

Consolidation

As a City Councilman, Pat Hogan has embraced consolidating and merging city and county services, recognizing that the benefits of these efforts can result in improved regional effectiveness, the elimination of duplication in many instances, and the streamlining of government. In uncertain economic times, the bottom line is steps need to be taken that make government work better. Unfortunately, not enough has been done.

Consolidation must generate cost savings, not promotion opportunities for favored staff as we recently saw with the consolidation of the Syracuse – Onondaga County Planning Agency. Now is the time to move closer to a metropolitan government.

Pat Hogan's participation in the creation of the regional airport authority – Pat served as the Chairperson of the Common Council's Airport Committee during the period when the authority was established – underscores his commitment to search for efficiencies outside the traditional approaches to service delivery.

As Mayor, Pat will:

- Organize a Blue-Ribbon Commission made up of business, educational, governmental and community leaders to scrutinize all city operations. The focus of this group will be the city's operations, including service delivery systems, staffing and expenditures, with a mandate to focus solely on the consolidation of services that result in either cost savings and/or improved efficiencies. The Commission's charge for projecting potential savings will be to undertake a ten year cost comparison between continuing services as they are currently being delivered versus the cost under municipal consolidation.
- Immediately direct every city department and agency to evaluate all activities with a specific focus on streamlining, simplifying and consolidating services. Each entity will be expected to submit a report based on this evaluation for the Commission's review and possible implementation.
- Create a strategic plan for moving Syracuse towards a consolidated city-county government, using the Louisville/Jefferson County model formed in 2003 in Kentucky.
- Because consolidation efforts to date have primarily involved support services (purchasing department, planning, etc.) the savings thus far have been minimal. Pat believes the time has come when the major service providers to city constituents – such as Parks and Recreation and Public Works – need to be examined for feasible streamlining and/or consolidation. In a climate of financial uncertainty and debt alarm, municipal governments have no choice but to exercise a will and good judgment to determine if we can better our services at equal or lower costs through the regional merging of some of our operations.