



A Vision for One Batavia

Second Community Forum

OVERVIEW

June 30, 2009

Tonight's Objective

- Summarize Study Committee's findings to date
- Provide a structured forum to:
 - Ask questions about the concept
 - Make suggestions to put into the final plan
- Add additional information based on June 18 feedback

About the Committee and this Report

- Town Board and City Council submitted a grant request to look at options for cost saving, up to and including potential merger
- City and Town rec'd SMSI grant
- Committee members were selected to represent cross-section of community, city and town interests
- Committee was asked to develop high level consolidation concept plan for consideration by the electorate

About the Process

- Committee is developing a written plan to present to Town Board and City Council in July
- Committee made all the backup documentation available on June 2
- Based on feedback from the forums, Committee will develop draft plan to give to Town Board and City Council

Next Steps

- July 2009 - Committee gives concept plan to Town Board and City Council
- August/September 2009 - Town Board and City Council discuss concept plan.
- November 2009 – if Town Board and City Council approve, would go to voters. Separate Town and City votes. Requires majority in each to proceed.
- 2010 – Joint Charter Commission develops charter. City and Town continue *status quo*.
- November 2010 – Voters vote whether or not to approve new charter – Dual referendum.

Topics To Be Discussed

- Concept of 3 Tier Government
- Services – what and by whom
- Financial Impact – costs and taxes
- Governance – size and type of representation
- Form – a single government – town or city?

Four Fundamental Questions Addressed

1. Do we have options?
2. Why change what we have?
3. What would the change mean for me?
4. What would the change mean for our community's future?

Do we have options?

- Yes, there are two options
 - Continue as separate governments
 - Consolidate the two governments

Why change?

- A consolidated government will reduce costs
 - Costs will be reduced through efficiencies
 - New state revenues or cost shifts will reduce demand on local property taxes
- Delivery of services will be enhanced
- Important positive spillover effects from pursuing government consolidation

What would the change mean?

- Current City and Town property tax burdens would stay the same
- No shift of City debt or other costs to Town
- \$943,000 additional funds (from savings and revenues) would be available
- Single elected government instead of two

What would the change mean for the future?

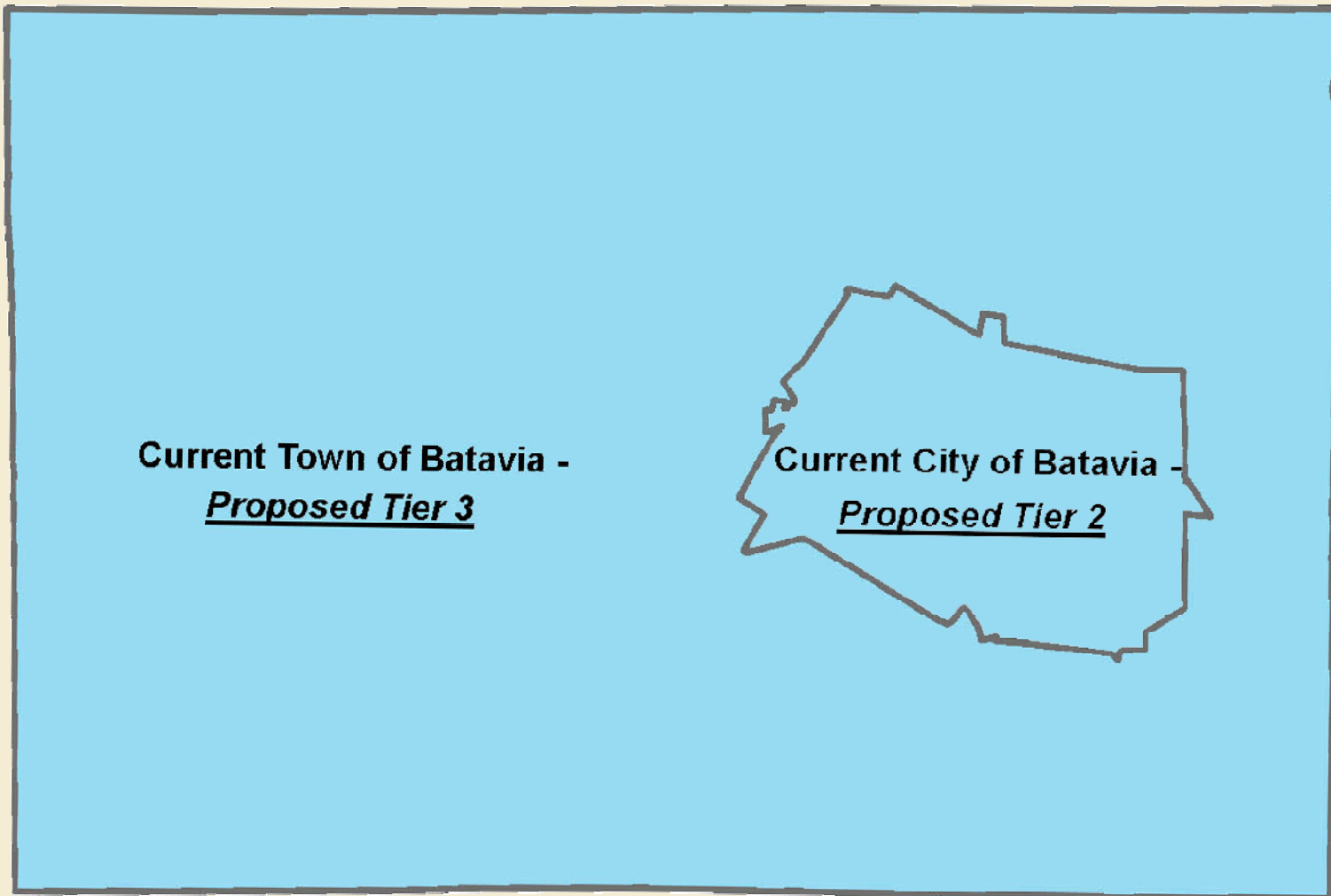
- Sends powerful message within the community and beyond
 - The community is progressive and willing to pursue a more efficient consolidated government
 - Economic development tool – attractive to potential investors
 - Long term benefits from making infrastructure and service function investments as an integrated system

