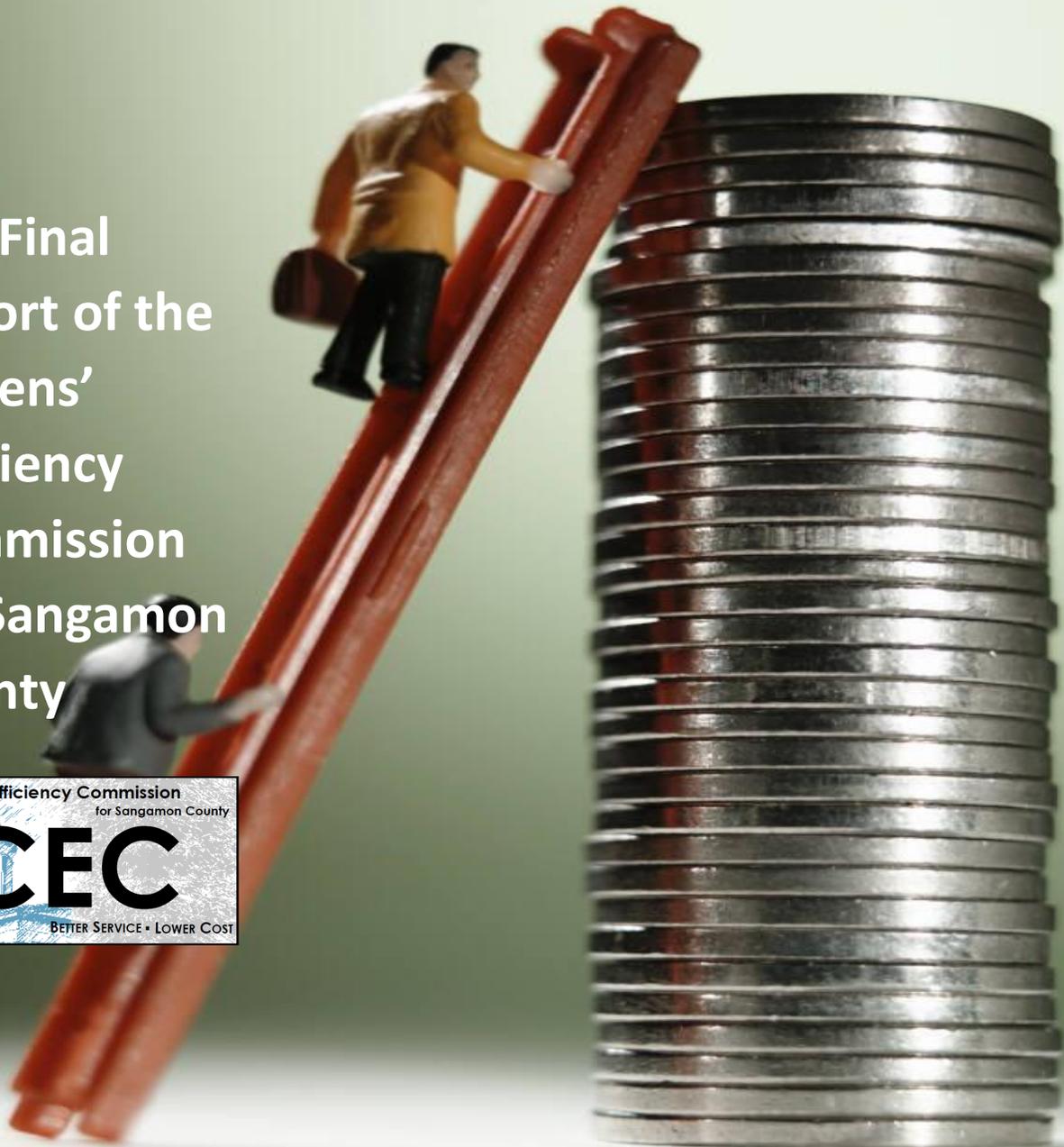


# Exceeding Expectations:

A New Vision for Greater Local Government  
Efficiency and Effectiveness in Sangamon County

The Final  
Report of the  
Citizens'  
Efficiency  
Commission  
for Sangamon  
County



January 2014

### **In Recognition and Appreciation. . .**

This report is the culminant expression of a rather remarkable and successful experiment in citizen participation in government process. Initially proposed by Sangamon County Board resolution and eventually endorsed by 62% of the county electorate, the Citizens' Efficiency Commission (CEC) was charged to examine local governments at all levels with the end in view of identifying and recommending changes in process, structure and resource allocation that would result in more efficient and effective delivery of government services.

In itself, this charge is both daring and daunting in scope. Though the report will provide the particulars, it is appropriate to note here that local government in Sangamon County is complex, varied and often overwhelmingly confusing to citizens. In this context, 23 unpaid volunteers, selected by local governments, were tasked with unraveling the complexity, understanding the variety and reducing the confusion to find ways to make government better.

Collectively, we 23 members of the CEC found it easy to say what we thought might make government better, but found it very difficult to demonstrate clearly that our notions were correct. From the outset, it was clear that, were our recommendations to be taken seriously, they must be well formulated and well grounded in the best information and research available.

The Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission provided the professional staff and expertise required to conduct the research and ground CEC recommendations in solid information. In addition, the staff and its able leadership provided access to local government process and venues that, left to its own efforts, might well have been inaccessible to the CEC. But perhaps most importantly, the Regional Planning Commission staff brought with it an intractable commitment to quality in all its endeavors.

Justifiably, we Commissioners take pride in the commitment, work and recommendations that we present in this report. However, we note here that without Norm Sims, Executive Director of the Planning Commission, and his capable and imaginative leadership in this project, the recommendations presented in this report would have been considerably reduced in scope. Without Jeff Fulgenzi, Planning Commission staff assigned to the CEC, and his tenacious commitment to clarity, our recommendations would have been considerably reduced in impact. Without Amy Uden, Planning Commission staff assigned to the CEC, and her nimble understanding of various ways to improve efficiency, our recommendations would have been considerably less flexible and imaginative.

It is imperative that other jurisdictions considering efforts similar to that undertaken by the CEC understand that, in the absence of professional staff of the caliber made available to us, the effort is likely to produce only mediocre results if not outright failure.

We, the members of the Citizens' Efficiency Commission, recognize the efforts of the Springfield and Sangamon County Planning Commission leadership and staff and sincerely appreciate the value their work has given to ours.



January 2014

# **Exceeding Expectations:**

**A New Vision for Greater Local Government  
Efficiency and Effectiveness in Sangamon County**



**The Final Report of the Citizens' Efficiency Commission for  
Sangamon County**

**January 2014**



**Prepared for the Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County  
by the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission**

**Approved by the Citizens' Efficiency Commission  
January 2014**

**Correspondence to the Efficiency Commission may be addressed in care of:  
SSCRPC  
200 South 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 212  
Springfield, IL 62701**

# Executive Summary

The Citizens' Efficiency Commission (CEC) for Sangamon County was established by referendum in the general election of November 2010. This body, made up of 23 "citizen" members, was tasked with looking beyond individual local government interests, jurisdictional lines or bureaucratic structures, to assess and propose opportunities for improving the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of local governments in the region through improved cooperation, coordination, and the sharing of services between and among local governments, as well as the reduction or elimination of duplication of effort.

During its two and one-half year life-span, the CEC was asked to do something that no other group of citizens had been asked to do: take an objective, comprehensive, and multi-jurisdictional look at how local governments in an entire region could operate more economically, efficiently and effectively. To achieve this end, and as will be detailed in this report, the CEC was called upon to come to a better understanding of the wide range of local governments in Illinois and Sangamon County, gather information from a variety of sources about them, develop protocols for the evaluation and assessment of the information collected, review the results of its research, and then make valid and well-reasoned recommendations intended to improve economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

This work resulted in the development of 23 specific recommendations (see pages 21 –31), eight white papers, and two supporting reports, addressing areas where improvements in efficiency and effectiveness are possible, grouped into four broad areas of governmental function:

- Administration, Management and Budget;
- Community Development;
- Public Safety; and
- Public Works.

The CEC also identified seven areas deserving of further review (see pages 32 – 33), including:

- Regional Water Management Coordination;
- Law Enforcement Collaboration;
- Property Tax Assessment Functions;
- Prairie Capital Convention Center and Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau;
- Infrastructure Project Coordination;
- Building Permitting Processes; and
- School District Efficiency.

In addition, the CEC identified five significant themes (see pages 37 –47) believed to be important for the long-term improvement of local government efficiency and effectiveness, including:

- Understanding and accepting the importance of local governments working across both internal and external jurisdictional lines.
- The necessity of targeting structural changes such as would occur from the consolidation or merger of jurisdictions or their functions.
- Understanding and overcoming statutory limitations on local efficiency and effectiveness improvement.
- Addressing the citizens' role in effectiveness and efficiency improvement.

- Developing a new way for local governments to do business that comes to terms with lack of capacity, information-driven decision making, and the planning or performance measurement necessary for long-term and continuing improvement.

The CEC believes that if its vision for local government economy and efficiency can be achieved, local governments in the region may not only meet the public's expectations, but exceed them.



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**Citizens' Efficiency Commission  
Chair Karen Hasara and Vice Chair Mike Murphy**



# ***A Message from the Chair of the Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County***

## **Honorable Karen Hasara, Chair, Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County**

It's been said that our lessons come from our journeys, not our destinations. As the following report will indicate, after two and one-half years on a journey to identify ways in which the local governments in Sangamon County can provide better service at lower cost in meeting the needs of their citizens, I believe that the 23 appointed members of the Citizens' Efficiency Commission (CEC) for Sangamon County have found that to be true.

While our destination involved the identification of specific recommendations for improving effectiveness and efficiency, and our work over this period generated 23 recommendations for improvement as well as numerous white papers and other reports indicating areas still open for exploration, what the CEC discovered during this journey was also telling. We found that the leadership and staff of the jurisdictions in the county were very often committed to improvement, and many improvements had been made or were underway. However, we also found that they were sometimes stifled by the existing systems they were called upon to use or state mandates that limited their options, often lacked the information necessary to manage for greater success, and seldom had the resources necessary to identify better practices, let alone implement them.

The CEC found that municipalities in the region were sometimes dealing with problems that other local governments had successfully addressed, but they did not know of these solutions; even when the leaders of these other communities were right next door or just a phone call away. These barriers, we found, not only exist between and among communities in the region, but sometimes exist within the bureaucratic structures of the local governments themselves. Because of this we found that fostering a community of practice among the local units of government in Sangamon County that communicates, coordinates, and cooperates would go a long way not just toward meeting the expectations of the public, but toward exceeding them.

This journey was not an easy one. The CEC was asked to do something that as far as we can tell no other group of citizens has been asked to do: take an objective, comprehensive, and multi-jurisdictional look at how local governments in an entire region can operate more economically, efficiently, and effectively within the constraints they face. Because of this, our final report makes an effort to not just repeat our recommendations and findings, but to present the way in which we approached our tasks and the methods that we used, so that others who follow us might learn from what we discovered on our journey, as well as how we reached our conclusions and our vision for more effective and efficient government. This vision calls for exceeding the public's demand for greater efficiency and effectiveness, not simply meeting this call.

Arriving at this vision could not have been done without the assistance of some remarkable groups of people. The first is the 27 people who served in the Commission's 23 appointed positions during its 28-month life-span. These unpaid appointees spent countless hours in their research and deliberations in order to accomplish the results presented in this report. The second is the five individuals who served with me on the CEC's Executive Committee, chairing its four substantive committees and helping to guide our efforts. The third is made up of the many community volunteers and interns who assisted us in our efforts, as well as members of various media that helped encourage public awareness and involvement in the CEC's work. And finally, the fourth is the staff of the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission, who brought their expertise, professionalism and objectivity to the task of assisting us.

As with so many journeys, we end our work by finding that there are still other areas to be explored. But all in all, we believe that along the way we set the stage for a new vision of government in Sangamon County—one in which government exceeds the public's expectations, and one in which, if achieved, the citizens of the region and the leaders of our communities can take well-deserved pride.

A large, stylized graphic in the background of the page. It features a thick pencil oriented diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right. A person is walking on the pencil, carrying a briefcase. To the right of the pencil is a large stack of coins, with the top of the stack appearing to be a large, textured cylinder. The entire graphic is rendered in a light, semi-transparent grey tone.

***We believe that it should be the stated intent of local governments in the region not just to meet the public's expectations, but to strive cooperatively and collaboratively to exceed them.***

# I. Creating a Vision for Exceeding Expectations: Introduction

It does not take extraordinary vision to see that the environment in which local governments must work today is not a simple one. The problems they confront are often complex, requiring that they face the reality of limited resources while at the same time confronting increasing needs. This conflict must be met with the expectation that the situation will not improve over the near term, particularly as localities are continually saddled with state and federal mandates that require more resources than higher levels of government seem to be willing or able to provide. These difficulties are exacerbated by the financial stresses faced by residents, who are often unwilling or unable to contribute more revenue to support the local services that they depend upon, because the public sometimes feels that government at all levels is not adequately using the funds that taxpayers already provide in efficient and effective ways.

Increasingly, the public is calling upon governments at all levels to find ways to use the resources available to them more efficiently and effectively, demonstrating that they *can* meet demands in new and creative ways. The Citizens' Efficiency Commission (CEC) for Sangamon County was established by referendum in 2010 for just this purpose: *to examine the ways in which the region's many units of local government can function more efficiently and effectively in meeting the public's needs.*

In pursuing this mission, and as this report will outline, the CEC faced many challenges.

It encountered myriad examples of challenging and complex efficiency problems in local governments' functions. It found, for example, that basic information often did not exist that would help it to sort through these problems and identify solutions. It found that many of the problems it encountered crossed jurisdictional lines, but that there were no established mechanisms for local governments to share their problems or work together to solve them. It found that bureaucratic lines within the jurisdictions themselves could be just as troubling. It found that efforts that might address problems could be hamstrung by legal and jurisdictional limitations that were outside of the control of those seeking to solve them. This last was seen as especially problematic given a recognized trend, particularly at the federal level, to redirect resources toward regional approaches – more often benefiting larger metropolitan areas with populations greater than those that exist in Central Illinois – rather than the more localized needs of smaller communities.

Along with these limitations, the CEC also found that it was somewhat alone in its task, as it was unable to identify any other region of the state, or even the nation, that had attempted to do what it was charged to do: take an exhaustively multi-jurisdictional approach to finding ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local government.

This was even represented in the CEC's terminology itself. If the Commission sought to improve the "efficiency" and "effectiveness" of local government, it is reasonable to ask what was meant by these terms. Answering this question was not inconsequential to the CEC's mission as the terms are used throughout its enabling resolution. In fact, the common conceptions regarding both terms can put the goal of creating cost efficiencies in conflict with the goal of achieving effective service delivery. Ultimately, the CEC addressed this matter as a component of its *Philosophy on Recommendations*, as will be further described later in this report.

But if the CEC was faced with hurdles in arriving at a vision for improved governmental efficiency and effectiveness, it must be recognized that local governments working to improve their programs and

services confront similar challenges as well. Throughout its work, the CEC often found that most municipal leaders and their employees wanted to do the best they could for their communities, worked hard to meet public demands with the resources they had available, were willing to consider innovative solutions when best practices were identified, and were generally willing to discuss both their challenges and opportunities in a useful and open way. However, they were also stymied by the political and operational environments in which they worked or which they had inherited.

Because of this, and as it tackled the challenges associated with its work, the CEC often asked local officials and staff members one substantive question thought to be particularly pertinent to arriving at a vision of efficiency and effectiveness: *“If you could start over and design this function of local government ideally, is this how you would do it?”* Without exception, the answer was an unreserved *“No.”*

The CEC found that the present governmental structures and administrative systems that limit improvement seldom are in place because of a lack of desire to find ways to do better, but arise from the fact that local governments in the Sangamon County region and in all of Illinois have developed as the result of historical patterns, unique considerations sometimes arising from parochial interests, and resource constraints. Whatever the reasons, the historic progression involved in developing the current functions and systems of local governments results in some seemingly inefficient and even archaic structures for approaching current problems and solving them.

As noted above, the CEC often learned that local officials are in most situations striving to do as well as they can with the resources they are provided and the constraints they face. But even so, these efforts do not produce results of *excellence*. Rather than *exceptionally* efficient and effective systems, the CEC encountered policies and procedures that left room for improvement on many fronts. At times, structural change may be best suited to addressing these problems. Conversely, however, there are inefficiencies in local government that have little relation to government structure and could instead be addressed by changing paradigms, cultures, or the way of doing business among existing units of government.

Tasked with cultivating government efficiency and effectiveness, the CEC ultimately made very significant, but limited, strides toward achieving the mission established for it by referendum. In order to ensure that its work is not lost, and to help local governments continue to develop meaningful improvements, in this final report the CEC has worked to provide its vision for long-term regional success.

