

Police Services Study

Spring Garden Township
York County, Pennsylvania
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Pennsylvania
Governor's Center for
Local Government Services

**Governor's Center for
Local Government Services**
Gerald R. Simpson
Police Peer Consultant



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Josh Shapiro, Governor

PA Department of Community & Economic Development
Rick Siger, Secretary
dced.pa.gov



Table of Contents

Forward	1
Executive Summary	2
Determining Proper Staffing Levels	3
Description of Six-Step IACP Formula	4
Findings	6
Current Organizational Chart – 20 Sworn.....	6
Law Enforcement Industry Benchmarks and Comparisons.....	7
Cost of Services and Budget	7
Per Capita Comparisons and Commentary	7
Percentage Comparison of Personnel and All-Other Expenses	9
Career Age of Police Department	10
Percentage of Police Budget	11
The Cost of an Officer or Price-Point Calculation.....	11
Thoughts and Recommendations.....	12
When an Organization Cannot be Financially Sustained	12
Dissolution	12
Reducing Staff and Services	13
Contracted Services.....	13
Consolidation of Services.....	13
Advantages of Regional Police Services	14
Disadvantages of Regional Police Services	16
The Regional Option - Cost Comparison.....	17
Commentary	17
Benchmark Comparisons and Commentary.....	19
Questions to Consider	20
Closing Commentary	21

Forward

This Spring Garden Township Police Department study was initiated at the request of the municipality on October 15, 2023, with the acceptance of a Letter of Intent (LOI) with the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Governor's Center for Local Government Services. The letter of intent was a two-part request to evaluate the financial sustainability of the police organization in its current business model. The second part of the study was to explore the costs of joining a regional department, along with identifying any challenges to that endeavor.

On October 17, 2023 an introductory meeting was hosted by DCED, which included Fred Chapman and Chief Gerald R. Simpson, along with the Township Manager, Marcy Krum-Tinsley and Finance Administrator, Luther Wike, Jr. Subsequently, the Articles of Agreement were signed and finalized between the parties.

Through the end of the year and into early 2024, Chief Simpson, Marcy Krum-Tinsley, and Luther Wikes, Jr. met virtually on numerous occasions to obtain financial data and other background information and clarify details for the study. A draft of the study was provided in early January of 2024 for the Spring Garden manager to review. This final production is a team-effort intended to offer the Spring Garden Township elected officials' accurate information pertaining to cost for services, as well as their options.

The Governor's Center for Local Government Services (GCLGS) of the Department of Community and Economic Development recognizes that there may be sensitive issues discussed in this study which may influence collective bargaining agreements and/or future negotiations with a community partner. The purpose of this management study is to take a holistic view of the financial impacts, to identify areas of concern, and to offer recommendations intended to maintain the level of services currently experienced. Additionally, the optimal method to use the community's tax dollars, for the benefit of both the residents and community, will be identified.

As mentioned, this study was completed by Chief Gerald R. Simpson under the GCLGS Management Peer-to-Peer Program. Chief Simpson has over 40 years of law enforcement which includes 11 years as a senior command staff officer for the City of Newark (DE) and 12 years as the Chief of Police for the Southern Chester County Regional Police Department. Chief Simpson is an honorable graduate from Cambridge University's Evidence Based Policing program, a graduate of the 234th Session of the FBI National Academy, and a 2022 and 2023 delegation member with the Senior Executive Leadership group to Scotland, Republic of Ireland, and Northern Ireland. He serves as the lead instructor for the Command & Leadership Academy in Chester County, PA and New Castle County, DE.

Executive Summary

The goal of this study is to address the question of financial sustainability for Spring Garden Township Police Department. Simply put, can the residents of Spring Garden Township, located in York County, Pennsylvania, sustain and afford the independent operations of a law enforcement organization for the next 30 to 40 years?

To understand the complexity of this question, an exploration of current staffing and operations must first be undertaken. Later in this study, other factors, both current and predictable, will be evaluated to understand the significant impacts of this question.

By the conclusion, the desired result is to offer a holistic view of the present and foreseeable future circumstances to empower the policymakers to address this question and prepare the organization to not only exist, but to thrive in its optimal model.

We identify a six-step process to calculate the adequate patrol staffing needs. These six factors are explained and outlined further in the study. It is worth acknowledging that there may be other environmental circumstances that influence the staffing needs. Some examples include population density, special environment conditions, collective bargaining agreement restrictions, and serious crime and traffic issues that directly impact the community. Further analysis of these environmental conditions may be necessary to determine if their impacts can be financially eased through other methods that do not include increasing sworn personnel. Examples of other methods for financial mitigation may include scheduling adjustments, reassignment to civilian staff, formation of other partnerships, and others.

The first requisite task of this study is to explore whether staffing is proper. We perform this task to establish the number of sworn staff required to adequately deliver around-the-clock, professional law enforcement and public safety services. Once this is determined, the next step is to address the appropriate number of support resources required to perform supervisory duties, followed by exploring the need for specialized functions, such as traffic, investigation, or community relation services.

Once the determination of police officers is established, the study will then analyze other budgetary factors and compare them to industry and regional benchmarks. Once this is completed, it is possible to conclude the estimated cost for police services by looking at past, current, and future trends.

It is worth noting that the Spring Garden Township Police Department is a professional and accredited police organization that delivers 24-hour professional services to its residents. When the costs for services are presented, the community can use the information towards the exploration of their meaning to the question of affordability and sustainability.

Determining Proper Staffing Levels

The formula used by the GCLGS to determine police personnel needs was developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). The procedure has been used and applied extensively throughout the Commonwealth by GCLGS and found to be very reliable. However, like most situations where an overall standard is applied to a unique and specific set of circumstances, it is subject to error and should not be considered infallible.

The IACP formula is applied on the assumption that 45 minutes is the time necessary to handle the average police incident. Serious crimes, especially those involving an arrest or prolonged investigation, take considerably longer, but minor incidents may take much less time to resolve. Therefore, the 45-minute number has been found to be a reliable average. It is recommended that only one-third of an officer's duty time be taken up with the response to incidents.

An officer needs time to handle equipment service, court appearances, and administrative duties, and additional time to conduct his or her preventative patrols to help ensure the safety and well-being of the entire community. This formula adds a "buffer factor" to account for those needs. It should be noted that an officer in a small department needs more administrative time since they are usually responsible for more record-keeping tasks than their counterparts in larger departments who have more support staff for those functions. Additionally, no factors are introduced into this formula to account for incidents needing or requiring more than one officer.

