

Twps., city's police mull united force

Idea for consolidated police force in and around York city came from Metro-York.

By TERESA ANN BOECKEL
Daily Record/Sunday News
York Daily Record/Sunday News

Article Last Updated: 09/13/2007 09:26:46 AM EDT

At bottom: · [AT A GLANCE](#) · [ABOUT THE REPORT](#)

Sep 13, 2007 — Some people believe drugs are a city crime, but it's a problem that has spread far beyond the city's borders.

In Springettsbury Township, Police Chief David Eshbach said, shoplifting is a problem and criminals often sell the goods or trade them for drugs.

"Crime is kind of like a cancer," he said. "It spreads."

Springettsbury's neighbor, York Area Regional Police, saw the number of robberies it responded to in 2006 triple.

Crime is increasing countywide and police departments are being stretched thin, York Area Regional Police Chief Tom Gross said.

That's why Eshbach and Gross support taking a look at a consolidated police department in and around the York city.

York city and West Manchester, Spring Garden, Springettsbury and York townships are involved in discussions about the possible consolidation.

The recommendation for it came from Metro-York, a YorkCounts organization that looks for regional solutions to problems across the county.

James W. DeBord, director of YorkCounts, said the idea of consolidated police department moved forward faster because of the interest in it.

"I think the most exciting thing is the fact that there seems to be no timidity and no concern on the part of the people working on it that they've got to be territorial, that they've got to guard their political flank," said Eric Menzer, co-chairman of Metro-York. "They seem to be focused on what is the best solution to the problem."

Gross and Eshbach said they see some of the positives that a consolidated police department would bring. Departments already share some resources such as the county forensic and tactical teams, Gross said.

A consolidated department would improve upon that and allow police department to put their assets where they would be most effective, the chiefs said.

It would allow officers to specialize in areas, improve communications and give residents a bigger bang for their buck, they said.

One thing Metro-York wants to find is a different funding system for a consolidated police department, Bill Simpson, the organization's co-chairman said.

Some communities have withdrawn from regional police departments because they were

dissatisfied with the service.

Gross said a feasibility study would likely have to be done in the future.

If people never think or talk about it, "it's never going to happen," Eshbach said.

AT A GLANCE

The municipalities involved in discussions about a consolidated police force are York city and West Manchester, Spring Garden, Springettsbury and York townships.

[top](#)

ABOUT THE REPORT

Metro-York's Nov. 15 report will include the following list of recommendations on handling the municipal and educational problems:

- Conduct comprehensive, regional land planning for Metro-York
- Address the way people are taxed in the Metro-York region
- Modernize York County government through its form and structure
- Establish a consolidated, regional Metro-York police department
- Attack the high-school dropout rate in the York City School District.
- Try to reverse the drain of middle income families out of the city school system
- Give York City School District students a choice about where they attend school
- Address the stress that suburban schools are seeing, such as growth and increased taxes

[top](#)

Close Window

Send To Printer