It is the CEC’s belief that to be successful the local governments in the region must adopt a shared vision – both internally and externally – to willingly and demonstrably seek to become and be seen as the most efficient and effective local governments in Central Illinois, if not in the state as a whole. The public will know that this has been attained when local officials and their constituents know how their government is intended to function and the limitations it faces, and then continually work to evaluate operations, publicly identify target areas for improved performance, adopt management processes and procedures that allow them to manage toward improved performance, and work together with the other jurisdictions in the region to achieve these ends.

***We believe that it should be the stated intent of local governments in the region not just to meet the public’s expectations, but to strive cooperatively and collaboratively to exceed them.***

Given the constraints noted above, this vision is not simply one for the leaders and agents of government to share, but one to be accepted and embraced by the public as well.

Government will only be as efficient and effective as its constituents demand and allow it to be. Residents of Sangamon County communities must recognize that they have a critical role to play, first by understanding the problems and the constraints that local governments face, and second by realizing that some of these problems can only be addressed by informed and participatory residents who are willing to work actively and constructively with their local units of government to achieve the CEC's vision. Indeed the Commission found many cases in which citizens could improve local government efficiency and effectiveness through a better understanding of how their own individual actions can reduce the burdens local governments face, leading to reductions in cost and improvements in service.

Without such a commitment by both the governing and the governed, the work of the CEC may be for naught, requiring groups like the CEC to be brought together again and again to address serious matters of governmental efficiency and effectiveness on an *ad hoc* basis.

In short, the CEC's vision for efficient and effective government in the region is one that works to overcome these concerns. It is one in which both the public and its servants work together in informed and creative ways to manage toward success. It is one in which performance is constantly reviewed, not in order to assess blame, but to find new and more successful ways to meet public needs. It is one in which there is a constant effort to review the environment in which local governments must work, identify the practices being used by others to improve processes and procedures, and to implement the practices best suited for the region.

Only in this way will the region arrive at the point where other communities will consistently ask the question, "*What are they doing in Springfield and Sangamon County?*" when they are faced with problems of their own. This will be but one measure as to whether the CEC's vision for the region is being achieved.

This culminating report provides greater detail on the CEC's vision for local government efficiency and effectiveness, as well as its findings supporting this vision. To help other groups that may follow—and to assist other regions that may look to this work as a template for their own efforts to achieve greater economies and improved local government service delivery—it provides detail on the CEC's philosophy and research process in developing its vision for excellence in local government. It also provides details on its preliminary and specific prescriptions for attaining this vision in the form of the CEC recommendations issued to date, and a number of on-going steps that the CEC advises will be valuable and necessary in developing local governments in the region into that which is reflected in the CEC's vision for the achievement of on-going regional efficiency and effectiveness improvement.



## CITIZENS' EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

# BYLAWS

Approved October 12, 2011



Prepared by the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission  
Based upon the Bylaws of the Citizens' Economy & Efficiency Commission of  
Los Angeles County, California

## II. Creating the Lens for a New Vision: The Establishment and Approach Taken by the CEC

The Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County was created by virtue of a resolution of the Sangamon County Board (see Appendix A) calling for a county-wide advisory referendum that asked voters if they supported the establishment of an independent and impartial body whose purpose would be to identify ways to improve the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of local governments in the region. This referendum passed on November 2, 2010, with an overwhelming majority of over 62% in favor. Those responsible for the establishment of the CEC saw the CEC's mission as important for a number of reasons.

First, **the state of the economy and current demographic trends were placing unprecedented fiscal pressures on local governments, as well as individuals, families, and businesses.** This pressure continues to this day, which means local governments must find improved ways of doing business if they are to continue to provide basic services while not increasing the burden of taxpayers. Myriad resources in the field of government practice discuss the newfound urgency of functioning efficiently in the face of revenue shortfalls and slower economic recovery.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, aging populations and declines in residents in rural areas have introduced challenges related to some traditional models for service provision.<sup>2</sup>

Second, **state and federal mandates increased this pressure by placing additional demands on local governments without the funding necessary to support them.** Financial difficulties at the state and national levels that resulted in reduced financial support for local governments exacerbated this pressure. Not only were the state and federal levels no longer potential sources of new revenue that could be used to address local needs, local governments in the county were actually experiencing roll-backs in funding they had received from these sources in the past. The CEC addressed a number of these mandates in the course of its work, which will be further discussed later in this report.

Finally, **state and federal programs often prioritize intergovernmental and regional initiatives as a critical component in their selection of funding recipients, which makes finding opportunities for governments and special districts in the region to work together increasingly important.** Local leaders believed that local governments would continue to struggle to meet their financial commitments if they did not become more efficient, find ways to work together, and reduce costs and unnecessary duplication of effort.

In fact, beyond the importance of regional initiatives in assisting local governments in garnering state and federal funding, regionalism and local efficiency have strong potential to positively affect overall local economic well-being. For example, a U.S. Chamber of Commerce report emphasizes the importance of local government infrastructure and services to spurring economic growth. It notes that what may be most critical to the economic future of localities in America is "the development of a

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<sup>1</sup> Goldsmith, Steve (March 20, 2013). "Building a Culture of Efficiency in Government." *Governing*. Available at: <http://www.governing.com/blogs/bfc/col-building-culture-efficiency-government.html>; Farmer, Liz (November 2013). "For Some in Government, 'Effective' is the New 'Efficient.'" *Governing*. Available at: <http://www.governing.com/topics/mgmt/gov-effective-is-new-efficient.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Kernek, Lisa (December 21, 2013). "Illinois' Natural Decrease: More deaths than births in more than half of state's counties." *The State Journal-Register*. Available at: <http://www.sj-r.com/article/20131221/NEWS/131229971>.

greater understanding among business leaders about the positive ways government can impact economic growth.”<sup>3</sup> Stronger local governments have impact beyond only the public sector, and can assist the entire region in becoming healthier and more vibrant.

## Organizing the Commission

After the referendum’s successful passage, local governments set about appointing members to the unpaid 23 member commission (see Appendix B). These appointments caused a slight delay in the CEC’s work, as many jurisdictions waited until after the spring 2011 municipal elections to select appointees since no appointee was permitted to hold elected office in Sangamon County or be an employee of a local government. The Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission (SSCRPC) staff provided fairly extensive support at this stage by pulling together the leaders of various jurisdictions and facilitating their process of selecting appointees. This provided some demonstration of the lack of existing structures in place for inter-jurisdictional cooperation at the time of the CEC’s inception.

One of the SSCRPC’s first efforts to assist the CEC was to try to identify other jurisdictions or regions that had conducted similar efforts, as it was thought that these efforts might inform the CEC about approaches that it might take as well as common issues that had been faced by similar bodies. Unfortunately the CEC found that it was somewhat alone in its work. While other bodies had been established in various locales to look at improving the operations and efficiencies of individual units of government – the Citizens Economy and Efficiency Commission for Los Angeles County, California, which was established in 1964, provided a good example – or specific operations, it was unable to find any similar body that was tasked as broadly as the CEC or with a multi-jurisdictional scope. The review of these other bodies was beneficial, however. For example, the bylaws of the Los Angeles County commission served as a template for the bylaws prepared by the Planning Commission staff for the CEC and ultimately adopted by the group.<sup>4</sup>

The SSCRPC also assisted the CEC by collecting a vast array of articles, reports and other documents related to local government economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The listing of the documents was condensed into a bibliography provided to the CEC members and the documents were shared.

Commissioners were finally fully appointed and the CEC began its work in the fall of 2011. Based upon the support research provided by the SSCRPC, the CEC first appointed a chair and vice-chair, adopted bylaws, and worked to develop a committee structure in order to facilitate its work. The CEC also established its desire to function openly and transparently in its research process, and all Commissioners took Illinois Open Meeting Act (OMA) training and committed to honoring OMA rules.

**This process of adopting bylaws and becoming established was of particular importance because of the significant influence that the CEC’s structure had on the Commission’s work throughout its life in helping to function in an organized and effective way.** Assisted by the staff of the SSCRPC, which was

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<sup>3</sup> Praxis Strategy Group and Joel Kotkin (NDG). *Enterprising Cities: A Force for American Prosperity*. U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

<sup>4</sup> SSCRPC (September 15, 2011). *Concerning Efficiency Commission Committee or Taskforce Structure*. Information brief for Citizens’ Efficiency Commission.; CEC (Oct. 12, 2011); Bylaws of the Citizens’ Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County (Oct. 12, 2011).

designated for this task in the CEC's establishing resolution, the CEC began to approach its charge of making recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local government in Sangamon County. The CEC finds it important to note that without the assistance of an objective, professional body like the SSCRPC in providing staff support, its work may have proved considerably more challenging.

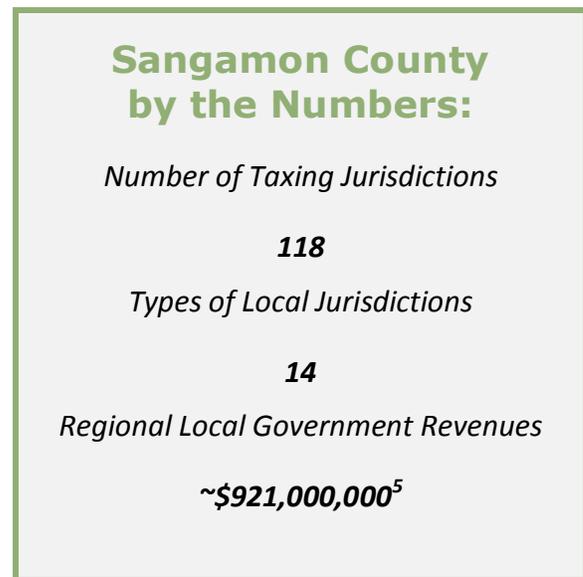
## Focusing its Vision

The CEC initially required some time and investment of effort to develop an understanding of the many units of government under its purview. **This was not a small task given the number and different types of local jurisdictions in the county.** These jurisdictions included not only the Sangamon County government and the municipal governments of the various cities and villages within the county, but also townships and an array of special districts, many of which also have taxing powers.

Particular attention was given to special districts (such as the Springfield Park District and the Metro Sanitary District in Sangamon County) as they are sometimes forgotten when local government efficiency and effectiveness is discussed. The CEC desired to fully understand the special districts that exist and operate along-side such traditional municipal bodies as cities and villages, because they can be numerous.

To help gain additional focus, the SSCRPC prepared a document for the CEC that discussed the units of government that can exist in the State of Illinois and outlined their powers. This document provided the CEC with an overview and commentary of a statewide survey of special districts.<sup>6</sup> Special districts differ from general-purpose governments such as counties and municipalities, but since they often have taxing powers and take on functions that could be provided by general-purpose governments, were important to the conversation.

The fact that the Sangamon County region includes a large number of local units of government should not have been surprising, because Illinois includes more local units of government than any other state. So many, in fact, that one report by the Illinois Commission on Intergovernmental Cooperation (ICIC) for the Illinois General Assembly focusing on special districts in the state, began with the caveat that the researchers were uncertain whether or not they had successfully identified all existing units.<sup>7</sup> This



<sup>5</sup> Based on Total Revenues reported in 2012 AFR for all units except school districts, and 2011 AFR Total Appropriations for reporting school districts. Four school districts submitted no AFR for 2011 or 2012. LLCC revenues also excluded because of multi-county nature.

<sup>6</sup> SSCRPC (December 6, 2011). *Special Districts: A Comparison of Their Use in Sangamon County with Three Other Illinois Counties*. An Information Brief for the Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County.

<sup>7</sup> Illinois Commission on Intergovernmental Cooperation (March 2003). *Legislator's Guide to Local Governments in Illinois: Special Districts*. Research Memorandum No. 117.

report compiled its data with the intent of identifying the universe of special districts in Illinois and the service delivery responsibilities of each type. Since Illinois has more local units of government than any other state, the ICIC did not find it surprising that it also has more special districts, although they found it hard to identify the precise number.

Overall, at the time of the ICIC study, Sangamon County hosted 44 special districts that fell into 11 distinct district types<sup>8</sup>. The largest number of these were fire protection districts (24 found to be in the county by the ICIC at that time), with multi-township assessment districts (6) and library districts (5) being the second and third most numerous.

In looking at some of Sangamon County's peers, Peoria County hosted only a slightly smaller number (42), with these falling into 13 special district types. Similar to Sangamon, the largest category was fire protection districts (11 in Peoria County), with library districts being the second most numerous (6). Four different types held the third largest number of districts in Peoria County, with four each.

On the other hand, Champaign County was found to host only 11 special district types, but these accounted for 128 special districts. This was due to the large number of drainage districts (81) in that county. If drainage districts were taken out of the listing, Champaign County would have only 47 identified special districts, or a number not much greater than Peoria and Sangamon.

Finally, McLean County was found to be hosting 13 types of special districts, accounting for 83 special districts in all. Unlike the drainage districts in Champaign County, there was no one distinct type in McLean that caused this number to be twice that of Sangamon and Peoria counties (or Champaign if drainage districts were removed from the count). There was one case where McLean hosted a type of district that the other three peer counties did not – hosting five water districts – but in general McLean simply had a larger number of districts than the other counties of the same district type.

This overview of units of government played a significant role in helping the CEC develop a true understanding of the scope of its work. As a truly 'citizen' group, some members of the commission had little background experience with local government, and this foundational understanding of units of government was essential. However, the CEC learned in the course of its work that it is not merely the number or type of units of government that play a role in cultivating or inhibiting efficiency and effectiveness. Rather, management of government *functions* can play as significant a role as the structure of governments, a theme which will be further addressed in Section V of this report. Understanding the functions of these governments also took significant effort, and the CEC found it of value to consider local governments not only from the perspective of jurisdictional lines, but from the vantage point of common functions held across numerous units of local government.

## Creating a Lens

In beginning its work the CEC undertook efforts to learn more about these various units of government – both general-purpose governments and special districts – and the challenges and issues that confront

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<sup>8</sup> SSCRPC (December 6, 2011). *Special Districts: A Comparison of Their Use in Sangamon County with Three Other Illinois Counties*. An Information Brief for the Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County.

them. For example, in its first several months the CEC heard numerous presentations from its appointing jurisdictions.

Additionally, the CEC hosted two series of public meetings early in its work. This was of particular importance because of the Commission's desire to remain a transparent and open body that took into account public input and feedback. From these public meetings, the CEC endeavored to address a number of suggestions and ideas, and worked to explore and then consider in some way the value of every item the public commended to it for review.

In its first year, the CEC also interviewed a large percentage of the mayors and village presidents, as well as leadership of many special districts in Sangamon County, to develop a more extensive working understanding of the challenges confronting local jurisdictions. This included consulting with the mayors and village presidents from a broad sampling of the 26 municipalities in the region to develop a working awareness of the challenges these jurisdictions face. This resulted in a document<sup>9</sup> used by the CEC to identify themes and common concerns voiced by these leaders. From this work, the CEC ultimately developed a recommendation, which will be addressed more fully later in this report, that a formal group of these leaders be established.

Because of the different types of jurisdictions that exist in the region, and in order to come to terms with areas where there might be similarities of function that could provide a focus for its research and recommendations agenda, the CEC worked to develop a framework for considering the functions and responsibilities of local governments. Unfortunately, the CEC found that there was no existing and useful taxonomy in the literature regarding local government functions. Some approaches to such classification do exist, but those typically are based upon some budget or expenditure classification or very broad service areas, rather than on the fundamental tasks that a unit of government might provide.

Even so, and working from item codes used by the U.S. Bureau of the Census' *Census of Governments*, the CEC identified 17 general functions of local government and as many as 87 subordinate functions (ranging from items as pedestrian as records keeping to as critical as emergency response) where a consideration of improved efficiency and effectiveness might be contemplated.<sup>10</sup> In this classification a "function" was considered to be a specific and high order duty or role of municipal government that might be addressed by many governmental bodies or their subunits. For example, all governmental agencies keep records, so this is a general function and there is no need to describe it as "public health record keeping", or "corrections record keeping", or so forth. The same is true of construction. The construction of a road might be considered a "transportation" project, but it is more generally a capital project, so there was no need to consider road construction as a separate "function" from other capital construction functions.

Similarly, the subordinate functions were intended to better describe duties or activities often necessary to carry out a general function. In some cases the classification system developed also included a list of items believed to fall under a subordinate function so as to offer a clearer picture of it.

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<sup>9</sup> SSCRPC (October 29, 2011). *Preliminary Report: Sangamon County Municipal Leader Interviews*. Informational Report for the Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County.

<sup>10</sup> SSCRPC (October 26, 2011). *General Local Government Functions: A Preliminary Review*. Information Brief for the Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County.

This assessment of governmental functions was important as it allowed the CEC to focus on areas where there was great similarity of function across the various jurisdictions – allowing the identification of areas where cooperative and coordinated efforts to reduce cost and improve service might be possible – as well as those areas where functions may not overlap, but could include very large expenditure categories worthy of special consideration.

