

**ATTACHMENT C - WORK PLAN**

***SUMMARY***

PROJECT NAME: Village of Morristown Dissolution Study

CONTRACTOR SFS PAYEE NAME: MORRISTOWN VILLAGE OF

CONTRACT PERIOD: From: 04/01/2016

To: 03/31/2018

Project Summary: A high-level overview of the project, including the overall goal and desired outcomes.

1. Description of Proposed Project

On October 11, 2016, the Village of Morristown Board of Trustees passed a resolution to apply for a New York State Local Government Efficiency Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant (CREG) to complete a Dissolution Study. This project will allow the Village to explore dissolution of the Village of Morristown and consolidation with the Town of Morristown. The primary objective of this project is to develop a detailed Dissolution Study that answers questions that Village of Morristown and Town of Morristown residents have about the dissolution process, impacts of dissolution, and how dissolving would affect residents and local governments. The Dissolution Study will provide the Village of Morristown with a report that includes the following elements: Executive Summary, Introduction, Population Trends, Local Government Tax Rates, Assets & Real Property Information, Operating Budget Summary, Fund Balances & Outstanding Debt, Municipal Program Summaries, and Legal Issue & Impediments. This information will be utilized to determine: 1) Potential Financial Savings; 2) Management Improvements; 3) Service Delivery Changes resulting from a local government re-organization; and 4) Alternatives to Dissolution. These items will be summarized in the Recommendations section of the Plan.

2. List of Project Partners & Roles

The Village of Morristown will be the lead and sole applicant for this project. The Town of Morristown will have a supporting role since dissolution will affect Town residents and governmental structure. The Village of Morristown will be supported through this process by its professional consultants (i.e., the Development Authority of the North Country and the Village attorney).

3. Project Chronology and History

The Village of Morristown residents have expressed interest in considering dissolution, especially given the recent dissolution of two neighboring communities – the Village of Edwards and the Village of Hermon. The Village of Morristown has observed the dissolution process unfold in other communities and realized that there are potential benefits to its community by exploring dissolution through a Dissolution Study. On October 11, 2016 the Village of Morristown Board of Trustees passed a resolution to apply for a New York State Local Government Efficiency Citizens Re-Organization Empowerment Grant (CREG) to complete a Dissolution Study.

Contract Number: # DOS01-T00025GG-3800000

#### 4. Anticipated Outcomes

The Village anticipates that this project will provide Village and Town residents with a detailed Dissolution Study and Plan that will ultimately lead to the implementation of changes in the governmental structure that will result in improved efficiencies and lower taxes. The Dissolution Study will evaluate existing conditions and identify potential financial savings, management improvements, and service delivery changes resulting from local government re-organization as well as other alternatives to dissolution that could result in improved efficiencies. The Report will contain recommended steps to complete the re-organization as well as other options to dissolution that could result in savings.

#### 5. Tasks & Budgeted Costs

The Village has entered into an agreement with the Development Authority of the North Country for a not to exceed amount of \$25,000. The Village has budgeted \$5,000 for legal services that will be provided by a contracted law firm. The Authority has a long-standing history of working with North Country communities and has experience working with the Villages of Hermon and Richville, and the Towns of Clifton and Fine; neighboring communities in St. Lawrence County that recently completed municipal consolidation studies with the Authority's assistance.

The Tasks involved in this project are outlined below:

- 1) Execute Professional Services Agreement (Complete)
- 2) Kickoff Meeting with Village, Town & Consultants
- 3) Establishment of Dissolution Study Committee (DSC)
- 4) Research & Data Gathering

During the research and data acquisition task, the consultant will gather information on finances, employees, assets, procedures for delivering services, etc. This information will be gathered and compiled to summarize for Village and Town stakeholder what presently exists. The information will serve as a baseline for examining future options, which will include dissolution of the Village and merging of operations with the Town.

- 5) Draft Report Preparation
- 6) Public Informational Meetings
- 7) Finalize Report

The DSC will draft a written plan. The Village anticipates that this project will provide Village and Town residents with a detailed Dissolution Study and Plan that will ultimately lead to the implementation of changes in the governmental structure that will result in improved efficiencies and lower taxes. The Dissolution Study will evaluate existing conditions and identify potential financial savings, management improvements, and service delivery changes resulting from local government re-organization as well as other alternatives to dissolution that could result in improved efficiencies. The Report will contain recommended steps to complete the re-organization as well as other options to dissolution that could result in savings. Comments will be incorporated from the draft Study and Plan into a final document that will be made publicly available.

#### 6. Description of Public Participation Process

This Study and Plan will be shared with the public to communicate the information and impacts that dissolution would have on Village and Town residents. The Village of Morristown has reached out to the Town of Morristown Board and communicated its intent on proceeding with a Dissolution Study. The Village plans to complete this process in a transparent manner and encourage public participation through the creating of a steering committee that includes Village and Town residents. To increase transparency the Village will host informational meetings, post information electronically, and provide hard copy documents that will be available at the Village and Town offices.

#### 7. How the Plan Will Meet the Objectives & Lead to Implementation

The Village of Morristown will meet its objectives for this project through the use of careful planning and public participation. The Village has an advantage that most communities do not – in that similarly sized nearby communities dissolved 12/31/12 and another will dissolve 12/31/16. The Authority has 35 years of experience assisting municipalities with comprehensive planning projects and has recently assisted four local governments with municipal consolidation studies. The Authority has the staff capacity and expertise to complete a sewer district consolidation study of this complexity.