Tiered Service Zone Concept

- 3 cities in New York use a zone concept
- Service zones allow taxes to fairly represent levels of service provided
- Tier 1 – common services shared across the existing City and Town
- Tier 2 – higher intensity services – current City
- Tier 3 – lower intensity services – current Town

A Vision for One Batavia

**Entire Area -
Proposed Tier 1**



**Current Town of Batavia -
Proposed Tier 3**

**Current City of Batavia -
Proposed Tier 2**

Services in Tier 1

- Single elected body for the area
- Central administrative functions
 - Professional Management
 - Central Finance, Accounting, Purchasing, Legal
- Central planning and zoning functions
- Central DPW functions – roads, streetlights, snowplowing, parks maintenance, water and sewer operations and maintenance, etc.

Services in Tier 2

- Current city police maintained
- Current city fire department maintained
- Current city refuse collection maintained
- Current special activities and tier specific water and sewer services capital improvements
- City specific zoning and ordinances retained

Services in Tier 3

- Current county sheriff patrol coverage maintained
- Current volunteer fire departments maintained
- Current private refuse collection maintained
- Current special activities and water and sewer district specific capital improvements
- Town specific zoning and ordinances retained

Financial Impact of Tiers

- Existing Debt – kept separate in each tier. No comingling of existing debt
- Existing Fund Balances – kept separate in each tier. No comingling of fund balances
- Costs for services unique to each tier paid for by taxpayers only in those tiers
- Tier 1 costs would be shared by all taxpayers

Annual Cost Saving Projection

- Net efficiencies and cost reductions from consolidating = \$245,000 per year at start-up, likely more in future years
- Net additional revenues, primarily State consolidation incentive funding = \$820,000 per year, ongoing
- After adjusting to balance revenues between tiers, net savings = \$943,000 per year, likely increasing in future years

Property Tax Bill Projection

- The SUM of the Tier 1 and the Tier 2 or Tier 3 property taxes would be the same as or lower than current City or Town tax bills.
- This also takes into account that current property taxes for Town operations are \$0, and county tax bills are lower by \$250,000 in total
- IF the \$943,000 in consolidation savings were used to reduce property taxes, this would reduce taxes \$1.10/\$1,000 assessed value across all tiers per year

Governance Options

- If Town – would become a first class town
 - 4 or 6 person council plus a Supervisor
 - Could be wards or town-wide elections, but not both
 - Could have a Town Manager in addition to Supervisor
- If City – multiple options for size, type of council
- Boards and commissions would be merged

Representation Options if a City

- Council – Manager Form
 - 14 cities in NY. Council + Mayor sizes: 5-11
- Mayor – Council Form
 - Strong or weak mayor form
 - 45 cities in NY. Council + Mayor sizes: 5-12
- Commissioner Form
 - 3 cities in NY. Outdated and little used form

Additional Information based on June 18 Questions/Comments (1)

- QUESTION - How to protect unique interests of each Tier?
- ANSWER -
 - Certain protections written into Charter. Example - super-majority required to change pre-existing conditions
 - Special codes and ordinances. Example - firearms
 - Have elected body represent wards

Additional Information based on June 18 Questions/Comments (2)

- Question – Would it be a City or a Town?
- Answer – The Committee reviewed extensive materials comparing the advantages and disadvantages of both forms. The weight of the evidence favors it becoming a City.
 - City Charter much more flexible than Town law
 - Significant revenue advantages for a City, including option for sales tax pre-emption after 2018

Additional Information based on June 18 Questions/Comments (3)

- QUESTION – Can you describe the elected body?
- ANSWER – Based on other tier cities, a good model for Batavia to consider would be 6 members elected by wards and a Mayor elected at large

Additional Information based on June 18 Questions/Comments (4)

- QUESTION – my taxes in the Town are already 0, how can you get better than that?
- ANSWER – Town real estate taxes are currently \$0, and the Town pays \$250,000 to offset County Real estate taxes. However, living in the town is not free. See example on next page -

Additional Information based on June 18 Questions/Comments (5)

- BASE TAXES ON A \$90,000 HOME**

	<u><i>Town</i></u>	<u><i>City</i></u>
County	\$ 879.76	\$ 879.76
Less Town Cont.	\$ (72.53)	
City or Town	\$ 0	\$ 916.84
Refuse Cost	\$ 220.00	\$ Inc. above
Fire District	<u>\$ 98.31</u>	<u>\$ Inc. above</u>
TOTAL	\$ 1,125.54	\$ 1,796.60

Forum Information

- Feedback/Comment Form available tonight, on-line or upon request (City Hall or Town Hall)
- On-line comments can be made on web site
- Check for web site updates at:
www.cgr.org/bataviaconsolidationplan/

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION