

# **Preparing Allegheny County for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**A Report to the  
Allegheny County Board of Commissioners  
Prepared by  
The Committee to Prepare Allegheny County  
For the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**January, 1996**

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## The Need for ComPAC 21

### THE ComPAC 21 MISSION

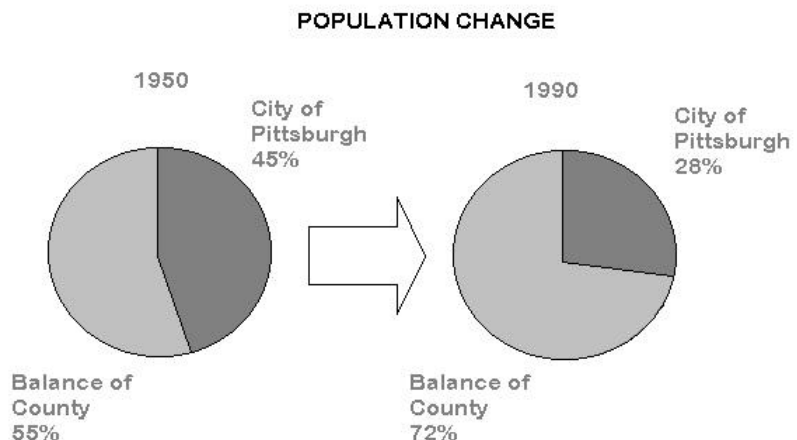
The Committee to Prepare Allegheny County for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (ComPAC 21) was created by the County Commissioners to further Allegheny County's goal of enhancing economic growth while maintaining the highest attainable quality of life. The Commissioners appointed Dr. John E. Murray, Jr., President of Duquesne University, as Chairperson in March of 1995. Dr. Murray then selected the Committee to analyze and assess the structure, organization, function, finance and economic development activities of Allegheny County by utilizing a benchmark process to compare the county with others across the United States.

Today, we live in a world of regions fiercely competing with each other for jobs and economic development. The most successful regions are those that have recognized and adapted to this new competitive world. This competition promises to become even more intense in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Recent appraisals of Allegheny County suggest that the county may not have adjusted to important shifts in population and business activity. Therefore, the region is not competing effectively with other regions that are experiencing vibrant growth.

These shifts are significant. In 1950, 45% of the population of the county was concentrated in the City of Pittsburgh and the remaining 55% in the rest of the county. In 1990, only 28% of the population was in the city with 72% in the county.

Similarly, 73% of business activity was in the city in 1949 and 27% in the county. By 1985, the city's portion dropped to 38%, while 62% of that activity had shifted to the county.

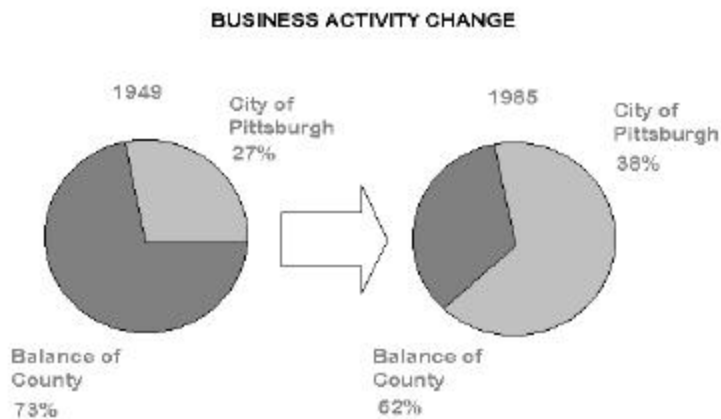
These demographics and economic shifts have led to the emergence of the county as the single most significant regional government in western Pennsylvania.



Despite these important shifts, Allegheny County's government and approach to economic development have not changed. While change for change sake is never appropriate, the Committee, through its research and analysis, has reached several findings which form the basis of its recommendations.

- *Counties that are experiencing significant economic growth have developed targeted and coordinated economic development programs.*
- *These same counties have streamlined their governmental organizations and functions to support their roles as major players in economic development.*

The ComPAC 21 Committee is convinced that there is a compelling need for a total change in the economic development activities of Allegheny County government. This change is necessary to compete effectively in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In turn, the new and aggressive approach to economic development must be complemented by improvements in the organization, function, finance and structural areas of government as well. There are many elements which must be brought together to insure success. While a new government design will not, in and of itself, insure future success, failure to move toward a bold new design will, in the Committee's judgment, preclude such success.



