



Regional police the way to go

Even the 'easiest' Metro-York idea won't be easy - but it will be worthwhile.

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Nov 20, 2007 — This is the first in a series of eight editorials focusing on the Metro-York proposal put forth by YorkCounts:

Recommendation 1:

"Establish a Metro-York consolidated police department: Just as criminals are not constrained by municipal boundaries, our police should not be hamstrung by them, or by the uncertainty of annual budget debates. This department should be created using a model more permanent than a contract between municipalities - assuring that its viability would not be threatened by inflexible funding formulas. Township, Borough and City officials should not be satisfied simply with contributing certain percentages to a pot; rather, they should identify and establish a separate revenue source, such as a Community Safety tax, but not a property tax add-on. Work is already underway on this recommendation. The York City, Spring Garden, Springettsbury, York Area Regional and West Manchester Township police departments are already engaged in the

conversation, but participation would ideally go well beyond these departments."

Our thoughts:

The Metro-York leaders say that of all their recommendations this is the "easy one," the one with the most "traction."

Several local police chiefs have at least bought into the concept - if not necessarily a specific plan of action. They, better than anyone else, understand that it makes more sense to have larger departments that can afford to have specialists in various areas of law enforcement. They know that such a regional department would allow them to better aim resources at problem areas, so the problems don't spread.

But do *the people* understand that this makes sense?

We'll see.

While Metro-York officials say many local municipal officials are on board with such a plan, there's clearly some nervousness about it. When this idea surfaced a couple of months ago, one Springettsbury Township official quickly wrote a letter to the editor saying any movement in this direction would be a long, deliberative process.

The idea is also going to encounter resistance from some suburban homeowners who don't want their tax dollars to go to fight the city'

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