

Creating One Batavia

Merging the Town and City into one City of Batavia

Presented by

Consolidated Charter Task Force of Batavia

Background

- ◆ Community has discussed shared services & consolidation for many years
- ◆ 2008-09 consolidation study suggested that one city could save residents nearly \$900,000 in combined costs
- ◆ Leaders in both communities decided to put the issue to voters
- ◆ Task Force was formed by the Town and City to generate a new city charter to be voted on by residents in both municipalities
- ◆ City and Town jointly received a Local Government Efficiency Grant to underwrite the cost of the process

8-Member Task Force

Town

- ◆ Judith Cotton
- ◆ Larry Reisdorf
- ◆ Marcia Riley
- ◆ Chad Zambito (Chair)
- ◆ Alan Koch (Alternate)

City

- ◆ Gail Stevens
- ◆ Laura Landers
- ◆ Chad Bachorski
- ◆ Joe Gerace

Charge of Task Force

- ◆ Develop a new city charter
- ◆ Develop the home rule message
- ◆ Develop the authorizing legislation
- ◆ Establish a formal timeline

- ◆ **GOAL:** Referendum on a new city charter in November.

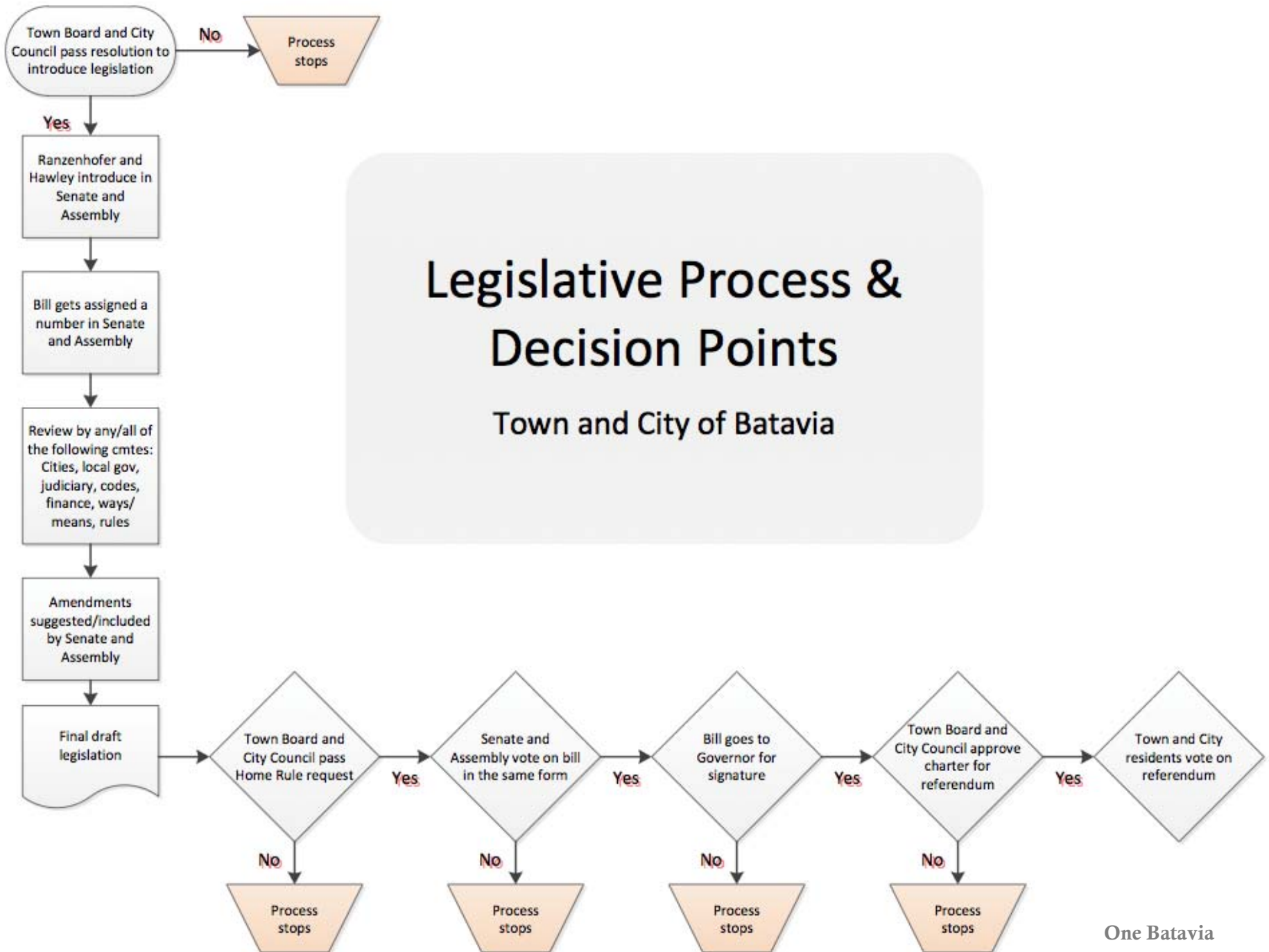
What the Task Force can and cannot address?