As the review of functions indicated that there *were* areas in which the various units of local government might overlap, leading to the potential for unnecessary and costly duplication, the possibility of consolidation and cooperation as a strategy for greater efficiency and effectiveness became apparent. Fortunately there were examples where this approach had already been taken within the region. The CEC studied these examples to assess their history, finding that Sangamon County voters appear to have a long-standing appetite for such changes, as evidenced by the mergers affecting the Public Health Department, Park District, and Elections Commission.<sup>11</sup>

Implicit in this work was the assumption that local jurisdictions in Sangamon County *did* have opportunities for efficiency improvements. Because of this, the SSCRPC was asked to explore and attempt to validate this assumption. For example, using Census of Governments expenditure data, the SSCRPC compared municipal expenditures in Sangamon County to those in a number of its peer counties.<sup>12</sup> This analysis was considered to be an important step in the CEC’s work as analyzing expenditures on a functional basis can provide insights as to which functions of the governments in one county cost more than similar functions in peer counties.

The Center for Governmental Research suggests that the Census of Governments is the “best information available” for governments in the absence of a comprehensive local database, which is unfortunately lacking for the governments in Sangamon County. But readers should be aware that the Census of Governments data is nevertheless incomplete, since not all units of government report and it imputes some figures based upon previous years’ reported figures or population growth rates. Moreover, even if all local governments submitted timely data, questions of reporting error linger, since local officials may have different methods of discerning which figures to report under each category, in spite of the definitions provided by the Bureau of the Census.

But even though the SSCRPC found challenges in comparing local governments due to the lack of a locally consistent database, issues of standardization, and the lack of performance indicators to measure efficiency and service quality, the report demonstrated both strengths and weaknesses of per capita expenditures when Sangamon County was compared to its peer counties. By examining a standardized set of services, SSCRPC staff found that the array of governmental entities in Sangamon County generally had comparable per capita expenditure totals vis-à-vis its peers. It did, however, identify certain functional areas where Sangamon County’s per capita expenditures differed substantially from its peers. These areas included police protection, public welfare, and sewerage, as defined by the Census of Governments.

While cross-jurisdictional per capita expenditure data does not provide a full picture of governmental efficiency and effectiveness, coupled with persons per unit of government they do provide a starting

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<sup>11</sup> SSCRPC (April 11, 2012). *The History and Nature of Joint Service Efforts in Sangamon County*. Information Brief for the Citizens’ Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County.

<sup>12</sup> SSCRPC (March 13, 2012). *Local Government Expenditures and Efficiency in Sangamon County*. Information Brief for the Citizens’ Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County.

point for examining efficiencies. The development of performance indicators measuring extent and quality of service would be important considerations for future elaborations on these fundamental comparisons, and the need for such indicators will be addressed again later in this report.

All of the studies, reports and analysis noted above, along with other requested white papers, were developed by the SSCPRC staff to assist the CEC in its work, helping to develop the initial “lens” through which it conducted its investigations (See Appendix D for a full list of papers, studies and reports). These reports and white papers, like much of the CEC’s work, grew as the numerous interviews were conducted and additional research completed.

In all, the CEC found throughout its initial investigations that **local government in Sangamon County is a complex and many-layered system that is largely comparable to the systems in peer regions**. Local governments have many shared functions, and there are many different approaches to government efficiency that can be taken.

As the CEC proceeded in its research, it learned that local government leaders and employees are often doing the best they can with the tools available to them. Their missions and legal constraints may limit them in creating on-going improvements, but a number of local bodies are working well within their existing capacity. The CEC also identified and cataloged a series of examples of such effective behavior on the part of local governments in order to provide examples of beneficial activities that can be taken by others.<sup>13</sup>

Although this review of the CEC’s early efforts to gain its footing and develop a thoughtful process for reviewing functions and structures of local government may seem exhaustive, the unique nature of its task, as well as its desire to produce objective and reasoned work as opposed to haphazard recommendations, required the CEC to invest substantial time in the process. The CEC finds that it will be important for the on-going improvement of the region for this process to be known and documented, and also that other regions of Illinois and the country may benefit by emulating this approach.

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<sup>13</sup> SSCRPC (September 12, 2012). *Positive Local Efforts Applauded by the Citizens’ Efficiency Commission*. Informational Report for the Citizens’ Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County.



**White Paper for  
The Citizens'  
Efficiency  
Commission**



February 6, 2012

**Key findings:**

- The CEC requires a well-defined

**Citizens' Efficiency Commission  
Philosophy on Recommendations**

**Introduction**

The Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County has identified a need for a well-defined philosophy regarding its relation to government and the nature of its foundations. The mission statement of the CEC is "to local government economy, efficiency and effectiveness by assessing and proposing opportunities for cooperation, coordination and reduction or elimination of duplication of effort and the sharing of services and among local governments in Sangamon County."

The CEC's work requires an explicit philosophy and shared assumptions for a number of reasons. The first is that the CEC is a diverse body, with twenty-three members appointed from different jurisdictions, and diversity in areas of experience and expertise. The CEC can likely function more smoothly and effectively with a clear understanding of its own intentions and underlying philosophical assumptions.

The CEC's findings and recommendations, in keeping with the laws, are intended for all relevant jurisdictions and the public. The CEC works in an advisory capacity, with no mechanisms for enforcing the implementation of its recommendations. If recommendations are to be supported by the public, they must be clearly understood and implemented effectively by municipal governments. A clear understanding of the CEC's philosophy may be important to comprehending the Commission's intent and recommendations. A well-defined and transparent recommendation process may also provide the public with a clear understanding of the CEC's work.

This document represents SSCRPC staff's attempt to articulate the philosophy and assumptions that inform the CEC's work, and to provide a process and framework for CEC recommendations. This document emphasizes the process for developing recommendations, a more extensive glossary of terms related to the CEC's philosophy is provided in Appendix B.

**The Six C's of Citizens' Efficiency:**

**Conservation-** reducing costs or inputs within a single entity or among individual members of the public

**Communication-** sharing knowledge or information among multiple entities

**Cooperation-** multiple entities working together by interacting through similar processes or means, though pursuing different ends

**Coordination-** multiple entities working together to pursue the same mission or ends, though working through distinct means or processes

**Collaboration-** multiple entities working toward the same ends and through the same means, by way of formal agreement

**Consolidation-** formal institutional combining or merging of two departments or governmental entities resulting from similarity in means and ends

### III. Framing Its Vision: The CEC’s Philosophy and Approach to Recommendations

While the members of the CEC understood the need to gain a clear understanding of the local governments in Sangamon County and the environment in which they worked, they were aware from the very beginning of their efforts that their charge was not limited to this: they were to make thoughtful, well-reasoned recommendations for improving effectiveness and efficiency. For this reason a significant concern was *the establishment of research and deliberative processes that would ensure that all of the CEC’s recommendations would be objective, well-reasoned, valid, and thoughtfully reviewed*. Stemming from this concern, the CEC developed a *Philosophy on Recommendations* meant to provide a guiding structure for its research and recommendation process<sup>14</sup>.

#### A Philosophy for Creating a Vision

The CEC’s *Philosophy* document expressed the members’ intent that all recommendations approved passed through a well organized and credible research process to help ensure that each recommendation was valid and supported by the facts as best could be determined by its members. This resulted in a structure for CEC recommendations that called for:

- A definition of the question at hand and its scope, likely in the form of a “finding” presented to the full Commission to gain support for an in-depth examination of the issue or area.
- An overview of the history and/or currently existing institutional structures– in most cases, the jurisdictions– involved in the recommendation.
- A consideration of alternative courses of action, and an analysis of the benefits and costs of each.
- A recommendation concerning which alternative should be taken and the rationale or relevant values for each choice.
- And since the CEC was only a recommending, rather than implementing, body, an overview of feasible courses of action for implementation that relevant jurisdictions could follow.

As indicated by this structure, initial ideas for consideration and research were first passed through the full Commission to determine the support for additional study as a “finding.” A finding was a formal description of an identified subject matter in which the CEC recognized indications of possible improvements in efficiency or effectiveness that could be implemented by local governments. Findings could be the informal or formal products of the “assessing” role identified in the CEC’s mission statement, and upon the identification and description of a finding, the CEC could find reason to call upon relevant jurisdictions to provide additional information or research pertaining to the opportunity for improvements in efficiency and effectiveness it presented.

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<sup>14</sup> SSCRPC (February 6, 2012). *Citizens’ Efficiency Commission Philosophy on Recommendations*. White paper for the Citizens’ Efficiency Commission.

The acceptance of a finding indicated that the CEC found there to be initial evidence that the area or issue identified deserved study and appeared to offer such sufficient potential for improvement in economy and efficiency that it was worth a commitment of the CEC's limited resources: primarily the time of the Commissioners and the limited staff resources of the SSCRPC. This was not unimportant as the review of the local governments, their expenditures and their functions, along with the various meetings and hearings the Commissioners had taken part in, had indicated that there were more opportunities for CEC action than its limited life-span and resources might allow.

In order to assist in this workflow and research process, the CEC formed a structure with four committees based on groupings of functions performed by local government. These committees included the: Administrative, Management, & Budget Committee; Community Development Committee; Public Safety Committee; and Public Works Committee. These four committees interacted with the full Commission and were coordinated by an Executive Committee made up of the chairs of the individual committees as well as the CEC's chair and vice-chair.

Once a finding was identified by a committee and approved as worthy of study by the full Commission, the subject area of the finding was researched and developed into a comprehensive, formal, written recommendation following the guidance provided in the CEC's *Philosophy* document. This guidance included 20 "Test Questions" that the committee members were asked to consider as they researched an area in order to help ensure a rigorous process.<sup>15</sup>

As the CEC's recommendations are advisory in nature only, its *Philosophy* and committee structure were specifically intended to provide a transparent, navigable framework for local leaders and constituents wishing to understand and implement its recommendations. By verifying its research at each step of the way, the CEC, with SSCRPC staff support, worked to ensure that its recommendations would not be lost to time, and would provide evidence for such compelling cases for improved efficiency and effectiveness that their implementation would seem intuitive to the citizens and leaders involved.

The CEC's *Philosophy on Recommendations* was also intended to ensure that no personal agenda or the interests of a single jurisdiction could capture or dominate its dialogue. Though at many stages in its process the CEC encountered local concerns that it represented one jurisdiction or another's efforts to expand control over the region, the CEC and SSCRPC staff went to extensive lengths to maintain neutrality and objectivity in its research process.

## **A Framework for Its Vision**

Additionally, the CEC worked to develop and maintain an objective framework for understanding and commenting upon the broad array of solutions available to local governments. For example, as the CEC explored alternatives, it developed several systems for thinking about types of governmental efficiency and effectiveness. As its established intent was to address improvements in economy, effectiveness, and efficiency, in its *Philosophy on Recommendations* the CEC explored both the concept of effectiveness and the ideas of input, output, and through-put efficiency, arriving at the following definitions:

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. See that document's Appendix E.

**Economy:** *Frugality, or the use of minimal resources, in the provision of a given service.* As relevant to the CEC’s examination of local jurisdictions, economy generally applies to fiscal efficiency concerns, comparable to “input” efficiency, particularly in the monetary sense, as explained below.

**Effectiveness:** *Being capable to achieve, or achieving, a stated goal.* With reference to the CEC’s mission, improved effectiveness implies that local jurisdictions achieve objectives in a manner aligned with policy goals or public service provision, i.e. ease to constituents. Effectiveness can be considered linked to “throughput” efficiency, defined below.

**Efficiency:** *Performing of a designated function in a manner that utilizes minimum resources to achieve maximum results, or has the most favorable ratio of inputs to outputs.* Efficiency can be broken into three categories: input, output, throughput efficiency. In input efficiency, a reduced amount of inputs, such as resources, money, or personnel hours, produces the same output. In output efficiency, the *same* amount of inputs produces *more* output. In creating throughput efficiency for local governments, changes do not decrease needed inputs *OR* increase outputs, but result in a higher quality of service. Throughput efficiency is similar to the concept of effectiveness. The CEC often uses “efficiency” in a manner which suggests a single opportunity for the creation of the quality of efficiency in a unit of government, e.g. “to identify where an efficiency might exist.”

Often, particularly in the state of Illinois, it is assumed that mergers or consolidations of governmental bodies are the best or only tools available for increased efficiency. The CEC made an important distinction between these two approaches, with *mergers* coming to mean situations in which the work of one governmental body is taken on by another existing body, and a *consolidation* occurring when two or more governmental bodies are replaced by a new, not presently existing, one.

However, the CEC took a series of steps to ensure that various approaches to strengthening regionalism informed its research, with the SSCRPC staff undertaking a number of reviews of the literature on this issue. It reviewed examples where mergers and consolidations had already occurred in the region, which were addressed in the SSCRPC’s white paper for the CEC on *The History and Nature of Joint Service Efforts in Sangamon County*,<sup>16</sup> and around the country. As another approach, the CEC reviewed a model for exploring various approaches to mitigating the negative effects of local government fragmentation that included approaches as varied as local capacity-building, functional consolidation, and intergovernmental cooperation.<sup>17</sup>

SSCRPC staff also arranged for the CEC to travel to the City of Indianapolis/Marion County, Indiana, to learn about experiences there related to government unification under a metro-form of government, learning that in many ways the challenges of consolidation can create substantial costs, particularly in a region with the demographic and structural complexity of Sangamon County (see page 24). As a result, the CEC points out in much of its work that consolidations and mergers are *not* the only ways to achieve

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<sup>16</sup> SSCRPC (April 11, 2012). *The History and Nature of Joint Service Efforts in Sangamon County*. Information Brief for the Citizens’ Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County.

<sup>17</sup> Uden, Amy (May 3, 2013). *Local Fragmentation and Paths toward Regionalism: Revisiting the “Too Many Units” Conversation*. Capstone paper completed pursuant to requirements of the Master of Public Administration program at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

local efficiency and improve effectiveness, and in fact can be costly as compared to other methods for fostering regionalism.

## Identifying Potential Strategies for Its Vision

To identify the different strategies that could be used to improve efficiency and effectiveness, the *Joint Service Efforts* document mentioned previously presented an approach termed the “Six C’s of Citizens’ Efficiency”, which served as a guide for the CEC throughout its work. The Six C’s the CEC considered in each of its research processes include:

- **Conservation** - reducing costs or inputs within a single entity or among individual members of the public.
- **Communication** - sharing knowledge or information among multiple entities.
- **Cooperation** - multiple entities working together by interacting through similar processes or means, though pursuing different ends.
- **Coordination** - multiple entities working together to pursue the same mission or ends, though working through distinct means or processes.
- **Collaboration** - multiple entities working toward the same ends and through the same means, by way of formal agreement.
- **Consolidation** - formal institutional combining or merging of two departments or governmental entities resulting from similarity in means and ends.

These Six C’s are seen as representing a spectrum of options available to local governments for creating efficiencies and improving effectiveness, and vary in formality and complexity. For example, Conservation can include reducing costs in a single jurisdiction on an informal basis through improved management and decision-making, whereas Consolidation requires substantive, formal actions by multiple jurisdictions and changes the institutional structure of the local governments involved in providing a service. The CEC found that consolidation is typically harder and more costly than the other five C’s, and learned that this fact is typically supported in the research literature in field cases studied.

It is also important to note that no “bright lines” or sharp distinctions necessarily exist between the different types of efficiency efforts suggested by the strategies categorized by the Six C’s, but each are relevant to the CEC’s work. Through these varied approaches, actions can even be encouraged that do not require interaction among governmental bodies, but can cultivate efficiencies within single units of government through the combined efforts of individual citizens.

As is evident in these Six C’s and in the CEC’s *Philosophy* document, the Commission developed a strong working framework for reviewing local efficiency and effectiveness as a whole in the course of its multi-jurisdictional work. Rather than merely attempting to fix a limited set of concerns, the CEC explored a framework of thinking that may be useful for application to any number of jurisdictions attempting to learn from and apply its conclusions.

## **“Becoming a World-Class City, One Neighborhood at a Time”**



In the summer of 2013, the CEC took an exploratory research trip to the City of Indianapolis-Marion County, where a unified metro government, “Unigov”, has been in existence since 1970. On this trip, the CEC met with the following individuals/offices to explore how inter-governmental and intra-organizational cooperation functions in Indianapolis, and to explore how the Unigov was developed and where it has succeeded : Mayor Gregory Ballard, City-County Council President Maggie Lewis, the Department of Public Works, the Controller, the IndyGo Transit Director, the Metropolitan Planning Organization Director, the Department of Public Safety, and Metropolitan Police Chief, and the Fire Department Chief.

The CEC learned that the Indianapolis-Marion County consolidation process was largely defined in statute by the state legislature, which is more engaged in various local processes in Indiana than is the case in Illinois. Because the vast majority of Marion County is urbanized, only four “excluded cities” that chose not to join Unigov are not included in the consolidated structure. The structure of Unigov is somewhat blended, and in fact, many portions of consolidation are still not in effect. The CEC noted that, significantly, law enforcement and fire protection proved most difficult to consolidate, and are still in the process of being reviewed and changed toward this goal. While there were many interesting insights offered in terms of the historical process of consolidation, such as the importance of structural choices and building public support, the CEC remained ambivalent regarding the potential for a Unigov model to be beneficial in the Sangamon County region because of the differing demographic makeup and the distinction in the Illinois and Indiana statutory contexts.