**THE BENCHMARK COUNTIES:**

- Davidson County, TN
- Hennepin County, MN
- King County, WA
- Mecklenburg County, NC
- Milwaukee County, WI
- Montgomery County, MD

*“Good government cannot insure economic development, but bad government is a definite roadblock to economic growth”*

-Pamela Syfert  
Deputy City Manager  
Charlotte, NC

# Economic Development

## EMPHASIZE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

- Make Economic Development a Primary Concern of Government
- Coordinate Efforts  
First Step: Pittsburgh Regional Alliance
- Develop a Regional Focus  
Institute a Non-Aggression Pact
- Develop a Tax-Base Sharing Program

*“The common perception of businesses seeking to locate headquarters is that Pittsburgh is dirty, old, and on its way out while Charlotte is clean, new, and on its way up. We seldom compete with Pittsburgh for new business.”*

-Bob Morgan  
Vice President,  
Office Development  
Charlotte Chamber of  
Commerce

It is crucial to the future of Allegheny County that the region increase its rate of economic growth. A stagnant economy denies many of the quality of life enjoyed by those who live in healthier economies. The region is not selected often enough as a site for business expansion or relocation. Pittsburgh ranked 90<sup>th</sup> on a list of the 100 metropolitan areas in terms of attracting the most new and expanded industrial facilities. On the same list, it is ranked last on a per capita basis. The region’s businesses and employers are too often leaving for other growth areas. The region’s greatest resource, its people – both experienced and those just starting their professional careers – are also leaving for other parts of the country. Not one of the benchmark counties indicated that our region represented an economic threat to their community.

## Primary Concern of Government

To address these concerns, county government must make economic development one of its primary missions. It should play a coordinating and financing role in economic development to insure that these efforts are effective and thorough. Such a role would necessitate a variety of actions.

The county should appoint a cabinet level post to coordinate all economic development, community development, and economic planning to insure the greatest potential benefit within all levels of government and non-governmental organizations. The director must maintain the confidence of municipal officials and work with them to promote the economy of the region.

## Coordination – Pittsburgh Regional Alliance

It is essential that the state, county, and other municipal governments coordinate all their economic development activities. It is no longer possible to allow each entity to go its own way and expect the region to benefit. Elements of this coordinated effort are listed below.

- There must be a single point of contact for businesses that are considering whether to remain, expand, or move to the region. Such companies should not have to search to find the right agency to help them. ***The county should contract with an appropriate private agency to serve as this single point of contact.***
- There should be a reduction in the number of private agencies in the economic development arena. The region currently had dozens of such agencies. Further, the activities of these agencies need to be better coordinated. ***The Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, the coordination of the efforts of four major organizations (The Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, Penn’s Southwest, Regional Industrial Development Corporation, and the World Trade Center), is an excellent first step in this effort.***
- The retention and growth of existing business must be our first order of business. Regional growth efforts must start at home with the businesses that are already located in Allegheny County. ***A program of visits to such businesses to discuss locational and other issues is a key ingredient of such a retention strategy.***
- The county and private sector should develop a program to improve the image of the region including an emphasis on marketing activities. The Pittsburgh region has many attractive attributes including cultural, educational, medical, and entertainment facilities. Housing is affordable and the quality of life is high. There is also a trained and available workforce. ***Businesses searching for new sites must be made aware of the tremendous assets of the western Pennsylvania region.***
- To maximize the benefit of the above activities, we must insure that there is extensive job training available for area residents, transportation links to high employment centers, and a primary and secondary education program that prepares all young people to participate to their maximum capability in the region’s workforce. ***The county must provide leadership in these areas either by providing this support or making sure that it is provided by the appropriate agency.***

*“By consolidating our governmental entities, increasing the competitiveness of governmental services, and working primarily through one private sector economic development agency, we make it as easy as possible for a prospective new business to seriously consider locating in our county.”*

Phil Bredesen  
Mayor  
Davidson County, TN

*“Moving a business 30 miles across an invisible county border is not our idea of economic development. The non-aggression pact reminds us that our real goal is to retain and expand our existing businesses while attracting jobs and industry from outside our region.”*

William Ryan Drew  
Director of Administration  
Milwaukee County, WI

- *Site visits to other counties should be undertaken by government and business leaders.* This is a common practice of other progressive counties. Charlotte, Nashville, and Seattle annually send large delegations to other metropolitan areas to examine how these areas are addressing public/private issues.

