

MCHENRY COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

LEGISLATIVE
AGENDA
2009



THE MCHENRY COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

2009 Legislative Agenda

McHenry County Council of Governments

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Introduction

On behalf of the McHenry County Council of Governments, I am pleased to present the MCCG Legislative Agenda for 2009. The Legislative Agenda was unanimously approved by MCCG members on January 28, 2009 and reflects the concerns and needs of our municipal and local government members.

In late 2008, the MCCG Legislative and Transportation Committees met jointly to identify and highlight the seminal issues of concern to municipalities and local governments in McHenry County. This agenda reflects those issues.

Overwhelmingly, road funding, mass transit and other capital improvements emerged as the main concern of the MCCG membership and as such we have identified the passage of a comprehensive capital bill as the most urgent need for McHenry County. Major population and business growth over the past two decades have resulted in increased traffic congestion to the point that the county's quality of life and economic viability are threatened unless investments are made now to the transportation infrastructure. This agenda includes the most critical projects that are needed to alleviate major congestion and to enhance the transportation network in the county. We urge the Governor and General Assembly to pass a comprehensive and economically sustainable capital plan this year.

The MCCG also recognizes that there are other issues of great concern and potential impact to local governments. We have identified five additional policy areas which are included in the agenda. These include: protecting local government revenues, identifying alternative revenue sources to fund infrastructure improvements, supporting legislation to increase local governments' ability to respond to the mortgage foreclosure crisis, maintaining TIF districts as effective tools for local government and ensuring that local governments' needs and concerns are addressed in any changes to the streamlined sales tax initiative. We look forward to working with our legislators on these issues that impact local government.

Finally, this agenda includes the legislative tenets that set forth our underlying principles when evaluating and taking a position on legislation. We believe local governments should be empowered to solve problems facing their local communities and we oppose any legislation that would infringe on this ability. We believe local government, as the government closest to the people, is in a unique and powerful position to directly impact and improve the quality of life for its citizens. We are committed to working on behalf of our local governments to support them in this endeavor.

Best Regards,



Robert Abboud President, Village of Barrington Hills
Chairman of the Legislative and Intergovernmental Committee

McHenry County Council of Governments

Legislative Agenda for 2009

☐ Comprehensive Capital Funding Plan

The McHenry County Council of Governments continues to call on the State of Illinois to fund a comprehensive capital plan, to address congestion on our transportation system. This congestion negatively affects the quality of life for residents and visitors and is a detriment to the environment. A capital plan will also provide much needed economic stimulus for the state by providing jobs and revenue for state and local governments. Investing in our transportation infrastructure (roads, transit, freight and supporting facilities) is critical to ensuring Northeast Illinois will continue to thrive. As one of the fastest growing counties in the State of Illinois, McHenry County is in particular need for infrastructure improvement. Finally, the lack of a state capital plan threatens the availability of tens of millions of federal funds designated for local transportation improvements. The members of the MCCG have identified 11 priority transportation improvements for McHenry County.

Priority Transportation Improvements:

1. Western Algonquin Bypass and Longmeadow Parkway (Bolz) Bridge Road
2. Illinois Route 47: from Interstate 90 to Reed Road and Reed Road to Price Road in Hebron
3. Illinois Route 31 from the western Algonquin bypass northern terminus to Rakow Road
4. Illinois Route 31 from Illinois Route 176 to Illinois Route 120 including Route 176 and Route 31 Intersection Improvements
5. The completion of a full interchange at Interstate 90 with Illinois Route 47
6. The completion of a full interchange at Interstate 90 with Illinois Route 23
7. The eastern McHenry bypass and Miller Road / Chapel Hill Road from Illinois Route 31 to Illinois Route 120
8. The Marengo bypass
9. The Richmond bypass
10. Illinois Route 14 Widening from Crystal Lake Avenue to Lake Shore Drive in Woodstock
11. Union Pacific Northwest New Start Project

▣ Protect Local Government Revenues and Reject Unfunded Mandates on Local Governments

Loss of sales taxes, property taxes, building permit and investment revenue along with increased costs for fuel, road salt, employee health insurance and other costs have significantly strained local government budgets over the past few years. In many cases local governments have been forced to lay off workers, enact hiring freezes and defer infrastructure or capital improvements threatening their ability to deliver vital services to their residents. The MCCG calls on our state legislators to protect local governments from fund diversions and unfunded mandates.

