

Remain a Township Exploratory Committee
Pros and Cons of the Township

GENERAL ISSUES OF GOVERNANCE

THE OVERWHELMING PRO: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!"

It is the view of the study committee that many residents and neighbors are essentially satisfied with the current level of community and municipal services. As incidental evidence of the satisfaction is the high turn out of the Town Hall first meeting at Skyline High School. Secondly, the participation at regular community council meetings is low and tends to center on some one or few who have a specific grievance.

THE SECOND OVERWHELMING PRO: Economy of scale

The size of SL County government means many share the financial cost and benefits of municipal services. Moreover, the entire county is involved in paying for portions of governance and service which benefit the incorporated and non-incorporated areas. As one example, the mayor's office and council offices are part of the general fund supported by all county residents.

THE THIRD OVERWHELMING PRO: Known Quantity

The township model of governance and the collection and spending of revenues is a known commodity. The township with the four community councils and the County Mayor and Council is serving the citizens in a manner that is recognized and approved. The strong support for the township in the surveys speaks to the citizens wishes to remain and township and be served by the form of government they know.

Pro: The immediate access, through community councils and individual efforts, to the Mayor's Office, County Council, Sheriff, and Planning and Zoning eliminates a tier of government not available in incorporated cities.

Pro: The Township Model is a known governance entity with a history of taxes for the general fund and municipal services. The Township provides stability to what has been with no vagaries about transitions to other models and funding sources.

Pro: Each community council helps to establish the identity of our neighborhoods.

Pro: A growing sense of Millcreek Township is emerging as a community. The recent formation of the township has increased collaboration and communication across the four community councils.

Con: the community councils have no mechanism of coordinating the efforts of the township on larger issues of concern across community districts.

Pro: The township is a model of governance that requires and encourages strong grass roots organization. Small local councils offer a more accessible opportunity for interested citizens' involvement and voice.

Con: The township representation relies on volunteer efforts.

Pro: The community councils encourage a passion in volunteer efforts.

Con: Because of the nature of volunteerism, the tasks may at times be secondary to more pressing needs of family, career, and life.

The following three Pros all have a similar Con:

Pro one: Community councils allow for quick decisions and areas of preeminence.

Pro two: Community councils have a sense of authority over decision of planning and zoning.

Pro three: Community Councils have access to County governance in areas of services and policing.

The Con: Community councils have no decision-making authority. The councils are purely advisory boards to the decision-making powers within County government.

SPECIFIC MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Preamble: For all municipal services in the township we see an overriding pro in the Economy of Scale mentioned in the Governance section. All services are in part supported to some extent by the size of the township and those living in all areas of the County. For instance, our police functions are supported in part by municipal services taxes but also by taxes in the General Fund of the County.

Sheriff as municipal service:

Pro: The sheriff services across the county and provides for one jurisdiction for all police functions.

Pro: The meetings of community councils give a face and chance to meet one on one with members of the Sheriff's Office.

Pro: The local community contacts are highly responsive to community concerns.

Pro: The presence of Sheriff's representatives at neighborhood fairs, carnivals, etc adds a human touch to the police efforts.

Pro: The neighborhood narcotics unit was mentioned for its highly meritorious work.

Pro: The Sheriff is one of the few elected law enforcement leaders in the community. An elected leader is more responsive to the larger needs of the people served.

Pro: The Sheriff's Office has ready access to helicopter surveillance.

Con: When near jurisdictional boundaries, a level of confusion may exist as to who has authority.

Con: The perception that ticketing may be a revenue stream and driven by needs of the County rather than the interests of citizens.

Unified Fire Authority

Pro: The size of the UFA means more and better equipment than a single governing body can maintain.

Pro: The training of fire personnel appears excellent.

Pro: Several new fire stations are planned; one in particular will serve a large part of the Millcreek Township.

Pro: While a special assignment burden to some home owners, the fire hydrant upgrades mean more effective fire fighting tools.

Con: The expense of the hydrant upgrade was difficult for many citizens to absorb.

Roads:

Pro: The maintenance and re-paving projects of neighborhood streets appears to have a common sense plan. Each summer the streets are upgraded in some neighborhoods.

Pro: Snow removal is timely in our neighborhood streets. The snow removal people are also responsive to citizen complaints about snow “dams” and blockage in cul de sacs and dead end areas.

Con: We understand that some people feel speed bumps and “traffic calming” measures are disruptive. However, we know that these fixtures are a response to those living on the streets who think greater problems exist.

Garbage:

Pro: The collection of garbage and recycle is done in a timely manner.

Pro: The use of standardized “cans” is useful in the efficient method of collection.

Pro: The blue recycle container receives a lot of praise.

Pro: The department is responsive to missed garbage collecting and makes every effort to revisit the missed site.

Pro: Some glass recycle areas are available but more sites and better publicity about glass recycling is needed.

Con: There is a growing need for green recycling.

Con: The neighborhood clean day is a good idea but the dumpsters are left for too short a time and moved frequently.

Con: Salt Lake City’s neighborhood clean up program was praised but noted that it cost a good deal more than the County’s program.

Other services include Parks and Recreation, Library Services, Sewer, Water, Sidewalks, and Animal Services. While an individual may have a complaint from time to time, it was the view of the committee that these areas are fine and serving the township’s needs.