Most significantly, alongside what it learned structurally, the CEC was impressed with the “can-do” attitude of the Indianapolis employees. As suggested by the motto of the mayor’s office that serves to title this description of the CEC’s experiences, Indianapolis employees appeared to have a sincere commitment to a vision of greatness and success for their unified metro government. Their dynamic, committed approach to efficient and effective government demonstrated to the CEC the importance of leadership in ensuring that a culture for government improvement exists.





**Advisory Report**

November 18, 2013

**Key Findings:**

- The CEC has learned that concerns exist in the region related to high costs of fire/EMS services in some areas, and lack of volunteer responsiveness in others.
- Data suggests that substantial extra-jurisdictional responsiveness occurs on the part of



**Citizens' Efficiency Commission Recommendation:  
Fire and EMS Functions**

**Introduction**

This report represents a formal recommendation by the Citizens' Efficiency Commission (CEC). Members of the CEC and its research staff have validated information contained in this report. The Commission expresses its hope that relevant local leaders will review the recommendation and take strides toward its implementation.

In light of the research presented below, the CEC recommends that fire protection districts and departments in the region pursue consolidation and resource reallocation toward the creation of four districts, each with one to two Fire/EMS stations, with response times strengthened through a stipend or on-call arrangement.

The CEC further recommends that the City of Springfield engage in a comprehensive program review in order to address budgetary needs resulting from potential reallocations and explore cost drivers described throughout this recommendation.

If necessary, the CEC recommends that a targeted action team be created for the purpose of pursuing and coordinating these efforts.

The Commission is prepared to provide assistance to the greatest extent possible for the review and implementation of these recommendations. The CEC may be interested in further efficiency considerations that develop based on this advisory report.

**Background Information**

During its review of emergency services, the Public Safety Committee of the CEC encountered information about multiple incidents in which emergency medical response times in outlying jurisdictions of the county suffered resulting from lack of available volunteers in some rural fire protection districts, particularly during daytime hours. After receiving such anecdotal evidence the committee felt compelled to look into the effectiveness of this critical public safety function in Sangamon County. Coupled with preliminary information related to high costs in other fire/EMS jurisdictions of the region, this resulted in a general review of resource allocation, structure, and functions of fire protection/EMS providers regionally. After preliminary review of these issues, the committee presented the following finding to the efficiency commission at its April 2013 meeting, and received support to further review these functions.

There are 29 Fire Protection Districts in operation in Sangamon County, in addition to the Fire Department of the City of Springfield. The Springfield Fire Department typically budgets over \$30 million to provide fire protection and emergency medical services for the City of Springfield and nine surrounding FPDs, and an additional approximately \$4 million is collected and expended by the twenty Fire Protection Districts not covered by the City of Springfield. Recent trends have indicated that

**CEC by  
the Numbers:**

*Number of Commissioners*  
**23**

*Number of Committees*  
**5**

*Number of White Papers and Reports*  
**10**

*Number of Recommendations*  
**23**

The Citizens' Efficiency  
Commission  
Room 212  
200 South 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Springfield, Illinois 62701  
Phone: 217.535.3110  
Fax: 217.535.3111  
[CitizensEfficiency@gmail.com](mailto:CitizensEfficiency@gmail.com)  
<http://www.sscrpc.com>

## **IV. Initial Steps Toward Achieving a Vision for Improvement: The CEC's Recommendations and Additional Areas Deserving Review**

Along with the various documents that helped the CEC structure and formalize its work, it also produced a substantial volume of valid and thoughtful recommendations, identifying numerous opportunities for local governments to become more efficient and effective. Producing these recommendations was central to its mission and the charge it was given by the referendum that led to its establishment.

The CEC or SSCRPC staff also issued a number of substantive white papers on research questions of interest related to the CEC's work during the course of the research process. Although the white papers were not intended as formal advisory recommendations, the information they provide adds to the dialogue and therefore merit consideration. As of November 2013, the date at which the CEC was to complete its recommendations, 23 recommendations and 10 white papers or reports had been submitted by its committees or SSCRPC staff and approved by the full Commission.

The recommendations cover a substantial range of issues and types of government. In order to capture the breadth of the CEC's work, a summary of each of these recommendations is provided in the following pages. Recommendations are grouped by the committee responsible for conducting research and producing the recommendation, and are placed in the order in which they were adopted. Significantly, a number of units of local government have begun to consider and implement the CEC's recommendations. Information related to follow-up actions that have already been taken as of the date of this report is provided below each recommendation's description.

The complete reports that address each recommendation are available on the CEC website and through the SSCRPC, and the CEC anticipates that these documents will be useful tools for both citizens and local officials interested in making the changes necessary to achieve greater economy and efficiency in the region.

### **Recommendations and White Papers Addressing Administration, Management, and Budget**

One of the CEC's four committees, the Administrative, Management, and Budget (AMB) Committee, was created with a scope of examining all of the "support" functions that are so critical to sustaining local government operations. Budgeting, technological tools, human resources, management of revenue generation and service expenditures, and administrative functions generally are among the larger costs for local government operation. However, they typically remain in the background of local government considerations. The AMB Committee was therefore tasked with looking at these operational and support functions across all jurisdictions in the region. Early in its work, this committee also took on the task of developing a CEC process for public outreach and media communications, in order to ensure on behalf of the full Commission that its research could be known and understood by the public, whose support will ultimately be essential in ensuring its advisory recommendations are reviewed and implemented.

### ***Township Property Tax Collection Recommendation***

In only one other county in the state (Peoria County) are Townships involved in property tax collection. The CEC recommended that townships turn responsibilities for property tax collection over to the Sangamon County Treasurer's/Capital Township Collector's office via intergovernmental agreement and vacate the position of Township Tax Collector in other townships. Upon reviewing the property tax collection process, the CEC noted that the system appeared to be redundant, with the County Treasurer collecting all second installments and the vast majority of first installments in spite of the existence of collectors in all townships. The CEC also noted that the Treasurer's office's processing cost per bill to collect first installments was generally much lower than that of townships collecting fewer payments. At the time of its recommendation, the CEC encouraged townships to reduce or eliminate funding for the Collectors' positions by the November deadline for setting salaries in order to generate cost reductions by discouraging the filling of these offices. In the future, townships can also undergo a referendum process to eliminate the office of collector, should they so choose.

**Status:** Following its recommendation, a number of local townships asked the CEC for guidance and assistance in implementing the recommendation to eliminate the position. As of the last municipal election, five townships had vacated the collectors' role. The CEC anticipates that further elimination of these positions could occur with attrition across time.

### ***Shared Procurement Recommendation***

The CEC recommended that local government purchasing agents and administrators review opportunities for savings on joint purchasing through existing national, state, and local purchasing cooperatives; aligning both commodity and capital purchasing schedules through increased communication and an online interface; and considering joint bids and procurements of materials through the City of Springfield, Sangamon County, or other large organizations. The CEC also noted in this recommendation that local governments are encouraged to "buy local" where appropriate. As an educational and advisory report, the recommendation detailed examples of shared procurement and demonstrated the value of joint purchasing through discussion of best practices, cost reductions, and local history.

**Status:** The CEC worked to develop this recommendation in cooperation with a Leadership Springfield study group. This group of young professionals assisted in the CEC's research, developed a procurement guidebook for local vendors to use when connecting with local governments, and assisted in publicizing the Source Sangamon RFP database on the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce's website for use in coordinating local government bids and purchases in order to reduce costs.



### ***Health Insurance White Paper***

In this document, the CEC discussed its efforts to understand whether opportunities for savings existed through coordination of health insurance purchases for local government employees. Although the CEC felt that some future opportunities for combined health insurance purchasing may generate cost savings for local governments, the Commission was limited in its ability to approach the issue, given the many unknowns related to federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) implementation at the time of its report. Instead, the CEC compiled a list of general best practices related to health insurance for local governments' benefit. The CEC recommends further review of shared or self-insurance possibilities after more information on the Illinois health insurance exchange and other ACA changes is available.

**Status:** As yet, no action has been taken with reference to this recommendation. However, the CEC expects that the peer network of mayors and village presidents that was recently established may review this issue in the future.

### ***Group Financing Recommendation***

The CEC recommended that local governments in Sangamon County develop capital plans, and work on an individual basis to utilize the services of the Central Illinois Economic Development Authority (CIEDA) where appropriate. The CEC also recommended that, to the extent possible, local governments work within these plans and with CIEDA assistance to coordinate capital projects so that opportunities for group bonding and financing may be explored. This recommendation developed as a result of the fact that local jurisdictions face a situation of scarce resources and many have difficulty financing needed capital projects. Often, local governments have unknown financial needs for future capital projects due to limited capital planning. This can lead to missed opportunities for garnering and seeking outside funding sources, in addition to preventing long-term financial planning. The CEC noted that bonding is one mechanism commonly used to finance capital projects. The bonding process typically includes high administrative costs, but CIEDA is one tool local governments can utilize in appropriate situations to reduce bonding administrative and tax liability costs.

**Status:** Following this recommendation, representatives from CIEDA spoke to local mayors and village presidents at a meeting arranged by the CEC, in order to raise awareness of these opportunities. Ongoing efforts at collaboration will likely be needed to fully explore local capital project cooperation.

### ***Mandated Publications Recommendation***

The CEC recognized in this recommendation that many local governments are mandated to publish treasurer's reports and other legal notices in print newspapers. Due to the cost of these publications and the decline in newspaper readership, the CEC recommended that local governments in Sangamon County work to increase transparency by including legal notices on their websites and persist in efforts to change legislation requiring newspaper publication of complete notices. Changing legal publication requirements would require state legislative action, but would be beneficial for local governments in Sangamon County and other regions.

**Status:** As yet, no action has been taken with reference to this recommendation, but the CEC intends to include it as part of its suggested legislative agenda for local governments in the region, which will be explored further later in this document.

### ***Administration and Financial Management Recommendation***

The CEC recommended that local governments cooperatively review opportunities for collaborative administrative functions, improved financial management, and automated and shared payroll and accounts payable systems. In its research on many issues, the CEC learned that many local governments lack administrative resources needed to effectively pursue all management and revenue-generating opportunities available to them. It also noted that all local governments also participate in financial and human resource management functions such as payroll, accounts payable processing, and employee benefit management. These functions often create substantial costs for local jurisdictions that may go unrecognized and unmanaged. There are also substantial opportunity costs associated with approaching these functions on a fragmented or dispersed basis regionally. Finally, the CEC noted that opportunities to manage and reduce these costs exist, particularly through sharing these functions or developing and utilizing an automated system for this purpose, and recommended that these opportunities be explored.

**Status:** As yet, no action has been taken with reference to this recommendation. The CEC expects that the newly established Regional Leadership Council, discussed below, could provide a platform for such discussions, particularly among local municipalities.

### **Recommendations and White Papers Addressing Community Development**

The second of the CEC's committees was tasked with considering all matters related to functions of government that deal with education, social services, economic development, and other "quality-of-life" services. While this represents a broad span of issues, the Community Development Committee's focus was on social service based functions of government and other areas in which local government impacts the development and prosperity of a community.

### ***Leaders' Peer Networks Recommendation***

In the first of its formal recommendations, the CEC recommended that formal, regular meetings of local leaders in like positions be established as a venue for cooperative actions. The CEC found it critical that these groups meet to share ideas, best practices, and advice. However, and as identified early in its review of local governments in the region and how they worked, the CEC found that few groups of local leaders met regularly or consistently with this purpose. This recommendation seemed intuitive to the CEC as a way to institutionalize on-going improvements in local government operations.



**Status:** In response to the CEC's recommendation, some local leaders have re-established networks, such as the Sangamon County Township Officials Association. The CEC also brought regional mayors and village presidents together three times during its work. The mayors and village presidents group has officially been established as the Regional Leadership Council. This group has adopted bylaws and elected officers. The Regional Leadership Council also provided a platform through which the municipalities of the region cooperated to provide savings to residents through an electric aggregation program.

Because of the important role that the Regional Leadership Council can play in improving local government in Sangamon County, the

Council requested, and the SSCRPC agreed to provide, staff assistance in 2014.

### ***General Assistance Administration Recommendation***

The CEC recommended that Township Supervisors examine existing cooperation opportunities similar to the Capital/Chatham Township intergovernmental agreement, and consider alternatives to the current structure for general assistance (GA) administration. The CEC acknowledged statutory limitations related to general assistance provision, and suggested a future legislative review of general assistance. Although townships' GA programs vary immensely throughout Sangamon County, the CEC's recommendation has fostered increased attention to these programs.

**Status:** At the close of the CEC's work, some townships had already responded to this recommendation by considering or pursuing intergovernmental agreements for GA administration. For example, Clear Lake Township entered an intergovernmental agreement with Rochester Township modeled after those the CEC discussed, and process its GA cases for it. Others, such as Williams Township, have considered the model but found that it may not be cost effective for their local conditions.

### ***Transit-Pupil Transportation White Paper***

In this white paper, the CEC explored opportunities for the Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD) and Springfield School District 186 to increase cooperation. While the CEC did not find it feasible that District 186 would be able to eliminate all transportation costs through cooperation with SMTD, increased ridership, particularly among high school students, could lead to cost savings for the District and SMTD. There are a number of areas where routes might be revisited to increase public school students' utilization of mass transit. The CEC preliminarily explored these options, but did not develop a final recommendation in this area.

**Status:** As a result of the CEC's efforts in this area, District 186 and SMTD have agreed to engage in conversations about where their operations can be revisited to complement one another's needs more fully. The SSCRPC has agreed to function as the coordinating entity for these efforts.

### ***Higher Education Collaboration Recommendation***

The CEC recommended that local governments and institutions of higher education in the region identify opportunities of mutual benefit such that the teaching and learning that occurs has a practical application for the agencies that serve Sangamon County citizens, and establish a work group to coordinate and facilitate action that takes advantage of these opportunities. The CEC identified a number of existing programs at local universities that provide opportunities for student engagement, but felt that local institutions of higher education could provide greater benefit to local governments in the region by engaging further in regional needs. Many institutions of higher education in the area have intellectual, social, and technological resources that could be used to great advantage to meet local agency and business needs with further coordinated efforts. Opportunities exist for these resources to serve Sangamon County citizens through internship programs, class projects, faculty research, or student research projects. These opportunities extend beyond merely the internship programs that already exist, and may include items such as faculty assistance with grant writing or class projects assisting local governments in financial analysis or other technical matters.

**Status:** Following this recommendation, the CEC pulled together the leaders of each of the institutions of higher education in the region. These leaders agreed to reach out to their faculty member for input on potential cooperative endeavors. The CEC is pleased to note that Benedictine University has recently

developed a new program for local outreach, and recommends that similar opportunities should be explored by other institutions.

### ***Building Permitting Process Recommendation***

The building permitting process is complex and varies across the many local jurisdictions of Sangamon County. In attempting to consider options for combining or streamlining aspects of this process, the CEC developed a preliminary working understanding or overview of the process. However, the CEC found that the systems in place for various jurisdictions' building permitting processes are too disparate and complex to allow for knowledge or management of flaws and exceptions in the system.

Some jurisdictions in the nation have implemented project tracking and/or online permitting systems with positive results, but these systems are typically costly for jurisdictions involved. In response to these limitations, the CEC recommends that local jurisdictions involved in the building permitting process endeavor to document their permitting processes and consider implementing a combined project tracking software or a structure for system management.

**Status:** As yet, no action has been taken with reference to this recommendation.

### ***Shared Online Curriculum Recommendation***

The CEC recommended that local school districts consider cooperatively utilizing online curriculum packages like those already in use, in order to reduce costs and expand educational opportunities. This recommendation was premised on the CEC's findings that some school districts in Sangamon County have experienced declining enrollment and scarcity of resources in recent years, and that literature in the educational field suggests that virtual schools and online curriculum offerings in various arrangements offer benefits to students in terms of the amount of college preparatory coursework available to them. Some local school districts are already utilizing such online curriculum programs with positive results. The CEC explored the example of Tri-City School District's use of supplemental online curriculum.

**Status:** At the time of its recommendation, shared curriculum opportunities had been raised for discussion at a local School Master's meeting, and the CEC encouraged additional exploration and action on these issues on an on-going basis.

## **Recommendations and White Papers Addressing Public Safety**

The Public Safety Committee was the third of the CEC's working groups. It was tasked with the challenge of reviewed law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical services, and all other areas related to public safety functions of local government.