- ◆ The Task Force can:
 - ◆ Propose the form of government
 - ◆ Develop the structure for tiered (zone) services/taxes
 - ◆ Decide on wards vs. at-large voting
 - ◆ Develop the framework for what services will be provided

- ◆ The Task Force cannot:
 - ◆ Rework fiscal impact projections
 - ◆ Address transitional issues and negotiate agreements
 - ◆ Determine final service levels and service quality

Overview of Process

- ◆ TF began meeting in October and started to review the CGR study. TF then received overview from CGR & received input from Town and City officials.
- ◆ TF then drafted an RFP to select a consultant. Factors considered included: Familiarity w/study & region, Experience in similar efforts, availability of staff & cost.
- ◆ TF selected CGR and began tackling key issues: Form of Government, At-Large vs. Ward and Taxing Tiers.
- ◆ TF expected to complete the charter and then request home rule legislation to make the referendum possible – State Representatives recently requested a resolution be passed by both boards to begin the home rule process.



Legislative Process & Decision Points

Town and City of Batavia

New City Charter: Form of Government

First issue tackled by TF was the form of government

- ◆ Weak Mayor-Council Form
- ◆ Strong Mayor-Council Form
- ◆ Standard Mayor-Council Form
- ◆ Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Model
- ◆ Council-Manager Form
- ◆ Commission Form

Decision

- ◆ Commission and CAO models both dismissed.
- ◆ Mayor models dismissed because they could encourage patronage and failed to guarantee a skilled and trained professional be selected to oversee day to day operations of the city.
- ◆ Council-Manager Form Chosen because it provides:
 1. Administrative expertise
 2. Clear lines of authority and accountability
 3. Professional standards that tend to trump partisan/parochial concerns
 4. Promotion of cooperation and partnerships rather than conflict.

*Form of Government Primer Provided by CGR www.cgr.org/onebataviacharter/documents.aspx

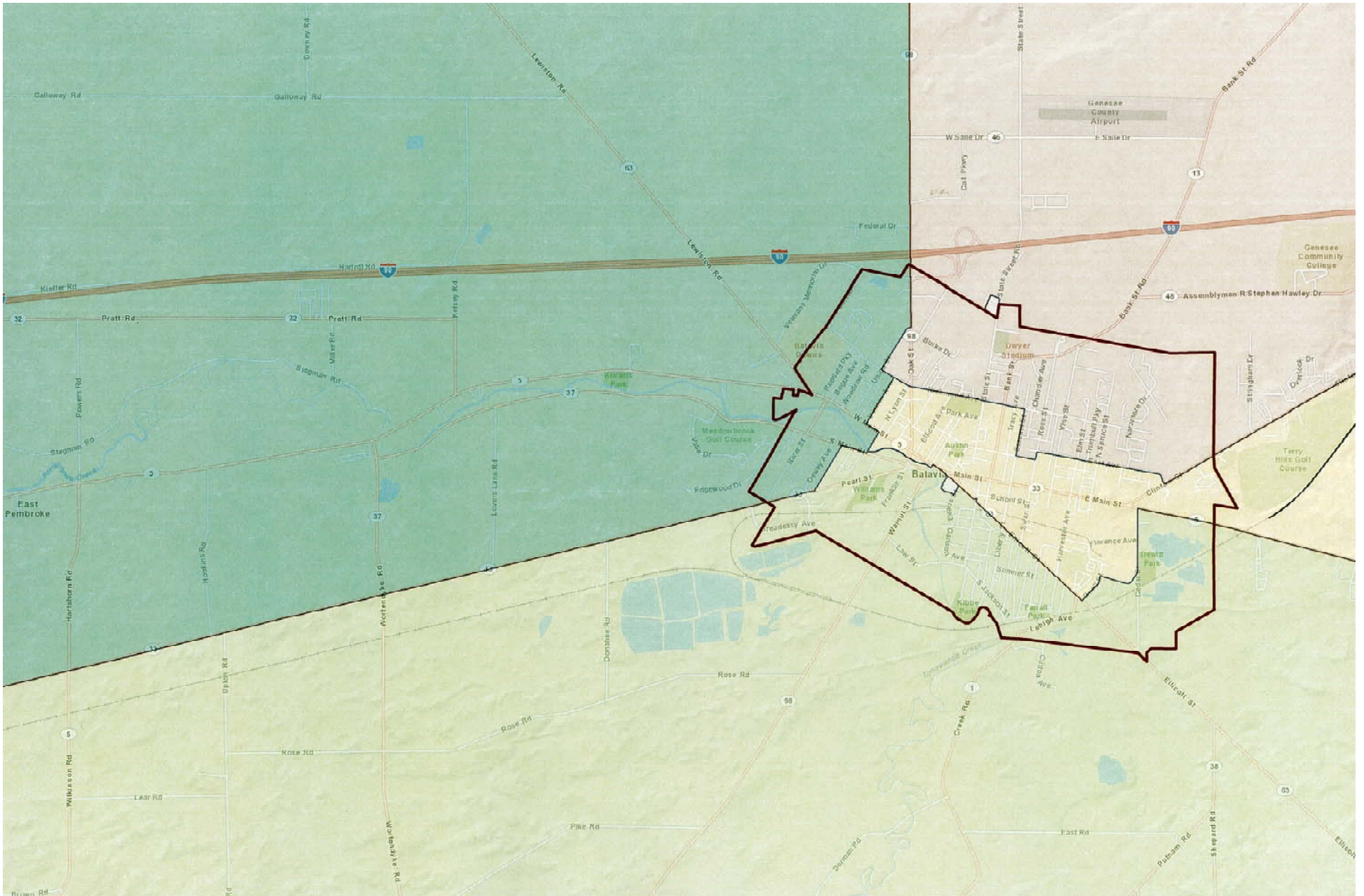
New City Charter: Council Representation