### **Regional Focus**

Economic development policies should encourage the counties of southwestern Pennsylvania to work together as a region. Growth in one area of the region benefits the entire region. Modern communication and transportation networks mean that people no longer respect boundaries when making decisions about where to live, shop or invest.

Two specific steps to achieve better coordination include the development of a non-aggression pact and the development of a regional tax-base sharing program. A non-aggression pact is a formal recognition that the key to economic development is not to seek to relocate a business across either municipal or county boundaries. Little regional economic benefit is created if a business moves from the Monongahela Valley to Westmoreland County. Instead, the entire region should cooperate to create conditions that promote sustainable economic growth and development. The region must develop a plan to maintain and expand its current businesses and attract outside industries to the region as a whole.

The time is right for a tax-base sharing plan for the region. Tax-base sharing helps to minimize the competition for development among local entities and helps to distribute that wealth of a community among local entities by encouraging development in a logical pattern. The program will encourage development in the most sensible locations in terms of transportation, environmental and other factors. It would share a portion of the resulting tax growth with all municipalities in the region. In this way, development can be placed in the best possible location, and communities do not have to compete with their neighbors, because all communities share in the tax growth. By distributing growth throughout the region, tax-base sharing also serves an important function of balancing our tradition of many local governments with our need to be competitive in the marketplace of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## Governmental Functions

### Reduce Fragmentation

- Pursue Zero Tolerance of Service Duplication
- Authorize the Disincorporation of Municipalities
- Develop a Countywide Land Use Plan
- Institute a Fair Share Housing Strategy

Competitive counties provide for efficient and responsive delivery of public services. Allegheny County has the distinction of having the most fragmented governmental structure of any metropolitan county in the United States. The county has 130 municipalities, 43 school districts as well as a number of public authorities. Of the 130 municipalities, 72 have populations of less than 5,000. The smallest has a population of 100. The largest is the City of Pittsburgh with a 1990 population of 369,879.

While there are arguments for and against this decentralized form of service delivery, the Committee has focused on those aspects of the county's organization which directly tie to regional competitiveness. The recommendations are, therefore, geared to areas where county leadership is key.

### Zero Duplication of Services

As a region, we cannot afford nor do taxpayers expect to pay for unnecessary and duplicative public services. The Committee strongly believes that we must adopt a zero tolerance for service duplication. As a matter of policy, Allegheny County should actively assist in the following efforts:

- Identify instances of service duplication
- Facilitate and encourage strategies to eliminate duplication
- Lead, by example, by working effectively with the City of Pittsburgh to eliminate service duplication.
- Encourage and support the efforts of councils of governments.

Many different areas could be considered for consolidation, and some progress has been made through city/county cooperation agreements and by various councils of governments. Some of the services that may be most amenable to consolidation include solid waste disposal, emergency management, specialized police services, public safety dispatch, fleet management, public works, provision of



low-income housing, purchasing, property tax collection, computer systems, and park maintenance.

Allegheny County should position itself to provide municipal services upon request either directly or through councils of governments. Financial incentives should exist to encourage this system.

**Disincorporation**

Enabling municipalities to disincorporate voluntarily is one practical way to reduce the adverse impact of fragmentation in Allegheny County. With the decline of the steel industry and the loss of over 100,000 manufacturing jobs, there may no longer be sufficient economic resources available to support each of the 130 municipalities as separate entities. Under current state law, a municipality that elects to go out of business must first find another municipality with which to merge. If the community is unable to find a willing partner, it must stay in business even if its citizens no longer desire that option.

The ComPAC 21 Committee is not recommending the elimination of any of the county’s municipalities; rather, the Committee is recommending that municipalities have the right to decide to go out of business or disincorporate. The Committee recommends that a municipality be able to choose to disincorporate and that the county coordinate the provision of municipal services whether by another municipality, a council of governments, or by the county.

**Countywide Land Use Program**

Allegheny County should develop a comprehensive land use plan which will serve as the base for all zoning decisions made by the county’s municipalities. Under the present system, there is a patchwork quilt of zoning regulations. One municipality could have an industrial zone directly across a municipal border from a single family residential zone in another community thus making development impossible or, at best, a cumbersome process. Coordinated zoning will enhance economic development activity as potential developers well be able to work within a more coordinated regional system.