### ***Foreign Fire Insurance Funds Recommendation***

A number of fire protection entities in Sangamon County receive funding from a fee charged on fire insurance premiums within their jurisdiction provided by insurance companies located outside of the state of Illinois. Considerable ambiguity exists related to which jurisdictions are eligible for and collect such fees. In its review of this issue, the CEC recommended that local fire protection entities review statutory provisions related to Foreign Fire Insurance and take the necessary steps to ensure that revenues are being paid to the appropriate local agencies. The CEC also suggested that these entities consider locally administering Foreign Fire Insurance Funding (FFIF). The Commission noted that local

fire protection agencies should consider these funds' use in relation to coordinated regional fire protection. Finally, the CEC recommended the Illinois General Assembly conduct a review of Foreign Fire Insurance Fund policy and administrative practices to ensure that funds are being collected and utilized in a manner that is in keeping with public policy best practice.

**Status:** At this point, the CEC is anecdotally aware that several Fire Protection Districts that had not previously levied for FFIF are considering implementing such a levy.

### ***Centralized Dispatch Recommendation***

The CEC recommended that the City of Auburn and Village of Chatham transfer emergency call dispatch responsibilities to the Sangamon County Centralized Dispatch System (SCCDS) Center, and evaluate disbanding their respective emergency dispatch centers. The CEC also recommended in this document that the SCCDS transfer the 911 Call Rollover Center responsibilities to the City of Decatur/Macon County Emergency Communications Center through intergovernmental agreement. Emergency Response in Sangamon County is handled primarily by the SCCDS 911 Call Center. Independent dispatch operations exist in Chatham and Auburn. Auburn currently functions as the rollover center for high call volume situations. On a region-wide basis, multiple emergency dispatch centers serve a redundant function that is unnecessary in the context of current technologies. These centers introduce process inefficiency and increased personnel costs for local jurisdictions.

**Status:** At this time, the CEC is unaware of action in pursuit of implementing this recommendation. However, with all CEC advisory reports, the recommendation has been shared with the relevant local leaders for review and consideration.

### ***Pass-Through Fire Protection District Recommendation***

After reviewing the relationship between the City of Springfield and the nine surrounding fire protection districts (FPD) that contracted with it for fire protection services, the CEC recommended that the nine pass-through fire protection districts, *or* select districts among that group, consider consolidating into a single district to receive continued services at lower administrative cost from the City of Springfield via intergovernmental agreement. Significantly the CEC also recommended, that these districts should alternatively consider contracting with outlying rural fire protection districts, if deemed appropriate upon additional local review. At the time of the CEC's recommendation, the Springfield Fire Department provided emergency services to these nine pass-through fire protection districts surrounding the City, which do not have their own fire departments. The CEC noted in its recommendation that no standardized mechanism exists to determine appropriate reimbursement for these services or tax levies within these districts, and that each of these nine districts accrues a variety of administrative expenditures for its boards and legal fees.

**Status:** Following the CEC's recommendation, Curran FPD entered into a new contractual arrangement with Chatham FPD to provide fire protection services. The CEC is aware that several other FPDs are engaged in conversations related to this recommendation.

### ***E911 Data Collection Protocol Recommendation***

In the course of its research related to Fire Protection Districts in the County, the CEC experienced some difficulties in acquiring useful data related to performance measurement, particularly in terms of response times among smaller units of government in the rural areas of the county. The Sangamon County Centralized Dispatch System/Emergency Telephone Systems Department are the agencies

involved in dispatching these emergency responders, and represent the unit of government with the greatest access to this information on a regional basis. The CEC learned that this information is collected in a manner that makes it difficult to access at the aggregate level to analyze trends across calls. While there are some limitations due to the cost-prohibitive nature of technology for collecting in-vehicle response time data available to these smaller districts, the CEC nevertheless recommends that a review of data collection protocols for the E911 system may afford greater opportunity for more efficient performance management throughout the region. The CEC recommended that such a review take place, and provided educational materials related to the structure and function of the E911 dispatch system in this recommendation document.

**Status:** As yet, no action has been taken with reference to this recommendation.

### ***Fire/EMS Recommendation***

The CEC learned during its research that concerns exist related to high costs of Fire/EMS services in some areas and lack of volunteer responsiveness in others. After extensive data analysis related to jurisdictional responsiveness and capacity, the CEC recommended that fire protection districts and departments in the region pursue consolidation and resource reallocation toward the creation of four districts, each with one to two Fire/EMS stations, with response times strengthened through a stipend or on-call arrangement. The CEC further recommended that the City of Springfield engage in a comprehensive program review in order to address budgetary needs resulting from the potential reallocations and explore cost drivers described throughout this recommendation. The CEC also indicated that a targeted action team might be beneficial for the purpose of pursuing and coordinating these efforts.

**Status:** At the time of the CEC's recommendation, substantive conversations among a number of fire protection districts in the region had occurred related to these issues, but no action toward implementation has yet been taken.

### ***Law Enforcement Recommendation***

The CEC thoroughly examined alternatives related to the on-going regional conversation on law enforcement functions. After extensive review, the CEC found it unlikely that local governments in the Sangamon County region will be able to sustain their law enforcement forces at their residents' desired level of service on an on-going basis, due to rising costs. The CEC presented a baseline analysis of options for the region. As interim steps toward a long-term solution, the CEC recommended in this document that local leaders and law enforcement agencies pursue increased regionalization of law enforcement functions by undertaking the following actions:

- 1) Expand technological improvements to eliminate dated, hand-written records processes and duplication of labor.
- 2) Create a shared regional task force for highly specialized functions including training, crime scene investigation, major cases, tactical forces, and similar activities.
- 3) Create shared divisions for regional administrative support, records, and evidence, potentially adding other support functions.
- 4) Consolidate select municipal departments into combined local departments to manage scarce resources.

5) Engage the services of an independent consultant, working in conjunction with the Regional Leadership Council and any group that follows on with the CECs work, to conduct a thorough analysis of Springfield Police Department-Sangamon County Sheriff's Office consolidation that builds upon the CEC's existing work.

**Status:** At the time of the CEC's recommendation, conversations were occurring in the region, but no action had yet been taken in pursuit of implementing this recommendation.

## **Recommendations and White Papers Addressing Public Works**

Finally, the fourth committee of the CEC was the Public Works Committee. This committee examined matters related to infrastructure management and repair, fleet management, energy use, and other infrastructure-related services. Roads, sewers, utilities, and energy in all jurisdictions of the county fell under this committee's domain.

### ***Electric Aggregation Recommendation***

The CEC recommended that Sangamon County and municipalities not served by electric coops or municipally-owned electric utilities pursue energy cost savings through electric aggregation. Electric aggregation allows units of local government to negotiate lower electric supply rates on behalf of citizens. The CEC further recommended in this document that local governments work together to create their aggregations, so that administrative burdens on individual jurisdictions would be minimized.

**Status:** As a result of this recommendation, eligible residents in 15 municipalities and unincorporated Sangamon County had opportunity to vote in the November 2012 election on a referendum related to electric aggregation. The referendum passed in each of the 15 municipalities. The CEC has since assisted these communities in a group aggregation effort, including bringing community leaders together, helping them understand the required steps in the aggregation process, and helping them engage the services of an expert consultant for the electric supply bidding process. The Aggregation Consortium of communities bid its electric supply in the spring of 2013, and over 7,000 households have enrolled in the program at a rate of 4.19 cents per kWh. This represents an estimated savings of over a half million dollars in the course of the year for residents in the region.

### ***Energy Efficiency Program Recommendation***

The CEC provided an educational report related to energy efficiency funding opportunities available to local governments. It recommended that local jurisdictions review the educational materials it provided, and consider projects on which they can utilize energy efficiency funding to upgrade government facilities. The CEC further recommended that local governments coordinate their efforts where possible to achieve additional cost savings on the "match" portion of project funding. The CEC noted that energy efficiency projects can reduce utility bills in the long term, and suggested that local governments can take advantage of public-private partnerships and grant programs specifically designed to help with the purchase of smart, energy-efficient equipment.

**Status:** As yet, the CEC is unaware of any action that has been taken specifically in regard to its recommendation. However, examples of local jurisdictions undertaking efficiency upgrades exist, including the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant program administered by the SSCRPC in recent years. The CEC encourages local governments to explore similar actions.

### ***Infrastructure Equipment Inventory Recommendation***

After surveying local governments related to their infrastructure equipment assets and needs, the CEC recommended that the existing infrastructure equipment inventory be expanded to include all Sangamon County municipalities and relevant jurisdictions, and that Sangamon County's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) maintain, update, and distribute this list annually on a county-wide



basis. Over fifty governmental jurisdictions share responsibility for road and other infrastructure maintenance in Sangamon County. Equipment used for the infrastructure maintenance purposes is often costly, and some equipment gets used infrequently. Some sharing of equipment already occurs, and townships annually inventory their road maintenance equipment. The CEC anticipates that increased communication related to existing equipment, if utilized by local departments, could lead to reduced costs for equipment purchases and rentals.

**Status:** In the course of its work, the CEC developed a more complete inventory than has existed in the past, though some jurisdictions' information is still unknown. This inventory has been distributed, and local governments are encouraged to share equipment on an on-going basis.

### ***Alternative Fuels Recommendation***

In this educational report, the CEC recommended that the larger jurisdictions within the county continue or initiate, as appropriate, alternative fuel conversion programs for their light-duty and heavy-duty fleet vehicles. The CEC further recommended that jurisdictions research the viability of cooperative alternative fuel fleet conversions in order to minimize the up-front capital costs of alternative fuel conversions. The CEC also provided educational resources and identified potential funding opportunities in this recommendation. Cost and energy savings are well-documented across the country in communities that pursue use of alternative fuel sources, including but not limited to propane and compressed natural gas (CNG) fleets. Governmental entities in the County are uniquely situated to expand their propane and CNG fleets, as some jurisdictions have already pursued propane and CNG options and developed arrangements for necessary but costly fueling infrastructures.

**Status:** The City of Springfield and SMTD are among users that have alternative fuels systems in place. While others have observed their efforts and considered the educational resources provided in the CEC's work, currently the CEC is unaware of other entities engaging in alternative fuel conversions.

### ***Parts Inventory Recommendation***

The CEC found in its research that most local jurisdictions have implemented few, if any, best practices to ensure that parts inventory and supply management systems are handled in an efficient fashion. A large volume of fleet-related expense in local jurisdictions results from parts procurement. Therefore, the CEC recommended that local jurisdictions consider alternative parts management systems for their fleet maintenance operations. The CEC also recommended that local governments consider cooperating in a "hub-and-spokes" fashion to allow the benefits of a parts management system to be accrued by jurisdictions that handle a lesser volume of equipment. Finally, the CEC expressed the importance of involving all affected entities, such as parts management employees, public sector organized labor, and

administrators, through a working group to discuss implementation steps and potential savings, in the event that local jurisdictions attempt to implement these recommendations.

**Status:** Simultaneously with the CEC’s efforts, the City of Springfield began exploring options related to parts supply management and just-in-time inventory alternatives.

### ***Recycling Coordination Recommendation***

The CEC received a suggestion in the course of its public outreach that it review opportunities to increase coordination between the City of Springfield and Sangamon County’s recycling programs. The CEC examined the recycling functions and personnel for each entity in this recommendation document, and ultimately recommended that the entities strengthen existing communication related to recycling and solid waste management, reestablish the recycling advisory committee, and update the County’s solid waste management plan, and coordinate personnel and efforts for recycling functions via a management agreement. The CEC also recommended as part of its review of efficiencies in this area that the City and County pursue long-term visioning and strategy development for waste reduction and future coordination of waste management efforts.

**Status:** At the time of this report, some conversations related to coordination between the two entities had occurred, but no further action had been taken.

### ***City-SMSD Sewer Cooperation Recommendation***

The CEC explored alternatives related to on-going sewer maintenance and ownership in this recommendation. A number of local government bodies are responsible in part for the collection of sanitary sewage, wastewater, and in some instances, storm water. There are substantial maintenance needs associated with the built infrastructure of some of these systems, particularly those owned by the City of Springfield. Recent City rate increases, although a necessary and beneficial piece of a long-term solution, are inadequate to cover the future costs for bringing sewer infrastructure to an appropriate level of repair. Delayed repairs and maintenance will likely lead to greater long-term costs. Many probable costs associated with the aging infrastructure are unknown, as the study required to develop this cost information is itself costly.

Based on these findings, the CEC recommended that ownership, operation, and maintenance of the City of Springfield’s sewer system be transferred to the Springfield Metro Sanitary District (SMSD) through a process of gradual accretion of lines that are newly built, are brought up to an established standard of repair, or are transferred with accompanying designated revenues needed to reach such a standard. The CEC recognized in its recommendation that this would be an interim step in pursuit of a larger regional sewer plan, and therefore further recommended that a group be convened immediately to pursue implementation of this negotiated transfer and to develop a



long-term plan for ameliorating the negative effects on public and private property of the deteriorating sewer system.

**Status:** At the time of this report, some conversations related to a consolidation of City of Springfield sewers into the SMSD had occurred, but no further action had been taken.

## **Additional Areas Deserving Further Review**

The CEC does not believe that the recommendations described above represent a complete or exhaustive look at all of the activities that local governments in Sangamon County might undertake to exceed the public's expectations concerning efficiency and effectiveness. Though its recommendations lay the groundwork for some efforts that local governments can undertake to become more efficient and effective, and could cultivate substantial improvements if fully implemented, the CEC ultimately found that most of its recommendations merely exemplify the myriad of small actions that can be taken to improve the way local governments do business.

Alongside these small ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness, the CEC found that there is an on-going need to explore more complex opportunities for improving local government efficiency and effectiveness. In fact, throughout the CEC's work, it encountered a number of areas where improvements are possible but where the Commission did not have the time or expertise for a full exploration. The CEC emphasizes that as a part of an on-going review of local government efficiency and effectiveness, and in order to fully achieve its vision for the region, the following areas merit further consideration:

### ***Regional Water Management Coordination***

Although the CEC's recommendation on City of Springfield and Springfield Metro Sanitary District sewers alluded to some of the storm water management issues in the region, the CEC and staff noted in their research process that there is little coordination in terms of addressing ground water or storm water management in the region. Better-coordinated review of these matters, as well as increased communication in capital planning on infrastructure projects, could result in both reduced costs and better services for residents.

### ***Law Enforcement Agencies Collaboration Review***

As noted in the CEC's recommendation on regional law enforcement bodies, some of the needed research in this area was beyond the CEC's capacity and expertise. Further review of this issue, particularly in terms of the question of City of Springfield Police Department and Sangamon County Sheriff's Office coordination, cooperation, merger or consolidation would benefit from further exploration.

### ***Property Tax Assessment Functions***

During its research process related to property tax collection in Sangamon County, the CEC found that some of the mechanisms currently in place for property assessment are also potentially inefficient. Little automation of assessment data exists in some townships, and the decentralized assessment process has the potential to be inefficient in a fashion similar to that found with the tax collection process. While the CEC did not have time to fully document this situation, it suggests that additional review of these processes would be in order.

### ***Prairie Capital Convention Center and Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau***

The Community Development Committee of the CEC initially undertook preliminary exploration of these two entities and their functions to determine if greater efficiency and effectiveness could be generated through greater coordination or consolidation, but was deterred by the distinctions in their funding structures. However, a thorough review of the tourism and economic development apparatus functioning in the region may produce a better understanding of opportunities for the coordination or consolidation of these two bodies, since they pursue complementary missions.

### ***Infrastructure Project Coordination***

The CEC learned during its research that the City of Chicago's Department of Transportation is working to increase the coordination of infrastructure projects through a massive communication overall among city departments, contractors, and utilities. The pursuit of this practice has led to increased efficiency and coordination, and the CEC finds that this approach may represent a best practice for further local consideration. Road commissioner training requirements and other transportation planning best practices are other areas that the CEC preliminarily explored but did not have opportunity to fully study.

### ***Building Permitting Processes***

Similar to the law enforcement recommendation, the CEC found in its recommendation on building permitting in the various jurisdictions of the county that the functions and structures involved in many units' of governments provision of this service were too complex for it to fully explore and provide more efficient and effective alternatives. The CEC recommended that local governments better document their process for approving building permits and then undertake additional analysis of options for cooperation and automation.

### ***School District Efficiency***

The CEC received several inquiries during its term about whether it intended to address school consolidation or any number of a myriad of other issues related to efficiency and effectiveness in school districts. While the CEC preliminarily reviewed some of these questions and met with various officials on matters related to school district issues at the committee level, it did not ultimately issue a recommendation related to school district efficiencies outside of the limited transportation and procurement discussions in some of its recommendations that impacted school districts. This does not, however, suggest that the CEC does not find opportunities related to school efficiency and effectiveness to exist. The CEC generally felt that a body specifically tasked with examining school issues might be better equipped to address these questions, and that its efforts would be better directed elsewhere, given its multi-jurisdictional nature, limited expertise, and the unique and complex nature of school district functions. The CEC also examined the Classrooms First Commission's report on school consolidation and reviewed opportunities it described, and felt that questions in this area merit further review in the future.