This formula recognizes that each officer is available for duty only 1,702 hours per year when regular days off, vacation, holidays, sick leave, training time, and court time are considered. This number can be influenced by several external factors and should be evaluated periodically to assure accuracy.¹ It is worth noting that in the Spring Garden Police Department 2022 Annual Report, the department recorded an average of 130 hours of training per officer. This amount of time has an impact on this buffer factor.

When applied, the IACP formula's calculations only determine the number of uniformed patrol officers who would be assigned "on the street" and needed to handle calls and incidents. It does not include administrators, supervisors, detectives, or any other required specialist positions that may be necessary to perform departmental duties. During the formation of a full-service, professional police agency, it is recommended to consider those facts when deciding on staffing levels and extra workforce for supervisory and investigative duties, even when officers also work on the street.

It is essential that when using this IACP formula, the number of incidents used for the calculations is accurate. The number presented in the formula is the industry average; 550 incidents per 1000 residents. The Department's 2022 data is available and found in the 2022 Annual Report, which indicates an average of 518 incidents per 1000 residents. Below is the description of the six-step process for using the IACP formula.

¹ Other studies have used a higher factor, 2.2 or 2.6, due to having negative schedule, CBA, or length of career influences.

Description of Six-Step IACP Formula

- ***Step 1 – Estimated Population***

The 2022 population of Spring Garden Township is 13,686. This does not account for increases in population during daytime business activities or undocumented residents living within the community.

- ***Step 2 – Estimated Incidents***

Complaints or incidents include all forms of police activity where an officer responded to and took official action, including filing an official report. Incidents do not include situations where information was given over the telephone, delivering messages, handling internal police matters, routine patrols, etc. An incident number would be assigned in most cases. An official report would be filed and entered into the department's computerized records management system by the officer after the incident has been completed. In this step, we use the standard rate of 550 per 1,000 residents.

- ***Step 3 – Time Factor on Complaints***

It is generally accepted that 45 minutes is *the average time* required to handle a police incident. Multiply the total number of incidents by 0.75 (45 minutes).

- ***Step 4 – Time Buffer for Patrol***

General experience has shown that about one-third of an officer's time should be spent on handling service requests. Other requirements that include servicing police vehicles and equipment, personal relief, meal breaks, and other administrative duties must be considered. Time must also be allotted for preventative patrol. This factor is more impactful in smaller police organizations that have limited administrative support personnel. To account for this time buffer, we multiply by three for the buffering factor and time needed for preventive patrol.

- ***Step 5 – Establishing Staffing Hours***

To determine the number of patrol units, the formula identifies the number of calendar days as 365, which is then multiplied by the number of hours (8) in a single shift. This calculation equals 2,920 hours. This number is then divided into the total number of complaints established in Step 4. This exercise in the formula does not consider the total number of officers needed for staff supervisory or specialized positions in the organization.

- ***Step 6 – Adjusted Staffing Hours***

Once the total available hours of the average patrol officer are established, the formula must consider the officer's availability. Figure 1 starts with the total staffing hours needed, 2,920, followed by a deduction process of the hours the officer would not be available for duty. It

should be noted that the hours deducted below are estimates. There are many factors that may influence the hours of availability, which can result in a higher number of needed patrol units.

The total number of hours available is 1,702, which is divided by 1,000. This identifies that there is a need of 1.702 police officers to staff each patrol unit.

Availability Factor	Annual Hours
Officer availability before leave impacts	2,920
Regular Days Off (104/year) or (2/a week)	-832
Vacation Leave (19/year)	-152
Holidays & Personal Days (15/year)	-120
Court Days (5/year)	-40
Training (5/year)	-40
Sick/Injury (2.25/year)	-18
Miscellaneous Leave (2/year)	-16
Total	-1218
Officer availability post leave impacts	1,702

**It should be noted that influences such as an aging department, training mandates, scheduling factors, and collective bargaining agreements directly impact staffing availability and thus the reliability of the factor presented in this formula.*

Figure 1. Availability Factor Using Benchmark for Average Leave Factors and Liabilities

	CATEGORY	IACP	Spring Garden
STEP #1	Population (2022 Estimates)	13,683	
STEP #2	Estimated Incidents; (X 550 per 1,000 residents / 13.68 x 550)	7,526	
STEP #3	Time Spent on Incidents; 45 Minutes Avg. (Multiply Above by .75)	5645	
STEP #4	Time Buffer for Patrol; (Multiply Above X 3)	16,934	
STEP #5	Staffing Hours (Divide by 2920)	6	
STEP #6	Adjusted Availability Hours (Multiply Above by 1.702)	10.22	
	PATROL OFFICERS REQUIRED	11	12
	Chief of Police	1	1
	Command Staff	1	0
	Sergeants - 1 st Line Supervision	4	5
	Detective/Traffic/Special Services Personnel	2	2
	Clerical Staff	2	4
	TOTAL POLICE PERSONNEL RECOMMENDED	19	20

Figure 2. Staffing Levels for the Spring Garden Township Police Department

Findings

To maintain a professional police department, the staffing analysis for this study identifies a minimum of 11 police units which would be assigned to the patrol operations division.

An additional staff to support the operations division identifies the need for eight police units which includes one or more of the following, one Chief of Police, one Command Staff officer, four first-line supervisors, and two specialized officers.

According to the above results, the Spring Garden Township is overstaffed by one position. However, the patrol division uses a 12-hour schedule. Based on that factor, which requires the even distribution of personnel, the minimum number of staff required for the operation of four patrol platoons is 12. This does not include the additional need for four, first-line supervisors assigned to each patrol platoon.

The recommendation to adequately staff the patrol is 16 sworn officers, which according to the organizational is the operational standard.

