

Louisville-Jefferson County Local Government Consolidation

On January 6, 2003, Louisville became the largest city in nearly three decades to merge its city and county governments. It took four votes over 40 years before the citizens of Jefferson County said “yes” in November 2000 to creating a consolidated local government.

For more information about Louisville merger, contact Louisville Deputy Mayor, Joan Riehm at (502) 574-8141 or joan.riehm@loukymetro.org.

Louisville – Before and After Merger

(2000 Census, US Census Bureau)

	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>
Area (sq. miles)	60	386
Population	256,231	693,784
Rank in U.S. City Size	67	16
Median household income	\$28,843	\$39,457

Service Improvements (since merger)

Public Safety

- Committed to creating the MetroSafe Emergency Communications System, a \$50 million single network to link police, fire, EMS and other first responders throughout Louisville Metro.
- Combined the two police departments under a new management structure that placed more officers on the street.
- Consolidated former City and County EMS systems to create the Louisville Metro Emergency Medical Service, and for the first time, hired a doctor with emergency medical experience to head EMS.

Finance

- Achieved a AA+ credit rating from Fitch Ratings, the Wall Street agency’s second highest city ranking after San Diego’s AAA, and a AA rating from Standard and Poor’s, upgraded from the AA- rating of the former City of Louisville.

Project D.R.I. (Drainage Response Initiative)

Largest drainage initiative in the community’s history: \$66 million for 350 neighborhood drainage projects in first phase. A second, \$55 million phase begins in July 2005.

Economic Development

- Launched the Corridors of Opportunity in Louisville (COOL) program to identify commercial and retail areas along major transportation corridors for potential redevelopment.
- Extended tax relief on property and equipment, formerly available only in the old City of Louisville, to all of Louisville Metro to encourage the location and expansion of manufacturing businesses.
- Opened a one-stop shop for development, combining offices for planning, design, inspection, permitting and licensing previously scattered across several locations.

MetroCall

- Information service via phone and e-mail that connects callers to live operators 24/7.
- Concern/complaint entered into computer system, and tracked for follow-up.
- Service operated from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the former City of Louisville when Metro Government began. Service was extended countywide and 24/7.
- Calls received: about 5,000 weekly.

Mayor's Community Conversations

Mayor and representatives of all Metro departments and agencies, plus some state agencies, are available the third Monday of every month in rotating neighborhoods of the Metro area, to talk directly with citizens.

Music in the Metro

Metro Government sponsors summer concerts rotating to different Metro Parks on Sunday evenings, to encourage citizens to visit parts of the Metro area they may not have been to before.

Mayor's Neighborhood Summit

For the first time in the community's history, representatives of all neighborhoods, incorporated cities and unincorporated areas were invited to an all-day workshop to learn about Metro Government, network with other neighborhood leaders, and to exchange tips on successful neighborhood organizing. Some 200 citizens were expected – an overflow crowd of 500 attended, and a number of new neighborhood organizations are being formed as a result. The Summit has become a yearly event.

Mosquito Control

When Metro Government began, the Louisville-Jefferson County Health Department had lead responsibility for mosquito control, with about a dozen employees to cover the entire 386 square miles of Louisville Metro.

The Metro Government, concerned about a recurrence of West Nile virus and seeking efficiencies, identified field employees from various Metro departments who could be trained in mosquito control techniques. Now, while performing their regular duties, as cross-departmental team of 200 employees is focused on mosquito control. In 2003, there were no cases of West Nile virus in Louisville Metro.

Planning

- Gave citizens a stronger voice in planning and development through "Innovations in Planning", a 15-point program of changes to simplify and improve the quality of planning decisions. Improves citizen access to hearings and review meetings, and requires developers to meet with adjoining property owners and neighborhood groups before filing plans.
- Created the Neighborhood Planning College to educate citizens about the planning process.

Beautification

- Expanded the former City of Louisville Brightside program throughout all areas of Louisville Metro to beautify neighborhoods and fight litter. Twelve new landscaped "BrightSites" are located in incorporated suburban cities.

Housing

- Began developing a comprehensive communitywide housing plan to create housing at all price points throughout all areas of Louisville Metro.
- Merged the City of Louisville and Jefferson County Public Housing Authorities to work throughout Louisville Metro.

Suburban Cities

- Mayor's Liaison to Suburban Cities is visiting with Mayors of all 83 incorporated cities to assess their needs and concerns.
- Suburban cities invited to join with Louisville Metro on bids ranging from office supplies and salt to asphalt and bulk fuel. Cities who have joined are saving money.
- Services once available only in the former City of Louisville that now are available countywide include cutting vacant lots and removing junked cars.

New Internal Operating Systems:

Inherited two payroll systems run on two different computer systems, paid weekly and bi-weekly.

- January 9, 2004, ran first biweekly payroll run using PeopleSoft platform for payroll and human resources management.
- Established new Oracle-based financial system
- Developing workforce compensation and work rule strategy, to be integrated into overall financial and management planning and practices.

Savings

Restructured Executive Branch from two governments to one, eliminated overlapping functions.

Savings: \$700,000/year

Moving Metro departments from leased space into buildings the government owns.

Savings: \$2 million/year (est.)

Outsourced functions performed by security guards, Corrections commissary, youth detention food service, and custodial services

Savings: \$700,000/year

Fleet Operations Reform

Affects 4,700 pieces of rolling stock; includes about 2,800 police and passenger vehicles

Former governments bought and sold 300-400 vehicles a year at a cost of \$7-8 million/year

We found savings by asking questions like:

- How many vehicles do we need and what kind?
- How are the vehicles maintained?
- Who has take-home cars and who needs them?
- What's the most appropriately-sized car for the job to be done?
- Are fueling stations and maintenance garages located and staffed for convenient access?

Solutions:

- Buy no new vehicles in FY 2003; keep vehicles longer before they are replaced
- Sell excess vehicles; convert take-home to pool vehicles;
- Downsize models where possible
- Partner with other agencies on vehicle maintenance

Switched from 89 octane to 87 octane gas in Metro police cars.

Savings: \$100,000/year

Courier Service

A previous contract for courier service was costly, with Metro Parks alone spending \$2,500/month.

A new contract, focusing on consolidated deliveries to departments, reduces costs.

Savings: \$100,000/year; \$1,500/month for Metro Parks alone.