**Fair Share Housing Plan**

Allegheny County is known for having a high quality and affordable housing supply. The county must develop a strategy that will protect and further develop this important regional asset.

*“You have to be kidding, you have 130 different municipalities? We thought we had problems, and we have 19 municipalities in our county.”*

Timothy M. Casey  
 Director of Economic  
 Development  
 Milwaukee County, WI

*“The real business of government is to provide a set of services as effectively as possible. There is no reason for a city and county to, in some instances, provide similar services to its citizens.”*

Gerald Fox  
County Manager  
Mecklenburg County, NC

Housing represents a significant industry, and its performance is important to Allegheny County’s future. Real Estate investment affects the economic status on nearly all county residents. The provision of housing for populations with special needs is an important public responsibility. Housing resources and needs can best be matched on a regional basis. Further, these resources should be used proactively to achieve specific regional goals. The responsibility for meeting the needs of special population groups such as the elderly, young families seeking ownership opportunities, and individuals with disabilities should be shared by all municipalities. A fair share plan for affordable and special needs housing would increase regional diversity and lessen the burden on any one municipality.

## Governmental Organization

### Improve the Organization

- Reduce the Number of Departments
- Institute a Merit-Based personnel System Including a Model Ethics Code
- Appoint a Standing Government Improvement Commission

Allegheny County's government is not currently organized with the goal of efficient service provision. Incremental changes over time have aggravated this problem. The county needs to reorganize its operations.

### Reduce the Number of Departments

The government of Allegheny County is very fragmented with 30 departments, ten row offices, and an independent court system. These departments range in size from a high of 1,700 to a low of three employees. The director of each of the departments reports to the County Commissioners.

The Committee recommends that governmental functions be consolidated into a much smaller number of departments. There are several ways in which this can be done. A proposed organization chart depicting county government with nine departments is shown on page 13. This chart is considered one option and is not meant in any way to reflect a single ideal reorganization. However, the benchmark counties all had fewer departments, and many had reorganized in order to make such reductions.

### Merit-Based Employment System and Employee Ethics

To attract and retain the most competent employees, the county needs to institute a merit-based employment system. The system needs to be designed to treat all people fairly and equitably while encouraging high levels of performance from employees. The county should also recruit highly professional and experienced managers. The selection process should try to identify the most competent and qualified individuals available.

Allegheny County has approximately 8,000 employees. These individuals can be hired by the County Commissioners, individual row officers, or by the court of Common Pleas.

Many areas do not have job descriptions or specified pay levels for the same job. There has been no systematic effort to review employment practices and assure that there is a match among existing positions, the positions actually needed to do the work, and the qualifications of the employees.

The county has no single employment system. Departments that receive significant state funding utilize the state civil service system. A few employee groups such as the police and jail guards are covered by a county civil service system. The Health Department has its own civil service system. Many employees are not selected under or covered by any civil service or merit-base system. Personnel decision making is cumbersome and does not always appear to be consistent.

The Committee recommends that, in all aspects of the ComPAC 21 report, downsizing be accomplished without employee displacement through attrition, early retirement, and transfer to available positions with refraining if needed. The nature of the current personnel system will make this recommendation difficult to achieve.

An important part of a merit-based personnel system is a strong code of ethics and professional standards. The code needs to deal not only with conflicts of interest in contracting and appointment of personnel but also in matters involving harassment and solicitation of employees for political activity or contributions.

