



NEW YORK STATE COMMISSION ON
**LOCAL GOVERNMENT
EFFICIENCY &
COMPETITIVENESS**

New Local Initiatives

Since announcing the local initiatives in September, several communities have sent in additional local initiatives that will receive special assistance from state agencies. These new initiatives include:

Westchester County: The Westchester County Department of Information Technology and the New York State Office of the Chief Information Officer/Office for Technology are partnering to expand their respective disaster recovery resources for their information technology systems.

Schenectady County: The Village of Scotia and Town of Glenville are investigating the possible consolidation of the village and town water departments, and are receiving assistance from the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation.

Tompkins County: The County is receiving assistance from the Division of Criminal Justice Services Office of Justice Information Services as they pursue information sharing and cooperation among criminal justice agencies in Tompkins County.

Hamilton County: The County is exploring both consolidation of property assessment and the potential for unifying tax collection activities under the county treasurer or finance department. They are receiving technical and financial assistance from the Office of Real Property Services.

Washington County: The County is exploring consolidation of assessment and is receiving technical and financial assistance from the Office of Real Property Services.

View the Buffalo and Hudson Valley Hearings

This fall the Commission held two more public hearings to receive input from local officials and citizens of Western New York and the Hudson Valley. The hearing held

October 24 in Buffalo featured a panel of Upstate leaders and a panel of Smart Growth experts. The November 28 Hudson Valley hearing included a dialogue with representatives from the Association of Towns, Conference of Mayors, and NYS School Boards Association. [Webcasts](#) of both hearings and [hearing testimony](#) are posted on the Commission website under the heading "News and Events."

New Issue Briefs Available

A series of [issue briefs](#) prepared for the Commission are available on our website. Four new issue briefs were added this fall:

Local Economic Development
Highway Services
Mandate Relief
Public Library Service

Commission Sessions at the NYSAC Legislative Conference

The New York State Association of Counties is holding their [annual legislative conference](#) January 28-30 at the Desmond Hotel in Albany. On Tuesday, January 29, they are offering a workshop track on modernizing local government operations. At three sessions sponsored by the Commission, attendees will hear about counties that are pursuing initiatives to centralize and modernize core services like assessing, highway operations, and purchasing. More information about the conference can be found on the NYSAC website: www.nysac.org

Dialogue with Town Officials

The Commission will hold a dialogue with town officials at the Association of Towns Annual [Training School](#) & Meeting in New York City. The session, which will be held on Monday, February 18, will feature a presentation by the Association to the Commission and testimony from a panel of town officials, followed by a conversation between Commission members and the panel. Later that day, three Commission-sponsored sessions will be held on the following topics:

- **Consolidating Assessing and Tax Collection** – The Office of Real Property Services has a new aid program funding studies and operations for countywide centralization of property tax assessment and tax collection, either through a coordinated or consolidated program. The session will describe what's happening around the state with these consolidation efforts.
- **Restructuring Highway Services and Other Public Works** – This session goes beyond sharing of equipment to discuss the merging of town and village highway

and public works functions, converting to public works departments, changing to appointive highway superintendents, and the impact of various service arrangements on CHIPS aid.

- **Restructuring Local Government: Consolidation, Dissolution, and Cooperation** – Experts will discuss the whys and hows of consolidating or restructuring special districts, fire protection, and even municipalities. You will hear about the factors to consider and have your questions answered about personnel impacts, outstanding debt, and other issues. Coterminal town-villages will also be discussed.

More information about the Association of Towns meeting can be found on its website: www.nytowns.org

Submit Your Suggestions

The Commission on Local Government Efficiency & Competitiveness continues to seek your input as to how local government can be improved to make New York a better place to live and conduct business. The simplest way to provide input is to send your suggestions via the Commission website by clicking on “Submit Your Ideas” at <http://www.nyslocalgov.org> or by e-mailing the Commission at localgov@empire.state.ny.us.