Current Organizational Chart – 20 Sworn

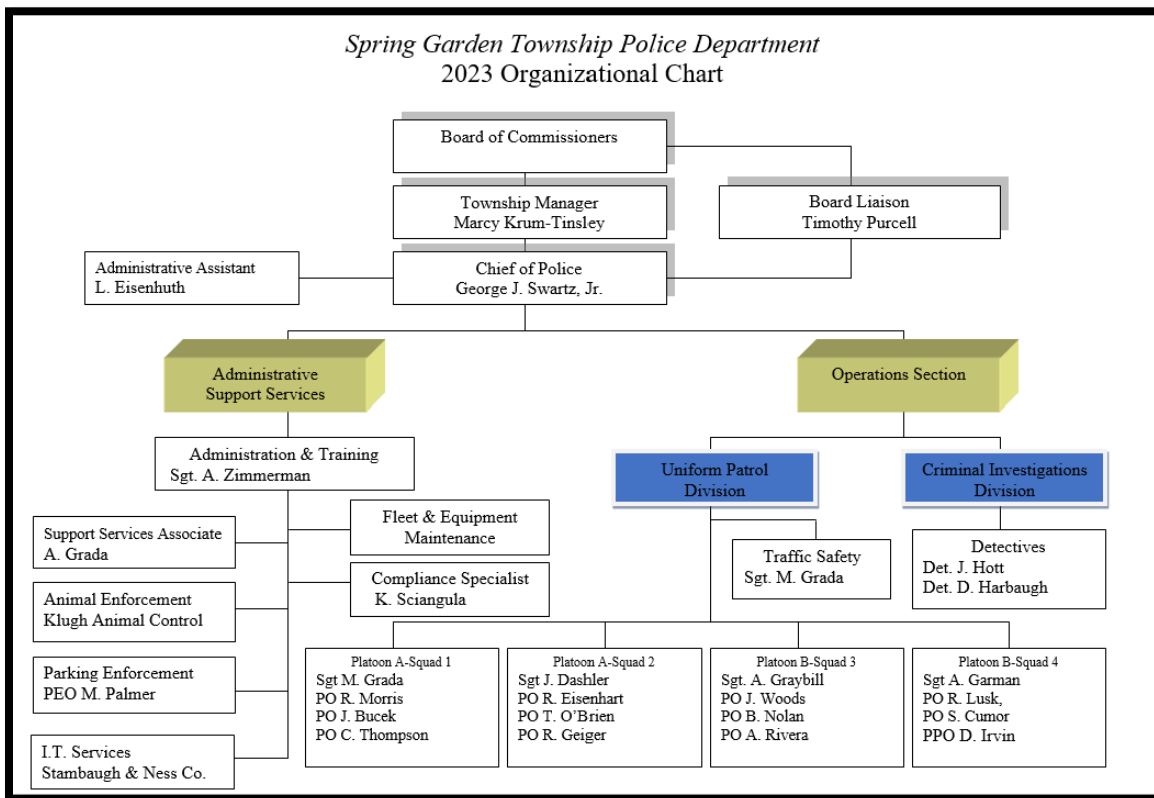


Figure 3. Spring Garden Police Department's 2023 Organizational Chart

Law Enforcement Industry Benchmarks and Comparisons

Cost of Services and Budget

It is common practice to use industry benchmarks and local comparisons to evaluate and measure the costs for the operation of a professional policing operation. The reader should accept that the adage, “you get what you pay for” is sadly a very real factor for American policing. There are many examples across the Nation where funding was not properly directed, and the results have had tragic results for the community, the public, the organization, and the individual police officer.

As noted earlier, on paper the Spring Garden Township Police Department is an accredited 24-hour professional police organization. That is not to say there is no room for improvement. One of the glaring deficiencies is a command staff level officer to work in unison with the Chief of Police and a career-development program to address succession. This will increase expenses but the department has the advantage of grooming “qualified” leadership within the organization, which will eventually lead to a smooth transition. Of course, it must be a qualified person who has demonstrated a pattern of competency and character. Otherwise, the path forward should be the exploration of external options, or a change in the business model.

Below are the industry benchmarks pertaining to the cost of services and budgeting that will be addressed:

- **Per-Capita:** The cost per resident for police services.
- **Percentage of Personnel Costs:** The standard is 85% to 90%. Higher percentages point to something within the internal environment being askew.
- **Percentage of the Police Budget:** While there is no standard, empirical evidence points towards an economically healthy range of the police budget being between 33% and 40%. Higher percentages are an indicator that should direct the community towards a deeper analysis.
- **Price-point:** This is a basic approach attempting to bring clarity to the cost for each sworn position. Identifying this cost factor can help the reader immediately place an average financial cost to the position while trying to evaluate the intrinsic value. In other words, if adding a position is the question, the use of the price-point figure can identify the impacts.

Per Capita Comparisons and Commentary

The first industry benchmark used to better understand police expenses and to potentially identify red flags is per capita comparison. The per capita cost is simply the amount each resident must pay to sustain the police department’s budget. For example, if the police department budget is \$100,000 and there are 1,000 residents, then the per capita cost is \$100 per resident. Communities

often use a per capita cost as a means for comparing expenses to their neighbors or to the whole state.

Per capita cost for Spring Garden Township is computed by dividing the number of residents living in the Township, 13,686², into the total police department budget, which is \$4,213,230³. In 2023, the per capita expense for each resident is \$307.84.

As shown in Figure 4., the average per capita cost in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is \$303⁴. It is worth noting that this figure is from a 2017 study. It is fair to say that the per capita amount for Commonwealth residents has increased since 2017. Unfortunately, there is no updated information available for the reader.