**Standing Commission**

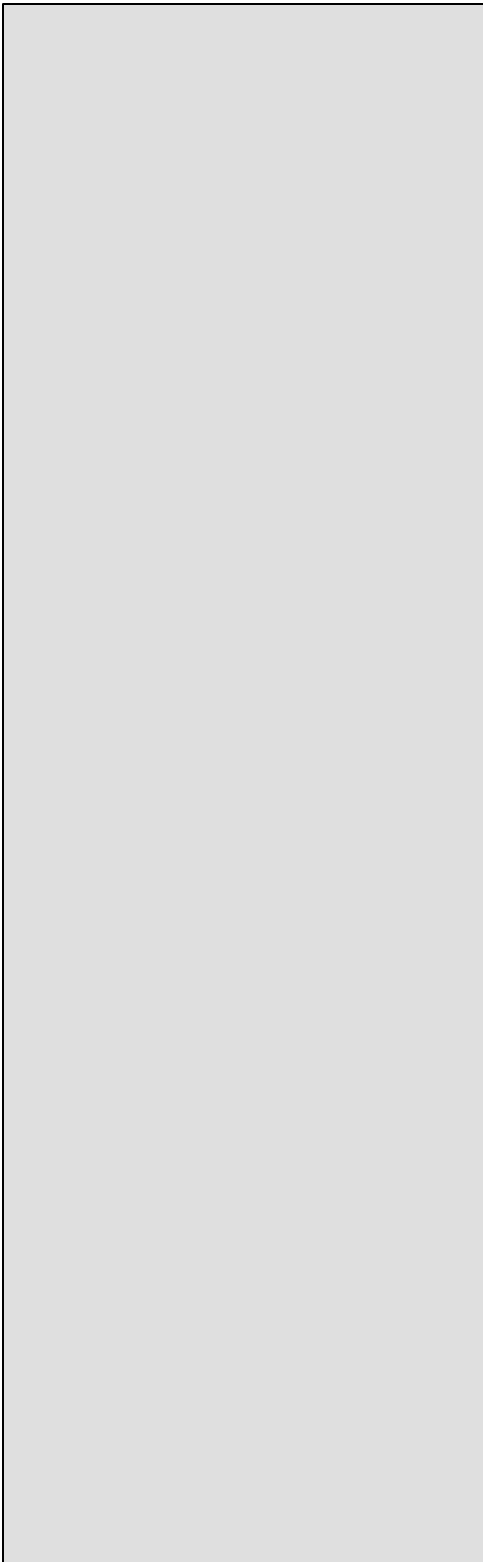
The county should appoint a standing commission to continuously identify efficiency and effectiveness measures for government. County leadership should identify a group of individuals to review selected components of government and suggest workable strategies that would improve governmental performance.

An independent commission working in collaboration with the county would continue the effort to make county government more effective. The changes recommended in this report are all aimed at improving the county’s competitive position. However, this effort is not a static process. Allegheny County must continue to become more efficient in its delivery of necessary services. The independent commission can be used to work with existing county management and outside agencies in a variety of ways such as:

- Conducting performance audits of selected county services;

*“We always try to hire the best and brightest. It is the only way for government to do business today.”*

James M. Bourey  
County Administrator  
Hennepin County, MN

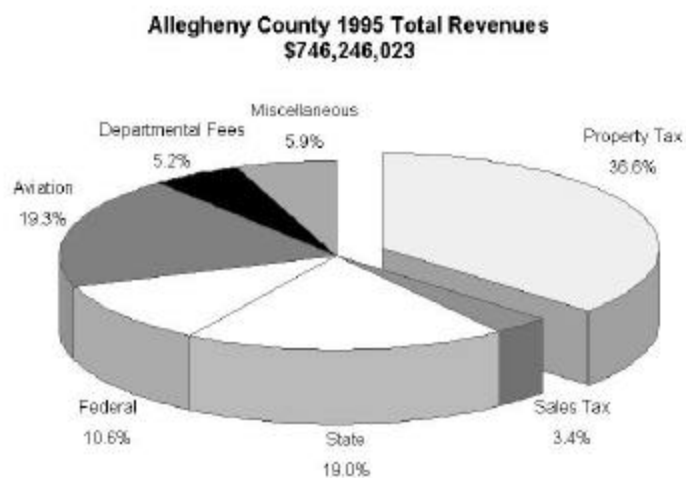


- Developing performance standards to measure the cost-effectiveness of services;
- Examining the impact of changes in the level of services to be offered in selected areas;
- Considering new approaches to the provision of services;
- Examining the rationale for the county continuing to be responsible for a service;
- Determining ways to improve upon the efficiency of selected service-delivery systems; and
- Working to develop cooperative means to jointly deliver services with other units of government.

## Finance of County Government

### Strengthen Government Financing

- Reduce Reliance on Property Tax
- Develop a Fair and Equitable Property Tax Assessment System
- Adopt Spending and Anti-Windfall Limitations



Any jurisdiction should have a blend of revenues to support its activities. A blend of revenues protects against downturns in a single revenue source and distributes the cost of government more equitably across the various sectors of the economy and the population.

