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Giuliani Won't Seek 3rd Term as Mayor

He renews offer to assist his successor

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Mayor Rudolph Giuliani curtailed an intensive lobbying effort to stay on the job for four more years by announcing yesterday that he had abandoned his long-shot bid to run for a third consecutive term.

"The city doesn't need division and litigation at this time," Giuliani said in disclosing that he would not accept the Conservative Party nomination for mayor. "The city needs every effort we can make to keep it unified."

But the mayor again said he was willing to remain in office for a three-month transition period if his successor seeks his assistance.

"I'll do anything that I can to make sure that the city is able to come out of this crisis," he said. "It isn't about me, and it isn't about the four candidates. It's a lot more important than that."

Despite the efforts of supporters who were "begging me to stay in the run for another term" in light of the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, Giuliani said he had told Conservative Party Chairman Michael Long that he would not be on the party's line in the November general election.

"I'm not going to be on the ballot," the mayor said. "I'm available to do the transition I offered to do. If people support it, fine."

Long said Manhattan attorney Terrence Gray would remain the Conservatives' candidate for mayor.

Giuliani, whose term expires at the end of the year, said he thought a three-month transition until April 1 would be the best course.

"Anybody who thinks they're ready for this job on Jan. 1, given the monumental tasks that lie ahead, doesn't really understand this job very well," he said. "The offer is there. If people want to accept it, they can. If they don't want to accept it, I'm not going to do anything to persuade them to accept it."

The proposed transition has received a chilly reception from Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (D-Manhattan). State Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno said yesterday that he would continue to press for a three-month extension of Giuliani's term but said it was unlikely the Democrats would go along.

Public Advocate Mark Green and Republican businessman Michael Bloomberg have both said they will go along with Giuliani's transition plan if they are elected. But Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer, who is in an Oct. 11 runoff with Green for the Democratic nomination, rejected the idea.

AP Photo

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani announces he won't push to stay in office.

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