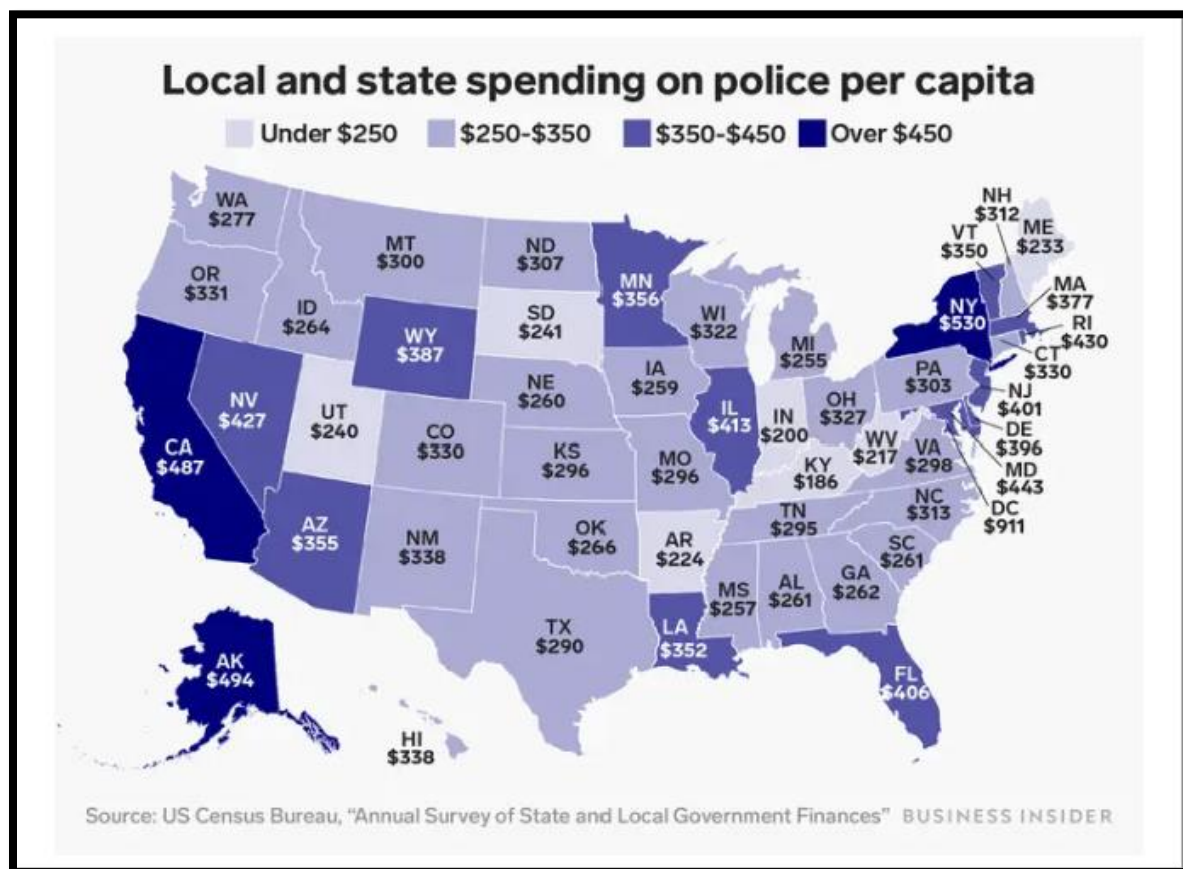


Figure 4. Local and State Police Spending, Per Capita

In 2023, Spring Garden Township’s per capita amount is within an acceptable range when compared to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania but is greater than all other York County Police Services (Figure 5.). The reader should take into consideration that the price comparison does not equate to the level of professional services provided by these other organizations. Additionally,

² U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Spring Garden Township, York County, Pennsylvania

³ Provided by Spring Garden Township Management and Finance & Budget dated 2024.

⁴ <https://www.cato.org/blog/spending-police-state>

costs do not equal the delivery of professional policing service levels and communities should factor in the costs for the other emergency services when it calculates its total. According to the Spring Garden Township’s 2024 budget, 54% of all costs are dedicated to public safety⁵. When a community clearly understands the costs associated with public safety, the question of sustainability and funding options should come into focus.

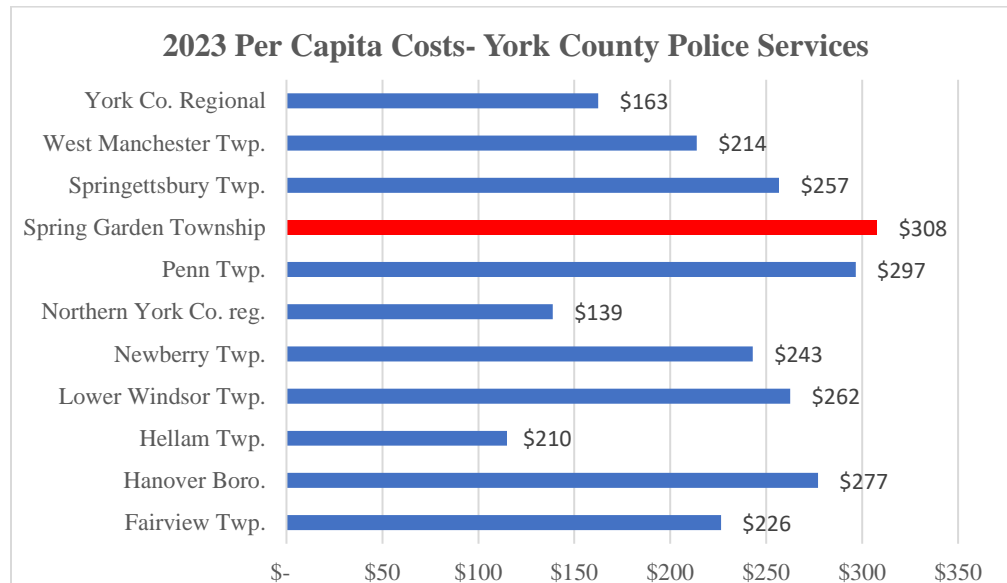


Figure 5. York County Police Services Per Capita Costs

Percentage Comparison of Personnel and All-Other Expenses

The second evaluation is the percentage of personnel costs. The industry benchmark used to reveal potential red flags is the percentage comparison between personnel expenses, which includes wages, benefits, etc., and the remaining categories referred to as “all other” expenses.

It is cited by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)⁶, that this indicator is important to monitor. Doing so can help identify numerous trends or questions about the police department’s financial health or other factors, such as staffing, career age trends, and collective bargaining impacts.

It is worth noting that the ratio, which was once an 85% to 15% standard between personnel and all other expenses, has risen in recent years. No evidence for this rise is known for certain but it is reasonable to assume that personnel expenses have risen and therefore, caused this increase. Several factors have contributed to this condition, such as competitive wage and benefits packages, the advancing career age, greater professional qualifications, unfunded legal mandates, etc.

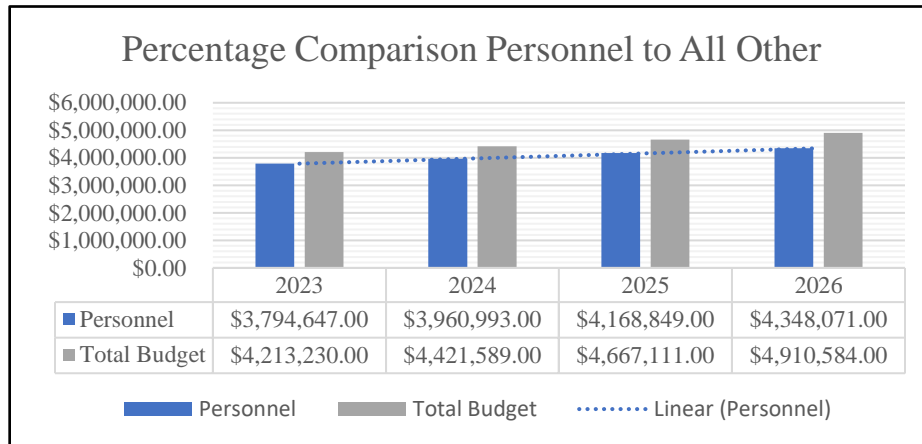
The current financial standard is approximately 90% of a police department’s budget being directed to personnel expenses. The remaining 10% is for all other expenses that remain. For

⁵ 2024 General Fund Budget Narrative.