### Property Tax

Allegheny County, like all counties in Pennsylvania, is overly reliant on the property tax. An effective taxation system includes a mix of taxes that are regional, easily and inexpensively administered, proportional or progressive, and easily understood by the subjects of the tax.

The Committee recommends a revenue-neutral shift away from the property tax. Allegheny County should have the authority to levy other types of taxes including sales (above the current one percent level) or income.

### **Fair and Equitable Property Assessment System**

Allegheny County is responsible for determining the property values that all jurisdictions use as the basis of levying property taxes. An assessment system must be modern and trustworthy. As recent controversies have demonstrated, the county has not succeeded in past efforts to develop such a system. There can be vast discrepancies in the assessed value of similar homes on a single street. Also, homeowners in the poorer areas can sometimes be dramatically over-assessed compared to wealthier parts of the county.

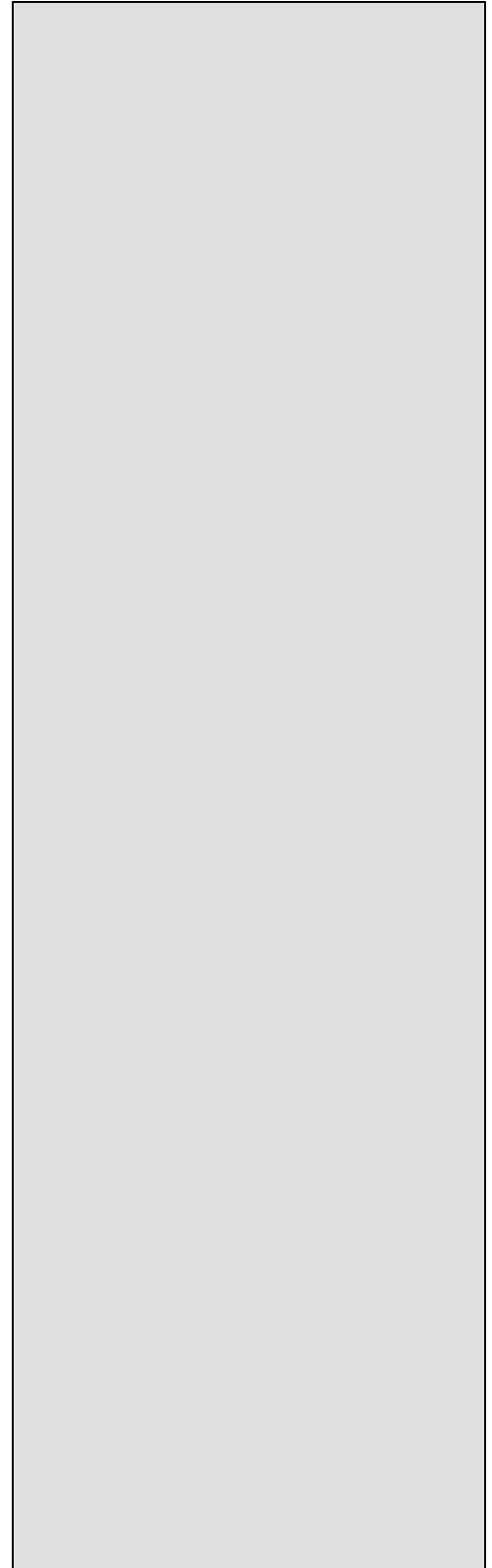
A good assessment system should:

- *Pursue fair market value on an annual basis.*
- *Utilize a 100% valuation measure.*
- *Have well trained, well equipped, certified assessors*
- *Utilize computerized mass appraisal systems*
- *Have the legal authority to obtain necessary information on each property*

In Allegheny County, property owners pay tax on 25% of assessed property value. Some neighboring jurisdictions levy tax on 100% of a property's value. This can have the effect of causing Allegheny County's tax rates to appear to be exorbitantly high when compared to other municipalities. Therefore, the Committee recommends changing to a 100% valuation plan. This would be accompanied by a proportionate lowering of millage, theoretically from 31.5 mills to 7.875 mills. While this would not change the amount of property tax paid by residents and businesses, the perception of a lower tax rate, particularly in relation to those of neighboring counties, is very important.

### **Spending and Anti-Windfall Limitations**

On the assumption that new government structures and taxing powers are adopted, it is important for the public to feel protected against unreasonable and hidden increases in spending of county tax dollars. Several jurisdictions have implemented spending and anti-windfall limitations that can only be overridden by substantial majorities of the legislative body. With the exception of mandated programs, the Committee recommends adoption of similar budget limitations.



