



michigan suburbs alliance

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, January 17, 2006

Contact: Conan Smith

m. (734) 649-2992

o. (248) 546-2380

conan@suburbsalliance.org

**LOCAL LEADERS LEARNING TO SHARE  
RESOURCES, SAVE MONEY**

*Workshop will focus on how to jointly provide fire service*

FERNDALE – City officials, firefighters and union representatives will learn how to initiate and maintain fire service partnerships this week at the Michigan Suburbs Alliance’s workshop on Fire Service Collaboration. The workshop will address the internal and external preparations, financial considerations, and marketing tactics that joint service provision necessitates, as well as general steps to ensuring success.

The free, half day workshop is the first in the Creating Collaborative Communities Workshop Series, which includes at least two additional workshops that will address police service and public works. These workshops will take place in the spring.

Attendees will participate in group discussions and question and answer sessions following presentations by regional experts on collaboration. The Suburbs Alliance will also provide workshop participants with a Resource Sharing How-To Manual outlining best practices, tips and other resources for cities engaging in collaborative partnerships.

The series comes at a time when cities across the state – older suburbs in particular – are struggling financially. Declining populations and the state’s municipal finance policies are shrinking tax revenue in mature suburbs. In addition, recent cuts in revenue sharing and drastic rises in insurance and pensions costs are severely limiting city budgets, and as a result, city officials are being forced to dramatically reduce basic city services like fire and police protection. Working cooperatively and consolidating services with other municipalities enables local governments to maximize limited resources and maintain city services. The Creating Collaborative Communities workshops provide local leaders with knowledge to take advantage of these partnerships.

-MORE-

“In these hard economic times, city leaders feel an obligation to maintain high quality services but are undermined by decreasing revenues,” says Conan Smith, Executive Director of the Michigan Suburbs Alliance. “Collaboration is one way to beat the system – it makes us stronger, gives better stability and often costs less.”

The Michigan Suburbs Alliance is a nonprofit organization comprising a coalition of mature, built-out suburbs that works to promote regional collaboration, economic development, and policy reform. For more information on the workshop, visit <http://www.michigansuburbsalliance.org/metro.htm#fire>.

## CREATING COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITIES

- WHO:** City officials, firefighters, and union representatives from communities throughout southeast Michigan. Registration has reached its 50-person limit and is now closed; however, interested members of the media are welcome to attend.
- WHAT:** Fire Service Workshop
- WHERE:** University of Michigan – Dearborn, Fairlane Center  
19000 Hubbard Rd. Dearborn 48126
- WHEN:** Thursday, January 19, 2006  
7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- WHY:** To learn how to work together to maintain high quality fire service

###