⁶ https://www.policeforum.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=655:trendingjuly25&catid=20:site-content

example, if a budget is \$100,000, then \$90,000 is for personnel expenses. This is accepted as the benchmark for police budgeting expectations.

Figure 6. shows the percentage comparisons for the Spring Garden Township Police Department from 2023 through the estimated budgets into 2026.



Year	Personnel %	All Other %
2023	90.10%	9.90%
2024	89.58%	10.42%
2025	89.32%	10.68%
2026	88.54%	11.46%

Figure 6. Percentage Comparisons for Spring Garden Township Police Department by Year

Career Age of Police Department

As mentioned above, increased expenses can be related to an advanced career age of sworn personnel who are at the top of the wage scale. However, seasoned personnel are a tremendous advantage to have in the organization. The knowledge, skills, and abilities these officers bring to an organization are invaluable. Figure 7. shows that by 2026, 47% of the Spring Garden Township sworn personnel will be in the latter half of their career. The proverbial bubble is about to burst. While wages may decrease from the top-end of the scale to the entry-level, this event will bring with it the challenges of competitive recruitment, training, equipping, and the loss of legacy information.

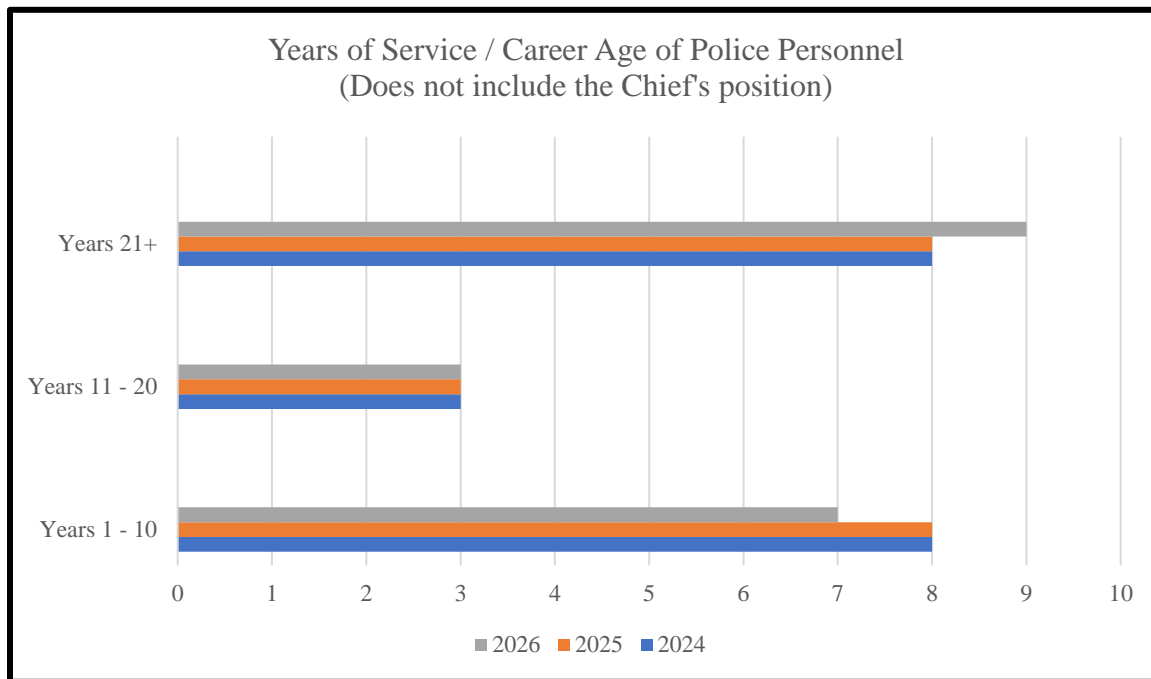


Figure 7. Demographics of Spring Garden Township Police Personnel

Percentage of Police Budget

Across the Commonwealth and the Nation, communities use their revenue towards their priorities and needs, along with having contrasting levels of services. For that reason, it is impossible to identify a standard or the industry benchmark. It is for the policy maker to determine their community's need and the reasonable percentage of the budget allocated towards delivering the expected level of emergency services.

A fiscally healthy range of percentages dedicated towards policing operations is between 33% and 40% of the community's total budget. Anything outside the range may be reason for the community to explore a greater analysis as to identify the reason behind it.

The 2024 percentage of the police department's budget of Spring Garden Township's General Fund is 44%.

The Cost of an Officer or Price-Point Calculation

For the same reasons as the percentage of police budget, there is no standard for average cost of an officer. A community's cost for police services varies greatly for several reasons. However, identifying this allows for the immediate identification of cost per sworn employee.

To determine the cost, one divides the total number of all sworn personnel into the annual budget before revenue and deductions. The cost of an employee is well beyond the salary. This allows the policy maker to immediately understand the actual financial impact of a sworn police position.

For 2023, the price-point cost was \$210,662 for a sworn officer. By 2026, this number will increase by 17% to \$245,530. It is for the policy maker to determine whether the community can afford this forecasted increase and if it is sustainable.

Thoughts and Recommendations

Below are a few questions the policy makers should consider while determining sustainability. With as much objectivity as possible, the policy maker should consider:

- Are the residents of Spring Garden Township committed to the sustainability of cost liabilities to afford their own police department? If the answer is yes, answer the next questions:
 - Are there other challenges in the community that will negatively impact that decision?
 - To assist with succession planning, do the policy makers support the addition of a command staff officer?
 - To enhance employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities, do the policy makers support the creation of a career-development program?
 - Are the policy makers committed to the level of service being offered?
 - To address shortfalls, do the elected officials have the willpower to make tough decisions, such as, reduce staffing, raise taxes, ask for collective bargaining givebacks, etc.?
 - Is the organization sustainable for 25 years or more?
 - *If not, should Spring Garden Township join a partnership?*

When an Organization Cannot be Financially Sustained

Dissolution

Townships of the first class are not required to provide local police services.⁷ Communities that find that their financial condition is unsustainable, may dissolve their police operations. There is no information or evidence to indicate this is Spring Garden Township's desire or financial condition.