## Governmental Structure

### **Provide Strong County Leadership**

- Elect a County Executive
- Appoint a Professional Manager
- Elect a County Council
- Reduce Ten Row Offices to Two

The county as a unit of government can be traced to seventh century England. The practice of using three county commissioners as a combined executive/legislative body is indigenous to Pennsylvania and dates back to the early 1700's. The majority of today's urban counties rely instead upon a single executive as leader. This development recognizes the growing importance and complexity of county governments. Nationally, there is almost an even split between those urban counties that elect a single executive along with a council that serves as the legislative body and those that simply elect a council which then appoints a professional manager.

While either of these two forms of government would be preferable to the current commission model, the ComPAC 21 Committee strongly believes that the need for county leadership dictates that there be a single elected executive to direct the county in its quest to move toward effective and efficient government. That type of leadership cannot be provided by a three member board of county commissioners. Regardless of the individual capabilities of the three commissioners, leadership by committee does not lend itself to the innovative decisions that are now necessary to move Allegheny County successfully into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The cost of the current Commissioners and their staff is estimated to be approximately \$2 million. The Committee believes that the recommendations dealing with the elected executive and the council can be implemented in such a way that there is both a cost savings in excess of \$500,000 to county residents plus enhanced leadership and management in Allegheny County.

### **Elected Executive**

The Committee recommends that Allegheny County should be led by a single elected executive. Allegheny County urgently needs government modernization and focused economic development. These kinds of changes require central administrative and political authority. No major corporation is operationally led by a committee. In today's world of



aggressive regional competition, government needs a single strong and forward-thinking leader.

In addition to being the chief policy maker of the county, this individual would be the chief representative and spokesperson for the entire region. Key responsibilities of this position would include representing the region at the state, federal, and international levels.

The creation of an elected executive in combination with a county council establishes the checks and balances system that is typical of government in the United States and promotes accountability for governmental, political, and community leadership.

**County Manager**

Today’s complex urban county government is responsible for many diverse services ranging from specialized police functions such as bomb disposal, to the care of abused children, to road repair and maintenance. The effective provision to this vast array of services requires the oversight of a professional county manager. The political leadership should focus on overall vision and policy, while the manager concentrates on the day-to-day management of county operations. Further, because of the importance of management, strategic planning, and budgeting functions, this office is specifically included within the manager’s operation.

It is essential that the manager be a professional and highly qualified individual. In order to select the best possible person who will be able to work effectively with both the elected executive and the council, a specific selection process has been outlined by the Committee. Under the proposal, the county council is responsible for conducting a thorough and comprehensive search for candidates for the county manager position. The council identifies three candidates that best meet the criteria of an experienced and professional manager. The three names are then submitted to the elected executive in alphabetical order. The elected executive selects the manager from the submitted names. The process can be repeated if the executive is not able to select or hire a satisfactory candidate. The manager would serve at the pleasure of the elected executive. The manager, in conjunction with the executive, would assemble the team of department directors to operate county government.

**Election of County Council**

A council of 11 to 15 members would form the legislative branch of government. The size of the council is necessary to insure

*“Montgomery county elects an executive to provide leadership to the community and appoints a manager to handle the day-to-day administrative duties. Having previously worked for Allegheny County, I know that the county would benefit greatly from a new form of government”*

Tim Firestine  
Finance Manager  
Montgomery County

*“We believe the implementation of these recommendations will result in cost savings of millions of dollars of taxpayers’ money and better enable Allegheny County to lead us into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”*

Dr. John E. Murray, Jr.  
ComPAC 21 Chairperson

geographic yet diverse representation. The members would primarily be elected by district but there would be several at-large members to represent countywide interests. The at-large member receiving the highest number of votes in the general election would serve as council president. While election by district would provide for representative government, many of the county’s responsibilities require officials who bring a countywide perspective to their duties. The combination council provides for both.

The council would be vested with the power to pass ordinances and resolutions, approve cabinet level appointments submitted by the manager in conjunction with the executive, and pass annual operating and capital budgets.

Council members should be motivated by civic interests. The council will serve on a part-time basis and a stipend would be paid to cover reasonable expenses and lost wages. The council should function as a truly legislative body allowing the executive branch to conduct the affairs of the county according to adopt budgets and resolutions. Therefore, minimal staff should be necessary.