## **On-Going Efforts for Greater Efficiency and Effectiveness**

Beyond the specific areas discussed above that merit additional review, the CEC found that its efforts will best be continued if an on-going, objective and external group has the standing responsibility for reviewing local efficiency and effectiveness across jurisdictions. The value it has perceived from the existence of an objective, unbiased, external review group has been substantive. Many local jurisdictions have already responded to its recommendations or merely to its existence by turning a sharper eye to

their own operations to see where opportunities for improvement might exist. The CEC sees this continuing only in the presence of an on-going group of this type, particularly if the implementation of the existing recommendations is to occur.

There are many different forms that a follow-on or renewed effort of the CEC could take, ranging from an informal collaboration that meets infrequently to check in with local governments on implementation efforts, to a fully-staffed innovation and performance body given the authority to continually review such issues, similar to the Office of Performance Improvement established for the Louisville/Jefferson County, Kentucky, metro area.<sup>18</sup>

At present, the benefits of continuing the CEC's efforts have been espoused by some jurisdictions in the county, including the Sangamon County Board. In an effort to gauge taxpayers' desire for such a continuation, the County Board has voted to place a referendum on the March 18, 2014 ballot asking the voters whether a renewed CEC group should be given an extended window of three years in which to continue its work. The Board has also voted for an additional referendum to provide the names of nine members, some taken from within the current commission and some from the general public, all recommended by the current commission, to allow public opportunity to express its support for this group to continue the work of the CEC.

As is evident from the depth and breadth of the issues addressed in the CEC's recommendations, the Commission and its staff invested substantial time and effort in reviewing areas where opportunities for increased efficiency and effectiveness are apparent. Although the CEC feels it is important to develop a discussion of its research process and themes it identified through this process so that its work can be continued and does not perpetually have to be recreated, this does not diminish the importance and value of each of its specific recommendations and reports or the areas in need of further study. The CEC expresses the hope that these recommendations will be seen as opportunities for providing better service at lower cost that citizens should find to be important and encourage their implementation.

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<sup>18</sup> See [www.louisvilleky.gov/performanceimprovement](http://www.louisvilleky.gov/performanceimprovement).



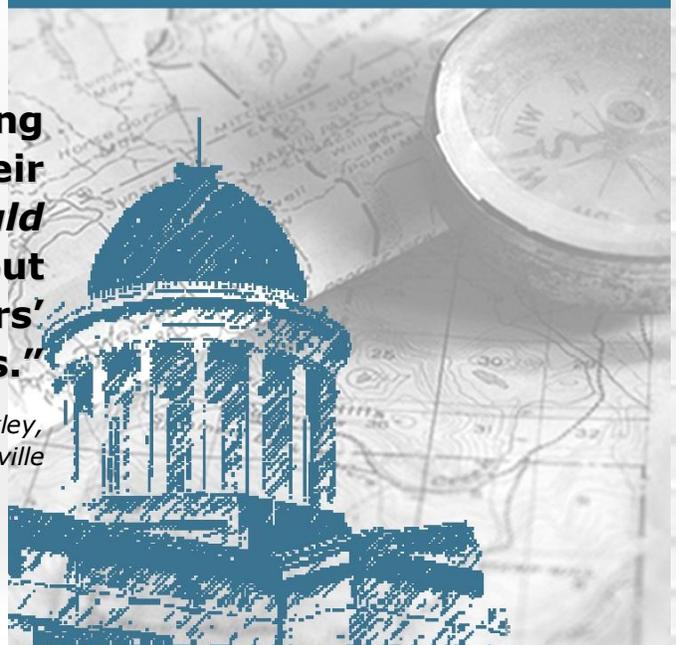


THE CITIZENS' EFFICIENCY COMMISSION  
FOR SANGAMON COUNTY

FIRST YEAR PROGRESS REPORT:  
PUTTING EFFICIENCY ON THE MAP  
JANUARY 2013

**“Leaders are being territorial about their turf. What we *should* be territorial about is the taxpayers’ dollars.”**

*-Mayor Tom Yokley,  
Village of Williamsville*



## V. A Vision Beyond the Recommendations: Exceeding Expectations

In the course of developing its recommendations and identifying areas for further study, the CEC often learned that its task was much more complex than initially perceived. In truth, the CEC found its own conception of its work evolving as it undertook its activities. The CEC became increasingly convinced that the problems that it was seeking to address with each of its recommendations were merely symptomatic of more important and lasting concerns related to local government operations in the region: how the governments viewed the very nature of the business they were in.

Government and the programs and activities it is called upon to carry out can be much more complex than the average citizen might think, because many elements are inter-related, some may lie outside the control of the local officials called upon to manage them, and change can be stymied by preconceptions and existing attitudes about how the business of government has been -- or could be -- done. The CEC found, as did Osborne and Gaebler over 20 years ago<sup>19</sup>, that it is most often not the people who work in government that are the problem, but the system itself.

As suggested in the CEC's interim report<sup>20</sup>, its guest editorials published in the *State Journal-Register*, and in the commentary and conclusions of many of its recommendations, there were significant *themes* which ran through its work that appear very relevant to its mission and its vision for the region. Rather than being localized to a specific program or activity, these themes appeared to be cross-cutting, flowing through many of the areas the CEC studied, and can represent systemic problems arising from the ways in which the local governments looked at the business they were in and went about doing that business. Because of this, and as in music, these themes were like a melody that played behind many of the areas studied and in some cases became the basis for the composition itself. This raised the concern that without an ongoing effort to identify and address the more significant themes uncovered, the most essential components of the CEC's efforts would be lost.

The CEC believes that if the intent of this and any future, similar exercise is to assist local governments in developing more efficient and effective practices, these efforts must include actions to come to terms with the significant themes that the CEC found in its work.

### The Importance of Working Across Jurisdictional Lines

The first theme uncovered by the CEC was **the necessity of working across both internal and external jurisdictional lines to produce positive results**. Often, local governments fail to communicate and work across jurisdictional lines in ways that would reduce their costs and also provide benefits to their residents and even the region as a whole. Even neighboring jurisdictions at times miss opportunities for savings through collaboration, because no formal mechanism exists to allow them to communicate problems and concerns to one another. This failure to work across lines was demonstrated in three areas: between and among municipal jurisdictions; between municipal jurisdictions and special districts; and between and among departments within the jurisdictions themselves.

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<sup>19</sup> Osborne, D., and Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing Government*. Addison-Wesley: Reading, MA. P. xviii.

<sup>20</sup> Citizens' Efficiency Commission (January 2013). *First Year Progress Report: Putting Efficiency on the Map*.

In the first two cases the CEC found this often associated with the local officials' desire to pursue their own jurisdiction's mission, and for this they should not be faulted. Governmental officials and their staff are expected to be cognizant of the specific and unique needs of their jurisdictions and to first and foremost give priority to meeting local wants and needs. Simply put, governments are designed to work in "silos", particularly those led by elected officials, for purposes of ensuring accountability. The same is, of course, true for special districts which are designed to have even more focused functions.

However, the design and history of local governments operating independently does not preclude communication and cooperation -- even coordination and collaboration -- among and between various local governments or their boards and commissions. And local leaders must come to understand that working across these jurisdictional lines can become an important element of efforts to serve and benefit their own local constituents (the people who hired or elected them) as well as others. The CEC acknowledges that individual units of local government and their governmental structures are, within limits, sovereign relative to all other local governments. Therefore, it came to the conclusion that *there needed to exist an objective coordinating body available to pull local governments together and to demonstrate why they should cooperate and how they and their constituents will benefit from cooperative, coordinated or collaborative activities.*

The CEC found at various points in its work that it sometimes fulfilled this role for the local governments of Sangamon County. It brought together a group of the region's mayors and village presidents, who formally established a venue for cooperation, the Regional Leadership Council. As a result of the CEC's work, the Sangamon County Township Officials Association also reorganized and began to work together more closely.

The CEC also recognized the benefit of its work in helping these officials establish meaningful connections. Sharing information on an internal and external basis assists local officials in developing a better understanding of opportunities for efficiency and program improvement. The collaborative efforts undertaken by the Regional Leadership Council, for example, assisted local officials in successfully implementing a collaborative electric aggregation program with the CEC's guidance. Mayors and village presidents have also benefited from these relationships in regard to their ability to share expertise, learn from one another's concerns, identify shared procurement opportunities, and discuss collaborative administration and management opportunities.

On an on-going basis, the CEC anticipates that the groups of local leaders networking and sharing concerns and challenges will build the collective capacity of the region as a whole to understand and address issues. While some local leaders are beginning to reap the benefits of this type of communication and cross-jurisdictional work, others have yet to recognize the benefits that could be accrued to their organizations and constituents through greater cooperation. Ultimately, working across jurisdictional lines will better equip local governments to improve efficiency and effectiveness, rather than be hampered by parochialism, "turf" battles, or constraints associated with their own distinct missions and structures.

However, barriers to local government improvement do not just arise due to a lack of inter-jurisdictional activities, but can occur *within* the units of government themselves. This particularly appears to be the case with larger units of government.

In larger units of government, programs and services may be of such magnitude or significance that they require their own departmental or divisional operations. These departments and divisions have their

own budgets and can become somewhat self-sufficient but also myopic, causing their administrators to focus only on what is in their own jurisdictional "silo". When this happens they may lose sight of how their work fits into the "business" of the local government as a whole, and less aware of how the activities or ideas of other departments or divisions in the same jurisdiction can be put to use in their department or division to improve efficiency and effectiveness. More to the point, they may lose sight of how the decisions that they make can cause problems for other jurisdictions as well as other parts of their own. For smaller local governments this is less the case, as they do not have the resources to set up the bureaucratic structures that larger governments can afford or require.

Greater communication *across* jurisdictional lines, as well as increases in communication *within* the units of government and their various departments and sub-units, is essential to the task of cultivating increased effectiveness.

## **The Necessity of Targeting Structural Changes**

As the CEC progressed in its work, it found that many local units assumed that working across jurisdictional lines or functional "silos" implied that their local sovereignty would be damaged or that it would force them to undertake consolidation with or merger into another unit of government. However, the CEC learned that consolidation and merger are only two tools among many for exploring regional cooperation, coordination or collaboration.

Early in its work, many of the members of the CEC expected that structural changes through the consolidation or merger of governmental bodies would be a significant, if not primary, strategy for improving local government efficiency and effectiveness. This was an important enough consideration that the CEC even found it necessary to make the distinction in its discussions between a *merger*, in which one unit of government is absorbed into another, and a *consolidation*, in which two units cede their functions to a new, standalone entity. This nuance is indicative of the fact that such structural changes were found to present complex issues and may not always be the default or sole tool for improvement. While the CEC examined the potential for consolidations and mergers, it found that in many cases small cultural changes or new management practices could often attain the same improvements in local efficiency and effectiveness, and potentially do so at less cost than required for a consolidation or merger.

As was mentioned previously, a broad array of alternatives for addressing the goal of local efficiency and effectiveness other than consolidations and mergers exist. The CEC detailed some of these in its *History and Nature of Joint Service Efforts in Sangamon County*, where it noted that Conservation, Communication, Cooperation, Coordination, and Collaboration are also opportunities for local governments to reduce costs without pursuing mergers or consolidations. Many of these efforts imply informal cooperation across jurisdictional lines, and sometimes simply better communication, which can benefit both jurisdictions.

The CEC came to understand that the structures of local government have an important purpose in allowing electoral accountability and in clearly defining local governments' missions. As demonstrated in the CEC's *Six C's* tool, a multitude of avenues exist that allow for greater local efficiency and effectiveness. The literature confirms the pattern experienced by the CEC and exemplified in the previously mentioned recommendations. Numerous articles in the field indicate that often

intergovernmental agreements are best suited to achieving cost savings through cooperation, as opposed to costly consolidations.<sup>21</sup>

Even so, the CEC nevertheless found that, at times, structural change through consolidations or mergers is necessary to truly attain local government efficiency and improve service delivery. Specifically, in circumstances where economies of scale cannot be captured because jurisdictions are too small, or where extremely limited capacity precludes effective governmental functioning, consolidation or merger may be appropriate solutions. **These instances should, however, be targeted and specific, rather than the assumed, default solution for local efficiency and effectiveness improvement.**

*“Simplistic solutions such as mergers are of limited relevance to improving efficiency in most cases, but public officials and managers need to vigorously pursue other forms of cost savings, and their citizens should demand it.”*

- J.R. Bartle on *Shared Services*

The CEC found that there are various approaches to consolidations and mergers that local governments can consider. Consolidation of *functions*, for example, can be a useful alternative to consolidation of structures, such as departments or jurisdictions. One clear example of the benefits of this approach is the CEC’s law enforcement recommendation, which calls for combined evidence and records functions, but indicates that further exploration is needed to determine the true benefits of a full consolidation or merger of police forces on a regional basis.

This document and others also suggest the theme of incremental improvement as an important concept when addressing the need for structural change. Looking for informal cooperative activities, or focusing on like functions initially, can lay a preliminary foundation for greater long-term ability to consider structural change – including mergers and consolidations – where necessary. For example, sharing administrative or “back office” functions could ultimately lead to incremental improvements between two jurisdictions that would better equip them to consolidate or merge additional functions in the future.

**It also appears that there are some local units of government that may benefit from significant structural change.** Some local governments in Sangamon County are so small and fragmented that there would be benefits derived from their being brought together on a more formal and unified basis. The CEC’s recommendation on Fire Protection Districts (FPDs), for example, represents such a case. Since many FPDs in Sangamon County do not individually have the financial capacity to recruit adequate volunteers to provide coverage in the existing demographic and economic climates, the CEC recommended that some FPDs consolidate into larger districts in order to have the combined resources needed to provide volunteer incentives and therefore generate adequate service coverage.

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<sup>21</sup> Bartle, John R. (May 16, 2013). “Shared Services: Where the Real Potential for Government Efficiency Lies.” *Governing*. Available at: <http://www.governing.com/blogs/view/col-merging-government-jurisdictions-sharing-services.html>.

## Understanding and Overcoming Statutory Limitations on Local Efficiency and Effectiveness Improvement

Another theme discovered in the course of the CEC's work was **the number of limitations faced by local governments seeking to provide better service at lower cost**. Even with structural changes when they are appropriate, not all efficiency opportunities identified by the CEC can be undertaken by local governments as State statute and other limitations currently inhibit local government efficiency and effectiveness efforts in substantial ways. Many local governments are attempting to do well with the resources they have, but face serious constraints in terms of budgetary pressures placed upon them by unfunded state mandates as well as specific statutory provisions that inhibit recommended efficiency actions.

As it encountered this theme time and time again, the CEC found it important to consider no opportunity for government efficiency out of reach even if it was precluded by state statute. Accordingly, the CEC documented instances in which it ran into statutory constraints and limitations in an attempt to begin the development of a legislative agenda that could ultimately assist local governments. Though these concerns are documented in a dispersed fashion in many of the CEC's recommendations, this final report offers the opportunity to gather them into the beginnings of a single legislative package. The CEC's hope is that some future continuation of its work will include an effort to address at least the following changes in statute:

- **Expand legislation reducing or eliminating required print public notices by allowing local governments to publish full notices on their websites or on a centralized portal, with a shorter notification published in the newspaper.** The CEC recommended this in its *Mandated Publications Recommendation*. After a review of the high costs to many local governments, the CEC learned that the incremental savings that could result from eliminating the mandate to disseminate public financial reports and other data in their entirety in print form could be of benefit. The CEC also found that such a statutory change would be beneficial in cultivating government transparency because of trends in internet usage as compared to print news subscriptions.
- **Allow township governments to transfer funds out of their designated general assistance fund for use in other areas, or review other alternatives for General Assistance programs.** The CEC addressed this issue in its *Shared General Assistance Administration Recommendation*. Currently, townships are statutorily required to keep a designated level of funds available in their general assistance fund balances, particularly to cover health care costs for general assistance recipients. These high fund balances often go unused for years and the funds could be redirected toward other purposes with statutory change.
- **Implement a Payment in Lieu of [property] Taxes (PILOT) for all of the properties held by the State of Illinois within local jurisdictions, in order to assist local governments with revenue shortfalls that burden them inequitably.** This legislative change would particularly benefit local governments in Sangamon County, as many of them lose substantive property taxes because of the many state-owned, tax-exempt properties within their jurisdictions associated with Springfield status as the State capital. A PILOT payment is practiced in some other states, and would allow Springfield and other jurisdictions to recoup forgone revenues.