⁷ Act of Jun. 24, 1931, P.L. 1206, No. 331 Cl. 73 - "FIRST CLASS TOWNSHIP CODE, THE" (state.pa.us)

Reducing Staff and Services

Communities in financial hardship with police organizations may also consider reinventing their policing model. This can effectuate a lower overall cost, and with that, a reduction in police services. One does not happen without the other.

Contracted Services

To maintain some level of local police services or to generate revenue, the community may consider purchasing or selling contracted law enforcement services. This model works for some communities who are simply interested in paying a fixed fee for services, without getting into the maintenance of a police organization.

Conversely, some communities sell their police services with a built-in profit margin which is used to financially maintain their independent operation.

For some communities, the idea of a “contract” is better because it may be less complicated than the “partnership” regional police departments are formed under. The policy maker should understand that what comes with the less complicated relationship is a limited voice in the vision and mission of the policing services. Communities engaging in this model get the scope of services paid for, without the ability to direct how it is delivered.

Consolidation of Services

Consolidation of policing services, referred to as the regional model, is authorized by law as follows:

- Legal Authority for Police Consolidation:

Section 5 of Article IX of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania serves as the legal and constitutional basis for consolidation of police services in the state. Section 5 of Article IX states: A municipality by act of its governing body may, or upon being required by initiative and referendum in the area affected shall, cooperate or agree in the exercise of any function, power or responsibility with or delegate or transfer any function, power or responsibility to, one or more other governmental units including other municipalities or districts, the federal government, any other state or its governmental units, or any newly created governmental unit. Act 180, as passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor on 7/12/76, serves as the enabling legislation that makes cooperation of public services in the Commonwealth a legal process. Contained in the Act are the provisions for initiating the cooperation and identification of the necessary contents of the agreement. Section 1202, clause 34 and 35 of the Borough Code; Section 1502, clause 53 and 54 of the First-Class Township Code; and Section 702, clause 40 of the Second-Class Township Code also bestow authority upon municipal governments to enter into agreements for the purpose of intergovernmental cooperation.

Apart from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there are approximately five regional police departments in four other states. There are 137 municipalities that have partnered to form 39 Regional Police Departments in 27 counties across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The evidence supports regional policing as a model for delivering public safety services.

In 2013, Scotland dissolved their nine individual policing services to recreate a regional organization which is known as Police Scotland. Police Scotland is the “national” example of a regional policing service that was also driven by the question of sustainability. Simply put, it was not sustainable as originally designed. The leaders realized that Scotland’s policing model needed to be streamlined and designed to reduce inefficiencies. Today, Police Scotland is a thriving law enforcement and public safety organization. Police Scotland is an excellent example of using the “economy to scale” model.

- Economy to Scale Model
 - Economies of scale are cost advantages companies experience when production becomes efficient, as costs can be spread over a larger amount of goods.
 - A business's size is related to whether it can achieve an economy of scale—larger companies will have more cost savings and higher production levels.
 - Economies of scale can be both internal and external. Internal economies are caused by factors within a single company, while external economies affect the entire industry⁸.

Advantages of Regional Police Services

The general advantages of, and some of the more common arguments for, regional police services are described below. Similar issues arise regardless of the way the agencies may be developed, the geographic conditions, or the special composition of the area. Improvement in the uniformity and consistency of the enforcement of police regulations and local law governing police practices and performance often vary from community to community. The implementation of the regional police department requires the establishment of uniform policies, practices, and regulations. The resulting standardization of law enforcement reduces citizen dissatisfaction and encourages voluntary compliance with the law.

One of the greatest improvements is the coordination of law enforcement services. Often, criminal investigations and law enforcement activities are limited by jurisdictional boundaries which are compounded by limited communication between jurisdictions. In a regional police department, geographic boundaries are extended, permitting police officers to focus activity on the source of the disorder, rather than simply addressing the symptoms. Under central leadership and direction, with uniformity of purpose, procedure, record-keeping, and policy, a regional department

⁸ <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/economiesofscale>

eliminates duplication of services and competition between local departments. This results in a more cost-effective and efficient use of limited public funds.

Improvements can also be experienced with recruitment efforts, distribution, and deployment of police personnel; recent statutory requirements regarding the selection, eligibility criteria, initial training, and annual certification of police officers have resulted in increased professionalism in the field. This has consequently resulted in higher wages, increased training costs, and competition between various law enforcement agencies in the recruitment of quality personnel. Smaller agencies, offering lower salaries and fewer incentives, are often at a disadvantage in the recruitment and retention of quality officers. Consolidation of services across a broader tax base often results in improved recruitment ability. Law enforcement services should be distributed and deployed based upon justified demand for services. Small departments do not maintain the staffing levels required to meet demands. Regional departments have greater flexibility in the scheduling and distribution of officers necessary to meet service demands, due to increased staffing levels. Where municipalities may currently not be able to provide any local police services or part-time services at best, consolidation may permit several local governments to employ full-time police service through cooperative financing.

Improvements in training and personnel efficiency providing proper and necessary police training is mandatory pursuant to Act 120, the Municipal Police Officer Education and Training Law. Annual in-service training includes a minimum of 16 hours of classroom study, annual qualification with all weapons, CPR and first aid, deadly force and use of force training, and training in hazardous materials operations. At the current time, the minimum time required for training is nearly 40 hours per officer, per year. Small departments find it difficult to meet training requirements and still maintain appropriate staffing levels. When sending an officer for training it often means not providing police patrol during certain periods of the day or paying overtime wages to cover shifts. Officers who do not meet minimum training requirements will be decertified as police officers. Any arrests made by such officers are invalid and municipalities that choose to ignore these provisions may find themselves in court, defending costly litigation.

Consolidation often means that more personnel will be available to attend needed training. In many cases, local officers can be certified as instructors, thereby reducing the need to send officers away from the department for training. In addition, vacations, losses due to sick time and work-related injury, court appearances, and personal days erode the ability of any department to properly staff its patrol and investigative services. Consolidation allows more flexibility in scheduling for such circumstances.

The economy to scale model absorbs challenges with greater ease. Regional departments also experience an improved management and supervision system, which provides for career development and career ascension. In many small police departments, the chief of police and supervisory officers often function in the capacity of patrol officer, with little time remaining for administration and supervision. They are unable to devote the necessary time to develop and maintain sound management systems. Consolidated departments, depending on size, may permit

the chief of police to become a full-time manager, improving the overall administrative function of the department. Consolidated departments are generally better able to offer salaries and benefit packages, which attract high-caliber candidates for the position of chief. Increased efficiency in police administration, management, and supervision is an example of one of many positive outcomes from police consolidation or regionalization.

