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One Batavia for all?

Posted by [Post-Standard Editorial Board](#) January 02, 2009 5:01AM

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"This will put Batavia in the national spotlight," says Charles Zettek Jr. of the nonprofit Center for Governmental Research, describing a new study that has propelled the Genesee County city and town that share the name to consider consolidation.

If Batavia's voters approve municipal consolidation next fall, it should make waves at least throughout the state. As Attorney General Andrew Cuomo recently noted, New York's 10,521 local government entities are excessive. Towns, villages, school districts and special assessment districts consume too many tax dollars and pit folks against each other who should join forces.

CGR estimates consolidation could save the village of Albion and the towns of Albion and Gaines in Orleans County more than \$336,497 per year -- even more as positions are eliminated. Consolidating the village and town of Seneca Falls could save \$393,00 per year, CGR estimates.

There are pitfalls on the road to consolidation -- apples-to-oranges tax and fee structures, pension and benefit plans; patronage jobs; parochial pride; and so on. But relentless fiscal pressure makes an ever-stronger case for the other side.

If Batavia wants to lead the way, it deserves the spotlight.

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