- **Allow school districts under a certain student enrollment to share superintendents and other high-level administrators.** As it reviewed opportunities for shared services in the area of education, the CEC found that many of the largest education costs are in administrators' salaries, but that statute requires individual superintendents even for small districts. This and other education-related opportunities should receive additional review.
- **Limit the opportunity for nuisance FOIA requests from prison inmates.** In the course of its research on the law enforcement process, the CEC learned from the State's Attorney's office that vast amounts of time and resource are expended addressing FOIA requests, often repeat requests, from prison inmates. Some solution that limits the number of requests or allows more discretion in responses may merit consideration.
- **Review the merits of requiring township road commissioners to undertake standardized training.** The CEC found in reviewing road maintenance operations that it would be difficult for a larger organization such as the County to maintain all the roads currently under township ownership at the low cost level currently in place. However, this does not preclude the importance of quality, trained professional maintenance of these roads, and the CEC received suggestions that training for road commissioners be made mandatory. The CEC researched road maintenance training opportunities currently available, and indicates its encouragement for officials to attend this training even if it is not mandatory.
- **Continue efforts to amend legislation making it easier to consolidate fire protection districts.** The CEC addressed this concern in its *Pass-through Fire Protection Districts and Fire/EMS Services Recommendations*. Currently, only contiguous districts can be consolidated, which typically requires a voter referendum in all involved districts. Legislation has been introduced that lowers these thresholds for consolidation, and should be continually pursued in order to reduce local challenges for districts that wish to merge with others.
- **Review school transportation requirements related to homeless students.** In its review of *Public Transit and Pupil Transportation Cooperation*, the CEC learned that some of the highest costs to local school districts are associated with busing individual students for very long commutes because of the way homelessness is defined and as a result of limitations placed on districts related to these issues. Additional review of opportunities for changing these requirements would be beneficial.
- **Consider mechanisms for encouraging the collection of fees associated with traffic tickets to ensure that municipalities receive more adequate reimbursement for efforts required to attend court.** The CEC briefly addresses this issue in its *Law Enforcement Recommendation*. At a meeting of the Regional Leadership Council, mayors and village presidents in Sangamon County addressed shared concerns related to the fact that localities often do not receive revenues associated with traffic tickets because fines and fees are subtracted from this revenue source before passing funds on to the local governments responsible for the policing activity. Whether the offender pays fees in addition to the normal court charges or the fees are subtracted from the charges is left

at the discretion of the judge hearing the case. The decisions made in this area can create budgetary shortfalls and should be evaluated for potential changes.

Other mandates that may merit consideration, but which the CEC did not specifically address or explore, may be available for consideration. Organizations such as the Illinois Municipal League and the Illinois Association of Regional Councils track such mandates, they are listed in the State's mandates catalog, and they are often identified in resources compiled by interest groups in Illinois and other states.

## **Citizens' Role in Achieving the Vision**

Often there is little incentive for local leaders to pursue efficiency and effectiveness activities. Even in the event that all barriers to local efficiency are removed, the CEC expects that it would be unlikely that all local governments would suddenly be motivated to perpetually review and implement efficiency activities. This is particularly the case when coming in at or under their budgeted revenues in a fiscal year is generally deemed to be the primary measure of organizational success, regardless of how efficiently or inefficiently they achieved this result.

While perpetual resource constraints and rising cost may contribute to a more active pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness among local government administrators, there can exist resistance on the part of elected officials to undertake these efforts if they raise concerns related to risk of failure or the potential for political controversy. Officials' understanding of public expectations can often lead to real and perceived barriers to efficiency. Leadership in local governments can even be deterred by a fear of raising public expectations about what a change in practice might achieve. While this may seem to reflect poorly upon local government officials and employees, the CEC suggests that the public is a major contributor to this attitude.

The CEC found that citizens typically do not actively encourage government officials to take the actions that may be necessary to increase the effectiveness of local government, particularly if the actions involve some initial additional financial cost or a change in established practice. **While citizens of the region can often be critical of government generally, lack of meaningful engagement, low electoral turnout, and other factors that demonstrate skepticism and apathy produce minimal incentives for local officials to truly work for efficient and effective government.** One example of this arose in the CEC's own efforts to encourage public input. The CEC expected early in its research process that it would receive substantial recommendations and involvement in its work from the business community, higher education community, other interest groups, and even the public at large, but struggled to achieve meaningful involvement by most of these groups.

As indicated in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce report discussed earlier, greater understanding and involvement between the public and private sectors can provide benefits for both. Particularly in a region such as Sangamon County where public employment makes up such a large share of the workforce, citizens who understand and engage in the governmental process are available and can be a vital resource in helping to create the motivation and inspiration for local governments to consider and then implement innovations that lead to reductions in cost or improvements in service. Even when public employees voice concern that new practices and innovations to encourage greater efficiency can result in fewer employment opportunities, there is still the realization that if present trends continue, there will ultimately be a reduction in government employment if efficiencies are not found. Only by engaging in a real conversation on both efficiency *and* effectiveness might there be a better

understanding that reducing costs at the loss of those who provide services can ultimately *reduce* both efficiency and effectiveness.

And alongside basic civic engagement duties that can assist in changing the culture associated with government efficiency and effectiveness, **the CEC identified a number of specific actions citizens themselves can take to help local governments reduce costs and improve services.** These actions, many of which are very simple, can be taken by each citizen to reduce the burden of demand on local governments. The CEC found that these actions merited mention because citizens can play such an important role in helping relieve local governments' struggles. As examples, some of the simple actions that individual residents can take to reduce the demand for government services and their costs include:

- Reducing false alarms for fire protection and EMS services, which require considerable resource expenditure for non-emergency situations.
- Conserving water, particularly in drought situations.
- Minimizing solid waste through recycling programs to prevent landfill overuse.
- Minimizing or eliminating grease from commercial entities to prevent additional sewer system maintenance costs.
- Utilizing "smart" device applications such as the Hazardous Drainage Grate identifier to help Public Works departments identify needs and target labor.
- Raking leaves and replacing nuisance trees to minimize sewer repair needs.
- Providing tips to the Crime Stoppers organization to assist in police arrests.

These and other examples represent the types of activities that citizens should consider *their* responsibility in contributing to the task of improving government efficiency and effectiveness. Local governments may also have the opportunity to explore additional tools and programs that will assist citizens in undertaking these goals, and should encourage their residents to submit their ideas and suggestions. For example, some new social media or self-reporting applications exist which local governments could explore for just this purpose.

Fully engaging local officials in the business of improving the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of local governments requires an engaged citizenry that holds them accountable and encourages them to implement changes toward this end. A fully engaged citizenry also takes its own actions to help local governments better target resources to truly necessary goals by reducing demand for government services in other areas. Finally, local governments can actively engage citizens in the process of recommending improvements to public sector functions and processes. The citizen's role, therefore, represents one vitally important, but often overlooked, component of regional efficiency and effectiveness efforts.

## **A New Way of Doing Business**

As the CEC has noted at many points in its work, eliminating individual barriers, implementing specific recommendations, and strengthening individual relationships and lines of communication, while valuable, represent only a small portion of the effort needed to improve local government efficiency and effectiveness. Throughout its work of developing its mission and philosophy, establishing a research process, and producing recommendations, the CEC learned a valuable lesson about its vision: **in order for the vision of local efficiency and effectiveness to "stick," a new way of doing business will be necessary in the region.**

The CEC found that for its ultimate vision for the region to be achieved, a new culture needed to be established; one in which every unit of government, their leaders and their staff are committed to managing for exceptional performance and public agency success. But it also found that significant barriers must be overcome if this is to become the norm. Several of these deserve particular mention.

### **Lack of Capacity**

One of the issues that will inhibit local governments in some jurisdictions from improving their performance on an on-going basis is simply a lack of capacity. **At various points in the CEC's work, it encountered situations in which local government employees and officials were attempting to do well with the resources they had, but did not have the technical expertise or the technological tools to implement improvements.** For example, the technological upgrades needed to automatically collect emergency response data needed for performance measurement are currently cost-prohibitive for some local fire protection districts.

Equally important as technological capacity is personnel capacity. Knowledgeable employees can assist local governments in cultivating savings, but often local governments have minimal time or resources to provide employee development and training. The CEC discussed this concern, for instance, in its *Shared Administration Recommendation*. Having an experienced human resources administrator could, for instance, help local governments understand and target use of early-out programs to save on pension costs. Similarly, several local jurisdictions indicated that they have difficulty tackling special projects, such as filling out grant applications, because their village administrative staff is part-time and its time is fully engaged in managing only regular, day-to-day tasks.

The CEC proposed in its recommendations several approaches that may assist local governments in confronting these difficulties. The first was to look outside of their existing structures for resources to assist them in solving their challenges. The CEC's recommendation that jurisdictions look to their peers for assistance as a community of practice and the *Leaders' Peer Networks* recommendation are both examples of such a solution. Another example is the *Higher Education Cooperation* recommendation, in which the CEC called for local universities and colleges to explore ways that their research and technical expertise might assist local governments in building their capacity or offering needed knowledge and expertise.

Additionally, the CEC examined ways that collaborative action could help fix capacity issues. A shared automated system for human resource administration or for law enforcement records are examples contemplated in the CEC's *Shared Administrative Functions* and *Law Enforcement* recommendations. The law enforcement review also suggested that shared grant writers or administrative/records personnel could be of benefit in smaller jurisdictions that currently lack these resources. These collaborative actions, however, would require leadership and risk-taking that the current way of doing business does not incentivize among local leaders.

### **Lack of Information-Driven Decision Making**

As briefly described at the very beginning of this report, **one of the other difficulties experienced almost universally in the region is the lack of the performance data that would allow for on-going performance measurement.** In fact, there appears to be little data-driven management occurring on a regular basis, and in the absence of performance data, governments simply cannot manage for success and the public cannot assess whether or not their local government is making headway rather than only making headlines.

At many points, the CEC's research was hindered because it could not even find adequate, available, uniform data related to local functions. Trends in the literature suggest this phenomenon is not uncommon. While many units of government have the ability to collect data, often it is not in a usable format and is disregarded rather than incorporated into a management strategy. *Given the absence of a generally accepted information system, the CEC was often only able to estimate the possible benefits to cooperation or other efficiency recommendations, rather than definitively demonstrate it.*

Examples of these difficulties are evident in many of the CEC's recommendations. Because of the limitations of U.S. Census of Governments data (which were described earlier), for truly comparable budgetary data for cross-jurisdictional comparison, the CEC generally turned to the Illinois Comptroller's Local Government Annual Financial Reports. However, some government jurisdictions indicated that there had been confusion in reporting the data in that resource, and questioned the reliability of comparison data. The CEC spent a great deal of time gathering basic information via survey for documents such as the *Inventoried and Shared Infrastructure Maintenance Equipment* and the *Township Tax Collection* recommendations. In the CEC's *Fire Protection and EMS Services* recommendation, the Commission and SSCRPC staff had to use a number of national and state databases in order to derive performance data related to emergency response, which led to its *E-911 Data Collection Protocol* recommendation.

Lack of data and management information not only disadvantage local governments in their ability to measure performance, but often inhibit actions that would otherwise be taken to achieve government efficiency and effectiveness. For example, the CEC found that many of its recommendations would result in small, incremental savings, rather than the larger cost reductions that could be easily captured and understood by the management systems that localities were using. Because they lacked information on these incremental savings, local leaders at times failed to recognize the benefits of pursuing incremental or minor reductions in cost that would add up over time to significant long-term savings.

The CEC's *Sewer Cooperation* recommendation provides another example of the way that a deficit of information can create difficulties for local jurisdictions desiring to implement solutions. This recommendation developed out of a conversation related to the possibility of transferring City of Springfield sanitary sewers to Springfield Metro Sanitary District ownership and operation, initially reviewed by the CEC with an eye toward whether operational efficiencies could be implemented through such a shift. The CEC learned as it explored this issue, however, that there was a much larger problem with the City's sewer system—a gaping shortfall in revenues needed to maintain sewers at a basic level of repair. Moreover, the CEC found that the amount of revenue needed for repairs cannot currently be quantified or even estimated, and that the city lacks vital information needed to adequately gauge what its future needs will be, without which it will continue to struggle to fully inform the debate related to its infrastructure needs.

Generally speaking, local governments require concise, focused, relevant information to truly make the best decisions for their citizens, but they often do not have such information available.

### **Lack of Plans or Performance Measures Driving Decision Making**

Although Springfield's sewer concerns represent a larger expenditure than many the CEC examined, similar problems can be found in smaller jurisdictions as well. Most municipalities in the region do not have formal capital project plans, for example.

At the very onset of the CEC's work, an effort was made to review the various plans of the municipalities and special districts in the region in order to get a sense of the performance measures that they were using to assess the extent to which they were achieving their goals and objectives. The CEC found that little formal planning appears to take place at the local level, and where it does, plans often remain unimplemented or are driven by weak data with no performance measures. **To demonstrate the benefits to be derived from efficiency efforts, effective planning resulting in plans tied to a common set of management criteria and corresponding methods of measuring performance will be required.** This is a very important component of the CEC's recommendations, and is particularly vital to ensuring that some on-going gains are made as a result of its work.

Additionally, local governments in particular need improved long-term planning to overcome the difficulties of succession when new officials are elected and inherit governmental systems with little training or continuity. Often, informal institutional knowledge is the main operating resource for local governments and provides the sum and substance of their planning, but it can come and go with a single employee if it is not being institutionalized. Improved planning would prove a resource for addressing these concerns and would assist in building local capacity.

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Ultimately, the responsibility for implementing such management techniques and for proactively finding ways to improve local efficiency and effectiveness falls to local government leadership. Without strong leaders committed to a vision for exceeding citizen expectations through performance measurement, innovation, and creative exploration of ways to build local capacity, governments in the region are likely to fall back into a "business as usual" pattern that will be incapable of implementing and sustaining efficiency improvements recommended by the CEC.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Goldsmith, Steve (March 20, 2013). "Building a Culture of Efficiency in Government." *Governing*. Available at: <http://www.governing.com/blogs/bfc/col-building-culture-efficiency-government.html>.



**The CEC has outlined in this final report its new vision for local government in the region—one in which jurisdictions, their citizens, and their leaders work not simply to meet expectations, but to exceed them, through a culture of ongoing and continual review and improvement of performance.**

## VI. Establishing a Vision that Exceeds Expectations: In Conclusion

The CEC fully understands that there have been many reports such as this one. Governments regularly pull study groups and “blue ribbon” commissions together to address the problems that they confront. These groups issue their reports – as the CEC is doing here – with great anticipation and expectation; but in a short time their recommendations seem forgotten as the status quo continues. This cannot be allowed to occur with this report, because when it does, the public becomes more cynical, less engaged, and ultimately the effectiveness of government suffers as the public becomes less and less willing to provide the resources that governments need to provide the services their constituents desire.

It is the strong desire of the members of the Citizens’ Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County that their work not contribute to this sometimes vicious cycle. The members of the CEC feel this way not only because of the time and energy they have committed to this effort over the past two and one-half years, but because as their work continued, they discovered over and over again its importance to the success of all of the local communities in the region as well as the well-being of those who live here. That is why the CEC’s vision for the region is not just one in which the citizenry’s expectations about the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of local government are met, but is one in which these expectations are *exceeded*. The Commission is convinced that achieving this vision is possible, but will not occur simply because a report is produced.

In its necessarily limited review of the multiplicity of local governments in Sangamon County, the CEC found many areas where effectiveness and efficiency could be improved, and these areas are addressed in the sections provided previously. The CEC also found that numerous limitations and barriers currently exist that limit local government improvement and are, all or in part, beyond the control of the local governments themselves. However, most of the identified areas in need of improvement relate directly to policies, processes, practices and operational structures directly under the control of one or more local jurisdictions, and many of the CEC’s recommendations speak specifically to such cases and offer some guidance for implementation.

But others are much more global, and the problems associated with local policies, processes, practices and structures are simply reflections—*symptoms*, if you will—of these larger problems. As symptoms they might be addressed with some palliative, but that of course will not cure the underlying problem. And the CEC found that underlying problems do exist which require thoughtful and direct action. In general, there is little attention given to planning, little performance measurement data is being collected or is utilized in agenda setting and decision making, citizens often fail to provide local officials encouragement or incentive to improve their operations, and given these constraints, new ways of doing business are required. Building successful local governments requires on-going attention, new tools, resources and external review and effort. And most importantly, it requires a change in attitudes and even the culture of government to ensure that the work of the CEC is not lost and its vision for the region achieved.

At the same time and of equal importance, the CEC found many positives, including a large number of local officials and members of their staffs who were working very hard to do good work for the residents of their communities. The Commission also found and came to appreciate the task that they have been given: to manage an often complex and sometimes contradictory system with limited resources,

mandates outside of their control, and local demands for more services at no greater cost. Even so, the CEC believes that if the recommendations here are taken to heart, if the themes found in its work are addressed to bring forward a new way of doing business—establishing local governments that are focused on efforts to plan, assess, and manage toward better service at lower cost—its vision can be achieved.

What appears to the CEC as necessary to achieve this vision is a *commitment* that is demanded, not just a *desire* that is voiced. And this must be a commitment by the citizens of Sangamon County, not just those they elect. Again and again, the CEC found that individual citizens play an important role in improving governmental performance, and that this role must go beyond simply deciding whether or not to vote every four years.

The CEC's vision is one of vital importance to Sangamon County as a regional “community”, but goes beyond that and represents an approach that the CEC believes should be of interest to other regions and communities attempting to address similar problems. To the extent that this report and its recommendations point to local jurisdictions learning from one another and working with one another to achieve better service at lower cost, so can the Sangamon County region learn from others.