Regionalization of any public-sector service usually results in decreased cost to the individual municipalities involved if the municipality already provides that service. This is especially true in law enforcement and police services. There are established minimum costs involved in the development and continued funding of any police department. These costs are centered in the police facility, communications, vehicle fleet, office equipment, records system, and administrative services. There are usually many instances where closely adjoining departments duplicate infrastructure and support services. The duplication of support personnel is also a major consideration. Consolidation results in decreased individual costs by reducing duplication of infrastructure and support requirements within the service area. A study previously conducted by the former Department of Community Affairs, now DCED, has indicated nine out of ten situations and, if properly managed, regional departments save an average of 25% when compared to traditional police departments.

Disadvantages of Regional Police Services

Arguments against consolidation of municipal police services are basically the same. Similar issues arise regardless of the way the agencies may develop the geographic conditions or the special composition of the area.

Police officers in small departments often perform menial duties that in larger departments are assigned elsewhere. These duties are generally traditional in many communities and were assigned to the police department by default, as there was no one else available at the time to carry out these duties. These miscellaneous duties are still very much a part of the everyday job of a local police officer. Running errands, delivering documents, turning on lights, unlocking doors for special occasions, flood watches, parking meter enforcement and repair, school crossing duties, escorts for funerals, and issuing permits and licenses are some of the extra tasks “inherited” by local law enforcement officers. Typically, when consolidation occurs, the police department discontinues many of these tasks to maximize their officers for patrols, crime prevention, traffic enforcement, and more police-oriented functions.

With the loss of local control as found in a traditional law enforcement situation, the entire governing body is often directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the police agency. Regional police departments are governed by a police commission, which provides broad policy guidance to an administrative chief of police, who is directly responsible for all day-to-day operations of the department. The chief of police has broad authority and responsibility and is

accountable to the commission. The commission consists of an established number of representatives from each participating community. Direct political and personal control over the department is considerably reduced.

An often cited disadvantage is the potential for the loss of citizen contact. There may be concerns that the citizens of a participating community will not have as close a relationship with the members of a regional police department as they do with their “own” officers. If this situation develops, it will be temporary and will exist only until the police officer becomes acquainted with their “new” area. Furthermore, many of the police officers employed in a regional police department will have previously answered calls for service, provided back-up, or participated in community functions in each of the other municipalities. With this being the situation now in these multiple communities, the transition to a regional department should proceed easily and with no major concerns for the officers or the citizens.

Occasionally cited, is the loss of position by the members of the local police department. Current chiefs and elected officials may initially fear this loss of position if regionalization efforts prevail. While it is certainly true that every current chief can’t retain the top position in the consolidated department and that some officers may choose not to participate in the new venture, regionalization is not intended to eliminate individual employment positions. Such concerns can be addressed through negotiations and discussion. In this arrangement, however, it is not recommended that any full-time positions be eliminated. All current positions should be retained and utilized in the newly structured regional department.

The Regional Option - Cost Comparison

Commentary

Within the past six months, Spring Garden Township policy makers have been presented with two options to join, as a full member, an existing regional police department. If the policy makers agree to this action, the footprint for one of these departments will expand, along with its influence over public safety in York County.

This study will not offer a recommendation on which one to join. However, the study will present questions in its conclusion that may guide the policy maker to identify a better fit for their community.

Disclaimer: These regional police departments have not offered updated proposals for membership and should not be used as an absolute cost. However, the data offered allows for estimated costs over the same period as Spring Garden Township’s projections. These charts are presented to demonstrate the logic of the economy to scale model, along with the cost differences between maintaining the independent operation or joining a regional police department. The cost

difference between the regional departments is negligible. This should not be the decision point for which regional department to join.

Figures 8 and 9 below capture estimates to compare Spring Garden Township's forecasted expenses, against the initial proposals offered by the York County Regional Police Department and the Northern York Regional Police Department, with Figure 8

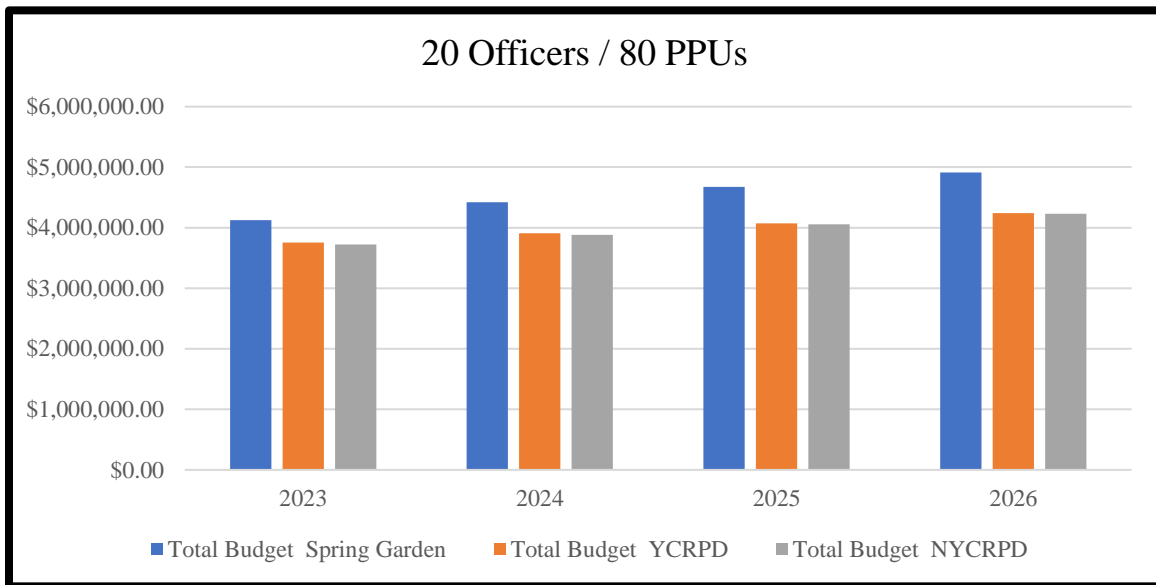


Figure 8. Regional Cost Comparison for 20 Officers/80 PPU's in Spring Garden Township

Why start at the scale of the current business model? If the economy to scale is to be the adopted business model, then by that philosophy, a focus must be to first evaluate the scale of services needed. The first thing to determine is the adequate staffing level needed to deliver services in the regional model, which requires a cost estimation. As show in Figure 9 and detailed in Figure 10, once estimated, the savings are significant for the staffing level of 16 officers, compared to the 20 in Figure 8.