▣ Identify Alternative Revenue Sources to Fund Infrastructure Improvements

The MCCG is encouraged by the new leadership in the State and General Assembly and renewed support for a capital bill this year. Should traditional sources of revenue fall short of meeting the State's significant infrastructure needs, the General Assembly should consider alternative revenue sources to fund infrastructure projects- especially those that have received federal funding commitments.

▣ Support Legislation to Increase Local Governments' Ability to Respond to the Mortgage Foreclosure Crisis

The MCCG believes that legislation is needed on the state level to allow local communities to mitigate the problems that foreclosed and abandoned properties can create. Along with other regional councils of government, the MCCG supports legislation that would require municipalities to receive notification of 1. foreclosure initiation; 2. completed foreclosure sales; and 3. completed tax sales. The MCCG also supports legislation that would allow municipalities to create land banks.

▣ Maintain TIF Districts as Effective Tools for Local Governments

Tax Increment Finance Districts (TIFs) are essential tools for communities in revitalizing neighborhoods, furthering economic development and improving quality of life. The current statutory limitations on TIFs are extremely rigorous and ensure that TIFs are only created where appropriate. The McHenry County Council of Governments opposes any moratoria or greater restrictions upon the use and creation of new TIF Districts and TIF Districts already in place. The MCCG also expresses concern regarding recent actions on the part of the Governor to veto TIF extensions that had received the support of the taxing bodies and their larger communities affected by the proposed TIF Districts.

▣ Streamlined Sales Tax

In December 2007, the Streamlined Sales Tax Governing Board approved amendments to the agreement regarding sourcing rules to allow states to maintain origin sourcing rules on intrastate sales. However, there are still significant issues with the Streamlined Sales Tax Project's point of sale rules, which if not addressed, could have a negative impact on municipalities. The MCCG supports the Streamlined Sales Tax Project Agreement as amended provided definitional issues are resolved. The MCCG also believes that the Agreement must allow municipalities to have access to sales tax collection records from the Illinois Department of Revenue, conduct a detailed study by the Department of the impact on each municipality of both the sourcing rules and potential increased revenues from expanded tax base due to the collection of taxes on the internet, catalogue and other remote sales and include a guaranteed mitigation plan which will hold harmless any municipality which may possibly lose revenues from the effects of the sales tax changes.

Legislative Tenets of the McHenry County Council of Governments

- Support legislation granting additional permissive authority for counties, townships, and municipalities;
- Support legislation allowing counties, townships and both home rule and non-home rule municipalities to expand non-property tax revenue sources;
- Oppose unfunded mandates imposed by the state or federal government;
- Oppose legislation that would reduce the existing authority of county, township, or municipal government;
- Oppose proposals that erode the existing county, township, or municipal revenue base; and
- Support legislation upholding local and regional land planning and zoning authority.

MCCG Membership

Municipal Members

Village of Algonquin
Village of Barrington Hills
City of Crystal Lake
Village of Fox River Grove
Village of Greenwood
City of Harvard
Village of Hebron
Village of Huntley
Village of Island Lake
Village of Johnsburg
Village of Lake in the Hills
Village of Lakemoor
Village of Lakewood
City of Marengo
Village of McCullom Lake
City of McHenry
Village of Prairie Grove
Village of Richmond
Village of Ringwood
Village of Spring Grove
Village of Trout Valley
Village of Union
City of Woodstock

Supporting Members

Ancel, Glink, Diamond, Bush, DiCianni
& Krafthefer, P.C.
Christopher B. Burk Engineering, Ltd.
Commonwealth Edison
Hampton, Lenzini & Renwick, Inc.
Lamp, Incorporated
Trotter and Associates
Zanck, Coen & Wright P.C.

Local Government Members

McHenry County
Algonquin Township
Grafton Township
McHenry Township
Richmond Township
Seneca Township
Lake in the Hills Sanitary District
McHenry County College
McHenry County Conservation District
Northern Moraine Water Reclamation
District

Our Mission

The McHenry County Council of Governments is a cohesive network of governmental bodies who seek to foster cooperation between all levels of government. The purpose of the McHenry County Council of Governments is to uphold and advocate principles of effective local government, facilitate solutions to regional issues, and otherwise lessen the burdens of government.

Our History

The McHenry County Council of Governments is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization created in 1976 to foster intergovernmental cooperation among municipalities and other local governments in McHenry County and to address issues of mutual concern. The organization was made more formal in 2002-2003 with the adoption of by-laws. In 2004, member municipalities began paying dues in proportion to their population and assessed valuation and in 2005, the first part-time Executive Director was hired. The MCCG is recognized as one of several regional councils of government and is a member of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus.