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## Bill de Blasio's Budget-Busting Hiring Spree

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The Editorial Board

To Mayor de Blasio, reports that the city is hiring at a historic pace come as a badge of honor:

“We have absolutely increased the amount of public employment,” he proudly told the Association for a Better New York Friday morning.

Since de Blasio took office, the city payroll has soared from 297,148 to 313,092 workers, with a target of 323,000 by next summer, representing a rate of growth that matches or exceeds the pace of private sector job creation

The hiring spurt is unsustainable, excessive and dangerous.

Private sector jobs are most welcome, because they signal that businesses are opening and expanding. There is no doubt that those firms are taking on only as many new employees as they feel are needed to succeed.

At the same time, de Blasio has boosted the payroll without engaging in the constant belt-tightening that brought efficiencies under former Mayor Bloomberg.

The consequence is that the mayor too often relies on new hiring to launch new programs or, he hopes, improve service delivery.

Some are clearly necessary, such as beefing up the NYPD.

The rationales for others are less certain.

Twelve city agencies are forecast to add more than 300 full-time and full-time-equivalent positions by next summer.

Those include the Administration for Children’s Services (which already benefited from more caseworker hires a year ago), Department of Sanitation, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services and the Department of Buildings.

As night follows day, the budget will rise — now and into the future in terms of increased pension, health care and other obligations.

“Every hire is \$100,000 a year, in cost of compensation,” notes Carol Kellermann of the Citizens Budget Commission.

Says de Blasio: “We’re making strategic decisions. We’re constantly watching the bottom line. We believe there’s a lot of other areas we can find savings in. Other things that are less essential that we can cut back on.”



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Well, why not start cutting back now? And exactly what are the “strategic decisions”? Will they entail reducing actual checks going to actual workers?

Probably not, because the mayor may well have inflated the number of hires he expects to make, giving him the opportunity to cancel some and claim that he has saved taxpayers a phantom bundle while, in fact, boosting spending.

Since taking office, de Blasio has enjoyed good economic times and increasing revenue. When the music stops, watch out.