As the CEC learned in its work, the task of working across a broad array of jurisdictions to cultivate improvements in local government economy, efficiency, and effectiveness is incredibly complex and difficult, but as it looks to the future, it is its hope that its research process and products will serve as the foundation for on-going local government improvement in Sangamon County and in other parts of Illinois.

The CEC has outlined in this final report its new vision for local government in the region—one in which jurisdictions, their citizens, and their leaders work not simply to meet expectations, but to *exceed* them, through a culture of on-going and continual review and improvement of performance. It is only by working toward such a vision that true strides toward local government efficiency and effectiveness will be attained in this region or in others that work to replicate the CEC's important efforts in the future.

# Appendices



## **Appendix A: Establishing Resolution**

### **Resolution No. 14-1 Citizens' Efficiency Commission**

**WHEREAS**, the current economic recession is placing unprecedented fiscal pressure on local governments, as well as on those individuals, families and businesses in our community that provide the tax dollars to fund local governments in Sangamon County; and

**WHEREAS**, it is always the duty of local governments in Sangamon County to look for methods and procedures to utilize taxpayers dollars as efficiently and effectively as possible; and

**WHEREAS**, the State and Federal governments continue to pass legislation that places mandates on local governments, without the accompanying funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the State and Federal governments are making intergovernmental and regional initiatives a critical component of eligibility for grant programs; and

**WHEREAS**, in recognition of such issues, there shall be created a Citizens' Efficiency Commission (the Commission) which shall have as its purpose improving local government economy, efficiency and effectiveness by assessing and proposing opportunities for improved cooperation, coordination and reduction or elimination of duplication of effort and the sharing of services between and among local governments in Sangamon County; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission shall meet regularly and all of the findings and recommendations of the Commission shall be made available to the general public, as well as to the elected officers of those local governments represented on the Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission shall consist of 23 members appointed as follows:

Four (4) citizens nominated by the Mayor of Springfield and appointed by the Springfield City Council.

Four (4) citizens nominated by the Sangamon County Board Chairman and appointed by the Sangamon County Board.

Two (2) citizens appointed collectively by village boards in Sangamon County.

Two (2) citizens appointed collectively by townships in Sangamon County.

Two (2) citizens appointed collectively by the school districts in Sangamon County.

One (1) citizen appointed by the Springfield Park District Board.

One (1) citizen appointed by the Springfield Metropolitan Sewer District Board.

One (1) citizen appointed by the Springfield Mass Transit District Board.

One (1) citizen appointed by the Springfield Airport Authority Board.

One (1) citizen appointed by the Springfield Metropolitan Exposition & Auditorium Authority Board.

One (1) citizen appointed collectively by the community college districts in Sangamon County.

One (1) citizen appointed collectively by the fire protection districts in Sangamon County.

One (1) citizen appointed collectively by the library districts in Sangamon County.

One (1) citizen appointed collectively by the water districts in Sangamon County.

**WHEREAS**, at least one appointment from the City of Springfield and at least one appointment from Sangamon County shall be a member of a racial minority, as recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission is designed to truly be a “citizen” commission, which looks beyond individual local government interests, jurisdictional lines or bureaucratic structures; and

**WHEREAS**, no member of the Commission may be appointed who holds elective office or is employed by the appointing entity involved in the Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, in selecting members to the Commission, insofar as possible, individuals should be appointed who: are not in a position to augment their income or promote their special interests through membership on the Commission; are not selected based upon political party affiliation; are broadly representative of the community’s geographic, economic, racial and cultural diversity; are knowledgeable, active or interested in community affairs; commit to their availability for meetings of the Commission and any committees or taskforces it may establish; and, in total, reflect a fair representation of the local governments in Sangamon County; and

**WHEREAS**, all members of the Commission shall serve two-year terms, and no Commission members shall receive compensation for Commission activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the duties and functions of the Commission shall be repealed four years after its establishment by referendum; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission shall be self-governing, and shall prepare and adopt by-laws, rules and regulations for the internal governance of its own business, including the obligations and responsibilities of its officers and members, and designate the time and place of its meetings; and

**WHEREAS**, a quorum shall exist if a majority of the commissioners who have been appointed and qualified are present; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission shall submit its final recommendations no later than 36 months after its establishment by referendum; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission shall operate under the provisions of the Illinois Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission shall have the authority to seek grants and other sources of funds helpful and necessary in the accomplishment of its tasks; and

**WHEREAS**, given its unique role, responsibilities and relationship with many area local governments, the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission may be called upon to assist the Commission in its work; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission may also call upon employees of the various jurisdictions and entities making appointments to the Commission to also assist in its work; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission is encouraged to seek the advice, guidance and expertise of individuals and organizations from outside our community that are experienced in efforts to improve efficiencies through the reduction of duplicative government services; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Members of the Board of Sangamon County, Illinois, in session this 10<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2010, that in the November 2, 2010 general election there shall be placed on the ballot the proposition heretofore stated in substantially the following form:

Shall there be created a Citizens' Efficiency Commission which shall have as its purpose improving local government effectiveness by identifying opportunities for improved cooperation, coordination and reduction of duplication of services among local governments in Sangamon County.

**AN BE IT** further resolved that the Sangamon County Clerk shall certify said question to the Sangamon County Election Office.

## Appendix B: Citizens’ Efficiency Commission Appointees

The listing below provides the names of all commissioners that served on the CEC at various points throughout its term, as well as their appointing entities. Commissioners who served earlier in the CEC’s research process but are no longer commission members are indicated with an asterisk. Executive Committee members are indicated by their leadership role and committee assignment next to their name.

<b>Commissioner:</b>	<b>Appointing Jurisdiction:</b>
Jeff Adkisson .....	Library Districts
*Mike Aiello .....	Springfield Metropolitan Exposition and Auditorium Authority
Dan Cadigan.....	City of Springfield
*Mike Chamness.....	Sangamon County School Districts
*Patrick Coburn.....	Springfield Mass Transit District
Jim Cimarossa.....	Springfield Metropolitan Exposition and Auditorium Authority
Josh Collins.....	City of Springfield
Jerry Crabtree .....	Township Governments
Gary Crompton .....	Fire Protection Districts
Jim Donelan.....	Township Governments: Public Works Committee Chair
Dr. Kevin Dorsey.....	Sangamon County
Cliff Erwin.....	Water Districts: Community Development Committee Chair
*Rev. Lee E. Fields Jr. ....	Sangamon County
*Jim Fulgenzi.....	Springfield Park District
Bob Gray.....	Community College Districts: Public Safety Committee Chair
Hon. Karen Hasara .....	Springfield Metro Sanitary District: CEC Chair
Marilyn Kushak.....	Sangamon County: Administration, Management and Budget Committee Chair
Frank McNeil .....	Sangamon County School Districts
Mike Murphy.....	Village Governments: CEC Vice-Chair
Drinda O’Connor .....	Springfield Mass Transit District
Ken Page.....	Sangamon County
Robert Plunk .....	Village Governments
Dr. Kent Redfield .....	Springfield Airport Authority
J.D. Sudeth.....	Sangamon County
Kenley R. Wade Sr.....	City of Springfield
Joan Walters.....	City of Springfield
Bob Wesley .....	Springfield Park District

## **Appendix C: Staff, Volunteers, & Interns**

### **Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission Staff:**

E. Norman Sims, Executive Director  
Jeff Fulgenzi, Senior Planner for Strategic and Comprehensive Planning  
Amy Uden, Associate Planner for Policy Research and Analysis  
Jane Lewis, Administrative Assistant

### **Contractual Spot Research:**

Martin Colloton

### **Student Interns:**

Richard Bennett, University of Illinois - Springfield  
Margaret Long, Benedictine University  
Lyndee Rodamaker, Benedictine University  
Jess Weitzel, University of Texas- Austin

### **Community Volunteers:**

Marilyn Cagnoni  
Jake Ferguson  
Carol Kulek  
Jack Pecoraro  
Stephen Schnorf

## Appendix D: Directory of CEC Papers, Studies, Recommendations, and Reports

- [\*Bylaws of the Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County\*](#)
- [\*Philosophy on Recommendations\*](#)
- General research white papers as a foundation for research:
  - [\*General Local Government Functions\*](#)
  - [\*A Comparison of Special Districts\*](#)
  - [\*Local Government Expenditures and Efficiency Comparison\*](#)
  - [\*History and Nature of Joint Services in Sangamon County\*](#)
  - [\*Positive Local Efforts\*](#)
  - [\*Preliminary Report: Sangamon County Municipal Leader Interviews\*](#)
- Specific issue white papers:
  - [\*Health Insurance Costs for Local Governments\*](#)
  - [\*Pupil Transport and Public Transit Cooperation\*](#)
- [\*First Year Progress Report: Putting Efficiency on the Map\*](#)
- Formal Advisory Recommendations:
  - [\*Leaders' Peer Networks Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Shared Township General Assistance Administration Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Electric Aggregation Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Centralized Township Property Tax Collection Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Regional Joint Purchasing Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Inventoried and Shared Maintenance Equipment Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Energy Efficiency Fund Use Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Foreign Fire Insurance Fund Administration and Use Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Higher Education Cooperation Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Regional Centralized Dispatch Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Group Financing for Local Capital Projects Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Pass-through Fire Protection Districts Review Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Alternative Fuel Use Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Parts Inventory and Supply Management Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Coordinated Recycling Functions Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Electronic Mandated Local Government Publications Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Building Codes and Permitting Process Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*E911 Data Collection Protocol Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Back Office and Human Resources Coordination Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*School District Shared Curriculum Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Law Enforcement Functions Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*Fire Protection and Rural EMS Recommendation\*](#)
  - [\*SMSD and Springfield Sewer Cooperation Recommendation\*](#)

## Appendix E: Other Tools and Products Produced for the Commission

As a resource for other communities attempting to emulate the CEC’s work, SSCRPC staff has compiled brief descriptions and examples of some of the resources it made available to the Commissioners in the course of its work. These tools assisted in the research process, and are important for other regions developing an understanding of ways that localities can be assisted in functioning more efficiently and effectively. They also demonstrate the level of involvement that SSCRPC staff and CEC members invested in ensuring that the CEC’s research process was professional and transparent.

### Best Practices Library

SSCRPC staff endeavored to collect articles related to best practices in the areas of the CEC’s research, and to document these articles in an electronic index, which detailed the articles’ sources, appropriate committees, and content keywords. This index assisted both commissioners and staff in retaining resources, reviewing best practices, and ensuring that information on research issues was appropriately disseminated among commissioners. The searchable database was periodically updated with new information for commissioners’ use, and an image exemplifying the database is available below.

Figure 1: CEC Best Practices Library Index

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	
1	<b>Index of CEC Supplemental Documents</b>									
2										
3	<b>Outside Publication Resources:</b>									
4	<b>Author</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Subject Keywords</b>	<b>Relevant Committees</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Date Entered</b>	
5	Arimes, George	APA	Zoning Practice: Transparent Development Services	2012	article	zoning, permitting, development	CD	"APA Zoning Practice-Development Services.pdf"	1/2/2013	
6	Barrett, Katherine and Richard Greene	e.Republic, Inc.	"Requiring a Doctor's Note, Tax Rates Vs. Growth, and Performance in Beantown"	2012	article	fire protection, performance measurement, personnel	PS, AMB, CD	"Cleveland FF Governing"	7/27/2012	
7	Basu, Indragit	Community of San Francisco	"San Francisco puts Idea Factory Online"	2012	journal article	open data, citizen engagement	AMB, CD	"San Francisco Puts Idea Factory Online"	5/29/2012	
8	Bramlet, Tim	Taxpayers' Federation of Illinois	Memorandum Re: "Financial Impact of Consolidation of Springfield Election Commission with Sangamon County Clerk's Office"	1996	consolidation study, memorandum	consolidation, election administration	all, AMB	"Taxpayers Fed-Election Consolidation"	4/11/2012	
9		Capital Region Council of Governments (Connecticut)	"OPM 2008 Regional Performance Incentive Grants"	2008	grant narratives, performance project descriptions	performance measurement, consolidation	all	"CROG Grant Examples.pdf"	1/8/2013	

### CEC Website

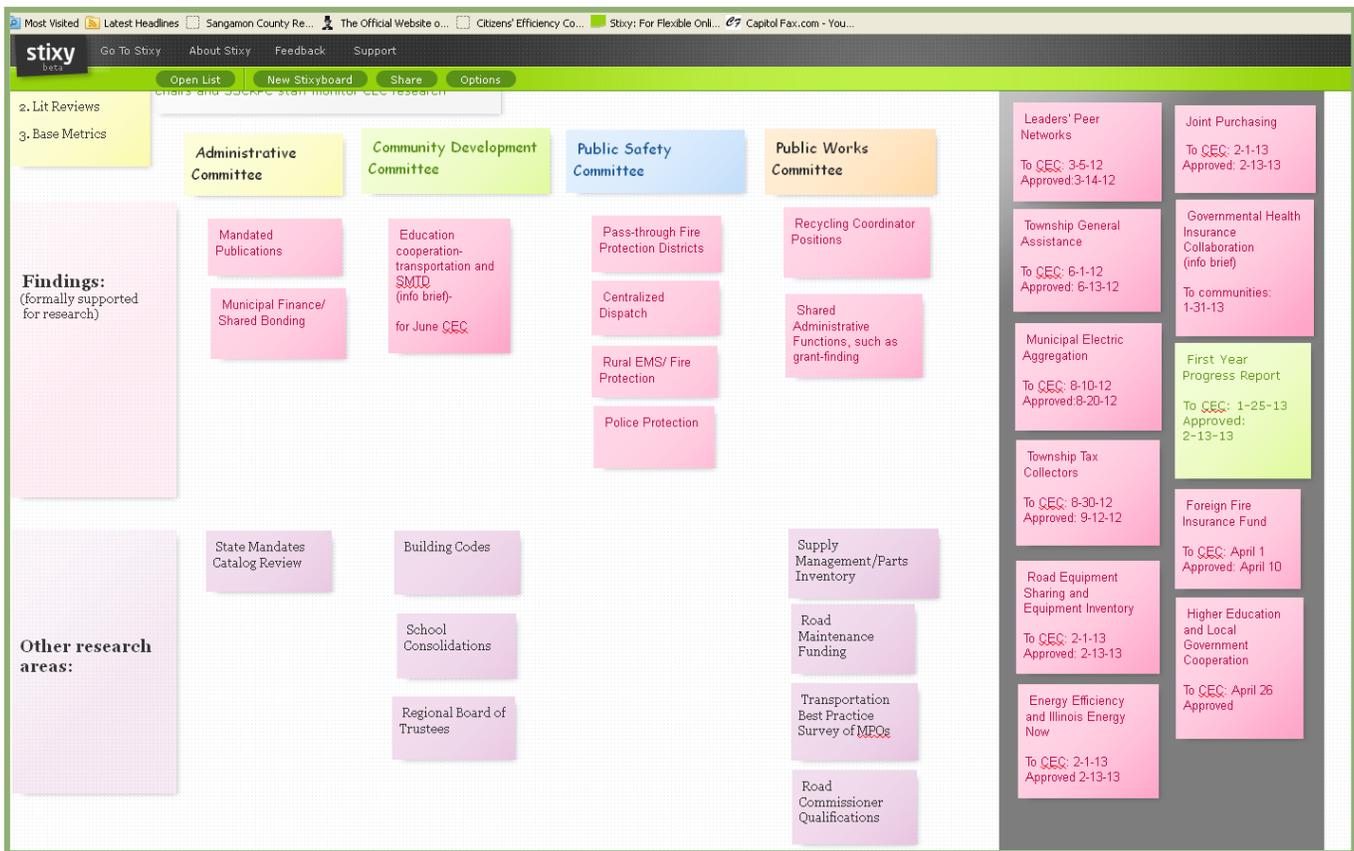
SSCRPC staff also hosted the CEC’s meeting and research materials on a section of its website in order to ensure that Commissioners and members of the public could access all information and materials

related to the CEC’s research process. Web materials included establishing documents, formal recommendations and white papers, agendas, and minutes of regular meetings.

## Project Tracking Resource

Due to its multi-jurisdictional nature, the breadth of research areas under review by the CEC led to a need for a resource to monitor projects and track research goals. The CEC utilized an online bulletin board for this purpose. This allowed Commissioners and staff to visualize the workflow of various committees, improved committee research coordination, and allowed for a snapshot of the CEC’s existing work product at any given point during its research process. Formally approved findings, for which the CEC had received full commission support for research, were tracked distinctly from general research areas, ensuring that the CEC’s research process was followed.

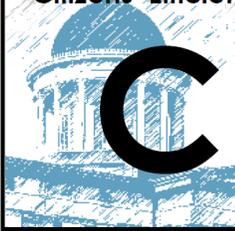
Figure 2: CEC Project Tracking System







Citizens' Efficiency Commission  
for Sangamon County



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