### **Row Offices**

Allegheny County has ten row offices which are held by 11 independently elected individuals (the office of Jury Commissioner is held by two people). Except for those offices which provide a governmental oversight function, there is no need for the independent election of offices such as the Register of Wills and the Recorder of Deeds. The continued existence of such separate entities is inconsistent with the adoption of a strong executive form of government. These functions should be under the control and responsibility of the executive branch.

The Controller and District Attorney should be maintained as independently elected officials. The Controller should continue to be elected to maintain the Controller’s ability to perform independent post-audits of county activities. The District Attorney should continue to be elected because this office is responsible for the legal oversight of government activities. The remaining row offices should be eliminated and their duties assumed under the executive branch of county government.

## The ComPAC 21 Process

### Total Quality Methodology

The Committee agreed to pursue its analysis through a total quality methodology. It rejected the approach of focusing specific parts of the current Allegheny County structure with recommendations to fix pieces that did not appear to be working effectively. In the language of total quality management, such efforts constitute “tinkering” with a process. It has been clearly demonstrated that such an attempt at piecemeal repair unwittingly creates other problems by failing to take a comprehensive approach through reengineering all of the processes in an organization.

### The Committee

The ComPAC 21 process was directed by a fourteen member committee composed of Allegheny County citizens representing myriad interests in the county including representatives from four universities, secondary schools, the business community, labor, the professions, community and neighborhood leaders, and civic leaders. Dr. John E. Murray, Jr., President of Duquesne University, served as the Chairperson of the Committee. Dr. Murray appointed the committee members, who served with no compensation.

The Committee was staffed by the Pennsylvania Economy League. The costs of staffing and expenses of collecting and distilling data as well as visits to comparison counties were defrayed by a grant from Allegheny County and other grants from foundations.

### The Study Process

The Committee chose a total quality reengineering approach that begins with a clean sheet of paper to create a totally new paradigm that would insure the goals and aspirations of all of our citizens for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in terms of governmental structure. Under this approach, the methodology is to ask the question, “If we were to create county government for the first time for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, what would that structure be?” This approach avoids the mistakes of “tinkering” and produces the best model of county government under our particular circumstances.

### The Benchmarking Process

A primary component of the ComPAC21 process included benchmarking six counties throughout the United States that could serve as models for Allegheny County. After a careful examination of many counties in the United States, the Committee chose six counties as models of quality government

and economic progress. The selected counties and their center cities were:

- Davidson County (Nashville, Tennessee - a consolidated city and county)
- Hennepin County (Minneapolis, Minnesota)
- King County (Seattle, Washington)
- Mecklenburg County (Charlotte, North Carolina)
- Milwaukee County (Milwaukee, Wisconsin)
- Montgomery County (Rockville, Maryland)

These counties were selected for a variety of reasons including the following:

- Positive reputations throughout the country for best government mental practices
- Known economic competitors of the Pittsburgh region
- Other rust belt and/or industrial areas
- Representative mix of governmental structure

The staff visited each of these counties and met with a variety of governmental, economic development, nonprofit, business and labor leaders. The benchmarking process was very informative and served as the basis for the development of this report's recommendations. The ComPAC 21 Committee and staff are extremely appreciative of the assistance provided by many individuals and organizations in each of the benchmark counties. This report could not have been prepared without their involvement.

## Implementation

There are many ways of implementing the following recommendations. Some, like the county manager and the reorganization of county departments, can be implemented immediately by the County Commissioners under their existing authority. Other recommendations, such as countywide land use planning, would require changes to state laws.

Some people believe that the populace should be given an opportunity to vote on selected major changes, such as the election of a single executive. Implementing such recommendations through the development of a home rule charter would allow such an opportunity. An alternative to that model would be to adopt the Second Class County Code as the Home Rule Charter and then

make appropriate changes in the Charter. The ComPAC 21 Committee stands ready to assist the newly elected Commissioners with the implementation phase of this process.

The ComPAC 21 effort was designed to develop a more efficient, effective, and professional county government able to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While cost reduction was not the primary concern, the implementation of these recommendations will result in immediate savings of at least ten million dollars annually. This figure will undoubtedly increase significantly over time.



**The ComPAC 21 Committee**

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Duquesne Light Company

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