#### 8. Challenges Associated with Implementation

The Challenges associated with implementation are innately related to people's resistance to change. New York State has many layers of government that other States do not. These levels of government have evolved over the last two hundred years and are entwined in the fabric of our communities. Dissolution evokes many emotions that have to be addressed through a carefully executed public process that presents data in an understandable format so stakeholders can make informed decisions about their future as a community. The public has many questions about how dissolution will affect them. The goal of this project is to answer those questions. To meet the objectives successfully, public participation will be critical to ensure that the questions are adequately addressed and the public has confidence in the process. The first step requires a detailed investigation of the current state of Village and Town operations. Gathering detailed information on existing processes will help ensure that the report accurately describes existing services and options that could be implemented to the current status quo of delivering services. Involving the public in the process through the development of a Steering Committee will ensure that key stakeholders provide input on the process and contribute to the Study. Informational meetings will provide additional opportunity for public participation and to communicate the progress as the Village works through the Dissolution Study.

**ATTACHMENT C - WORK PLAN**

***DETAIL***

**Objective**

1 Village of Morristown Dissolution Study

**Tasks**

1 Project Initiation - The Village shall meet with the Department of State prior to initiating work on this project to discuss goals, objectives, state requirements and expectations.

The Village Board of Trustees will appoint a Dissolution Study Committee (DSC) which shall be charged with developing a dissolution study, including fiscal impacts, provision of service, alternatives to dissolution, and other matters as identified. The study will provide information and serve as the foundation for a dissolution plan, if dissolution is recommended.

The Board of Trustees has selected the Development Authority of the North Country (Authority) to assist in the development of the dissolution study. The Village Board of Trustees entered into technical services contract for professional services related to this project.

The DSC will initiate the project with a kick-off meeting.

Schedule: Month 1

Deliverable: Kick-Off Meeting Summary.

Performance Measures

1 Kick-off Meeting Summary - Kick-off meeting summary will be submitted to NYSDOS.

**Tasks**

2 Existing Conditions - The Existing Conditions phase of the study is intended to provide a foundation for the project in the form of the Existing Conditions Report. The report will include a comprehensive list of village services, including information on a per-service basis which shall include budget allocation, employment allocation, per-resident cost, inventory of equipment, complexities of delivery of services, specialized knowledge of personnel and necessary capital investments as well as the opportunity for cost savings and/or service enhancement. Associated with this, the DSC shall conduct a review of the services provided by the Town (and County if appropriate) to identify which entity would most appropriately deliver the services currently provided by the Village.

The DSC shall develop a draft Existing Conditions Report and hold a public meeting to review the draft report.

Schedule: Months 1 through 6.

Performance Measures

1 Existing Conditions Report - Deliverable: Draft Existing Conditions Report submitted to NYSDOS for review and comment, and meeting summaries.

**Tasks**

**ATTACHMENT C - WORK PLAN**

***DETAIL***

3 Public Meeting #1 - The DSC will hold a public meeting to review the draft Existing Conditions Report.  
Schedule: Month 7.

Performance Measures

1 Public Meeting #1 Summary - Deliverable: Summary from public meeting, including documentation of comments and feedback received.

**Tasks**

4 Alternatives to Dissolution and Dissolution Plan - The DSC will develop possible alternatives, up to and including Village dissolution, that achieve cost savings and/or efficiencies Village operations in the form of the Alternatives Report. Possible alternatives may include shared services, functional dissolution, and reduction or elimination of services. These alternatives will include high-level cost impact projections. The Village will also make assumptions about what will happen if the Village restructures service delivery, setting in motion the process to determine the potential cost and user cost impacts. The DSC, using the information developed in the Existing Conditions Report and Alternatives Report, shall develop a Dissolution Plan that will allow for a refined fiscal impact model of the affected municipality.

Schedule: Months 8 and 9.

Performance Measures

1 Alternatives Report and Dissolution Plan - Deliverable: Draft Alternatives Report and draft Dissolution Plan submitted to NYS for review and comment.

**Tasks**

5 Public Meeting #2 - The DSC will hold a public meeting to review the draft Alternatives Report and draft Dissolution Plan.

Schedule: Month 10.

Performance Measures

1 Public Meeting #2 Summary - Deliverable: Summary from public meeting, including documentation of comments and feedback received.

**Tasks**

6 Final Dissolution Study - The Final Dissolution Study will include the items identified in the tasks above.

Schedule: Month 11.

Performance Measures

1 Final Reports and Plan - Deliverable: Final Existing Conditions Report, Alternatives Report, and Dissolution Plan.

**Tasks**

**ATTACHMENT C - WORK PLAN**

***DETAIL***

7 Board Accepts Study - The Village and Town Boards will accept the final study through action at a Village or Town Board Meeting.

Schedule: Month 11.

Performance Measures

1 Board Meeting Minutes - Deliverable: Certified copy of the meeting minutes which documents the Board's acceptance of the work of the committee.

**Tasks**

8 Public Hearing - The Village and Town boards and the DSC will hold a public hearing on the Final Dissolution Study. The DSC will transmit the final deliverable to the Village Board and the Town Board along with a summary of the Public Hearing.

Schedule: Month 12.

Performance Measures

1 Public Hearing Summary - Deliverable: Summary from public hearing, including documentation of comments and feedback received.

**Tasks**

9 Meetings, Administration and Project Close-Out - The grantee will actively manage the project and at the end, it shall initiate and complete project close-out with the Department of State.

Schedule: Ongoing to Month 12.

Performance Measures

1 Meetings, Administration and Project Close-Out - Deliverable: Copies of project correspondence to be provided to the Department of State. Reports prepared as required by the Department of State as well as supporting information required to execute payment requests and comply with funding requirements. Project close-out items completed to the satisfaction of the Department of State and submitted.