- ◆ At Large System
- ◆ Ward System
- ◆ Mixed Elections
- ◆ Single Transfer System
- ◆ Cumulative Voting

Decision

- ◆ Single Transfer Voting and Cumulative Voting dismissed
- ◆ At Large and Ward dismissed
- ◆ Mixed System chosen:
 1. Combines city-wide focus of at large members with neighborhood and local concern represented by the ward-elected members.
 2. Used by 38% of large cities and 17% of small-medium cities.
 3. New Structure Consists of 4 ward and 5 at large seats.

*Primer on Council Representation Provided by CGR www.cgr.org/onebataviacharter/documents.aspx



New City Charter: Tiered Taxing

- ◆ The TF believes it is essential that current Town residents continue to enjoy the zero tax rate and not be burdened with current city debt or be required to pay for services currently provided by the city.
- ◆ The only way to accomplish this is through a tiered taxing structure.
- ◆ There would be three tiers:
 1. The Current City
 2. The Current Town
 3. The Entire New Entity
- ◆ This configuration is guaranteed by the charter which requires a referendum to extend the inner taxing jurisdiction and/or services.

Timeline

- ◆ May 15: Next Task Force Meeting
- ◆ May 17: Info Session in Town at Town Hall
- ◆ May 24: Info Session at City Hall
- ◆ May 31: Public Hearing
- ◆ June 4: Public Hearing
- ◆ June 11: Public Hearing
- ◆ June 21: Public Hearing

Timeline

- ◆ July: Public input reviewed, documented, edits, corrections made to proposed charter.
- ◆ August: Revised charter introduced to City and Town officials
City and Town Boards then hold their own public hearings
City and Town Boards then vote on final charter & ballot initiative
- ◆ September: Ballot submission by both Town & City Clerks required by 9/6
- ◆ November 6th Election Day

If Approved

- ◆ Town and City Boards, appointees and employees remain in place until January 1, 2014.
- ◆ The current TF recommends that a Consolidation Committee be formed composed of elected officials and residents of both entities.
- ◆ The TF is compiling a list of recommendations for transition.
- ◆ Election to fill the new City Council take place in November of 2013 with at large seats serving a 4 year term and ward seats filling an initial 2 year term to stagger elections.
- ◆ All terms will be four year by 2016.

Ways to Engage

- ◆ Previous Study: www.cgr.org/bataviaconsolidationplan
- ◆ Current Study: www.cgr.com/onebataviacharter
- ◆ Email TF: <http://www.cgr.org/onebataviacharter/email.aspx>