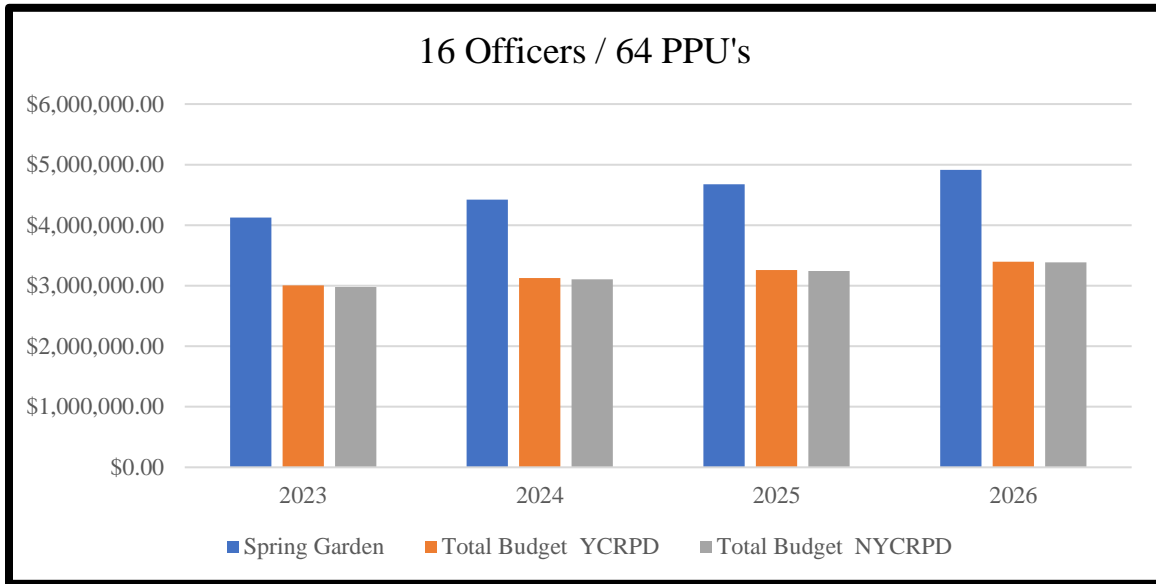


Figure 9. Regional Cost Comparison for 16 Officers/64 PPU's in Spring Garden Township

Benchmark Comparisons and Commentary

Below are the annual budget estimates for the years 2023 through 2026. As noted earlier, the numbers for the regional police departments are not actual proposals. However, they serve as an accurate illustration to bring into focus the cost differences.

Total Budget – 20 Police Officers/80 PPUs			
	Spring Garden	YCRPD	NYCRPD
2023	\$4,123,230.00	\$3,756,542.00	\$3,725,306.00
2024	\$4,421,589.00	\$3,907,179.00	\$3,881,118.00
2025	\$4,677,111.00	\$4,074,016.00	\$4,054,113.00
2026	\$4,910,584.00	\$4,242,680.00	\$4,229,256.00
Per Capita	\$331.10	\$291.92	\$290.26
Total Budget – 16 Police Officers/64 PPUs			
	Spring Garden	YCRPD	NYCRPD
2023	\$4,123,230.00	\$3,005,234.00	\$2,980,245.00
2024	\$4,421,589.00	\$3,125,743.00	\$3,104,894.00
2025	\$4,677,111.00	\$3,259,212.00	\$3,243,290.00
2026	\$4,910,584.00	\$3,394,144.00	\$3,383,405.00
Per Capita	\$331.10	\$233.53	\$232.21
Price Point	\$226,503.00	\$199,131.00	\$198,447.00

Figure 10. Regional Budget Estimate for 2023-2026 (20 vs. 16 Police Officers)

Additionally, the chart offers a glance at the average per capita costs over a four-year period. Using a “scaled model”, there is the possibility of an estimated 42% cost reduction for policing services. Unlikely, but even if the scale requires the same number of personnel, the reduction to the per capita is 14%.

Finally, the price point costs are offered at the bottom of the graph. This number can aid the policy maker’s comprehension of the cost estimation for each sworn employee.

Questions to Consider

1. Based on the data, is the current operation of the Spring Garden Township Police Department sustainable?
 - a. If yes, answer questions 2 through 5.
 - b. If not, move on to questions 6 through 12.
2. Do you support creating a career development program?
3. Do you support creating a command staff position in the organization which is aimed at building a succession plan?
4. How will you reduce costs?
 - a. Are you willing to reduce staffing - either sworn or civilian?
 - b. Are you willing to reduce the level of delivery?
5. To reduce costs, would you consider asking for givebacks from the police association?
 - a. Once you are convinced of your answers go back to question #1 and ask it again?
6. Do the start-up expenses to join a regional police department significantly reduce the saving for the partnership?
7. Are there hidden costs to level up current personnel into a new collective bargaining agreement?
8. Are there boundaries in the partnership which would limit oversight and/or management of the regional police department?
9. Is there an ability to influence or correct the organization when necessary?
10. Can you identify and understand if there are any policing culture influences that may challenge your community? Explore the iceberg...what you see, as compared to what is below the waterline.

11. Do you trust the character and leadership of the regional departments? Is their philosophy for delivering police services consistent with yours?
12. Are there public examples offering confidence for the policy maker to identify which regional police departments are professional and most capable of being the best fit for the residents of Spring Garden Township?

Closing Commentary

Professional policing services are expensive. It is even more expensive when it is not performed at the level required and expected by your community and the public service industry shows no signs of immediate financial stabilization.

The residents of Spring Garden Township, the business community, and the visitors, need a local police department. A regional police department can accomplish that mission. The change will bring challenges, which is why it is critical to interview the leaders of the regional police organizations and their customers to understand which is the best fit for Spring Garden Township's residents.

If the policy makers decide to continue with independent operations, there must be a full understanding and acceptance to support all the financial challenges for the organization to thrive.

The answer should not be the reduction of services. Reduction in any form will predictably create internal issues for the police department and external challenges for the community, which in turn may lead to additional waste.

In closing, this report attempts to provoke thought towards the challenge. It cannot address every unanticipated scenario or question that may arise from the analysis. A meeting to address the unanswered questions is always offered and welcomed by the team from the Department of Community and Economic Development who helped develop this study.