

**COURIER-JOURNAL** OCTOBER 13, 2015

# Cities' innovative partnership gets a nod

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Colleyville, Keller merged municipal court services in 2012

Keller's annual savings is more than \$140,000

Colleyville saves more than \$50,000 annually

BY MARTY SABOTA

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NORTHEAST TARRANT — The cities of Colleyville and Keller made history in 2012 when they became the first in Texas to merge their municipal court services.

Three years later the success of that partnership has earned them the Texas Municipal League's Excellence Award for Management Innovations.

"After extensive research and study, leaders in both Keller and Colleyville concluded that this precedent-setting merger made sense for our cities," Colleyville Mayor David Kelly said in a news release. It gave us a way to deliver the same or better service to our citizens at a lower cost. For the taxpayers in Colleyville and Keller, it's been a winning proposition."

The costs of the combined court is shared between the two cities and paid in direct proportion to the percentage of citations issued.

On average, Keller realizes an annual savings of more than \$140,000 as a result of the merger, while Colleyville saves more than \$50,000 annually.

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**THE AGREEMENT SAVED KELLER TAXPAYERS AN ESTIMATED \$3.5 MILLION IN CAPITAL COSTS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO CONSTRUCT A NEW MUNICIPAL COURT FACILITY TO SERVE ITS GROWING POPULATION.**

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"This partnership provides a roadmap for other cities willing to look beyond their borders to find efficient, cost-effective solutions to serve their citizens," Keller Mayor Mark Mathews said in a news release. "Additionally, our collaboration has saved both cities thousands of dollars that can be redirected toward other projects and programs."

The agreement also saved Keller taxpayers an estimated \$3.5 million in capital costs that would have been required to construct a new municipal court facility to serve its growing population, a Keller spokeswoman said.

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**COLLEYVILLE AND KELLER, ALONG WITH SOUTHLAKE AND WESTLAKE, HAVE OPERATED A JOINT 911 DISPATCH AND JAIL FACILITY SINCE 2010, AND A REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES UNIT SINCE 2012.**

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The cities shared similar municipal court operational policies and procedures, and used the same service providers for prosecution, software and warrant collections — all of which paved the way for a combined court.

Colleyville and Keller, along with Southlake and Westlake, have operated a joint 911 dispatch and jail facility since 2010, and a regional animal services unit since 2012.

TML is an association of more than 1,140 Texas cities working primarily to serve the needs and advocate the interests of municipalities statewide. Awarded annually at the organization's annual conference, the Municipal Excellence Awards recognize and encourage the achievements of cities in meeting the challenges of municipal government.

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