



South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association 2023 State Legislative Priorities

The South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA), an intergovernmental agency representing 45 municipalities and nearly 750,000 residents, serves communities that have long struggled for inclusive economic growth. Unfortunately, SSMMA communities have yet to recover from historic commercial redlining, the Housing Crisis of 2009, the Great Recession, and the COVID pandemic.

Our priorities include solutions that allow us to turn the tide on the decades-long economic downturn—but we need the State to act as our partners on the arduous path to stability and sustainability. Together, we can truly “build back better” and achieve transformational inclusive economic growth in the South Suburbs.

We call upon Illinois leaders— now, when the State of Illinois has achieved its best fiscal shape in decades—to make improving the economic quality of life in the Southland a top priority so that our communities also see a strong and equitable recovery in 2023.

SSMMA’s 2023 Legislative Agenda:

1. SECURE AND PROTECT PROMISED REVENUES

Restore Local Government Distributive Funds (LGDF) to 10%. Local governments need sufficient resources to limit the reliance on property taxes to fund vital services. LGDF dollars fund everything from the salaries of police officers and firefighters to garbage pick-up, road repairs, maintenance, flood prevention, and large scale infrastructure projects. Increasing LGDF levels would allow communities to fund basic services *and* reinvest in critical roads and water infrastructure projects or other important local initiatives without going to local taxpayers.

2. ADDRESS PENSION COSTS AND DEBT OBLIGATIONS

Extend the 2040 Pension Amortization Deadline. Governor Pritzker and lawmakers took steps to stabilize the downstate public safety pension system starting with consolidation of pension boards and moving towards consolidation of investments. The promised savings have not been felt yet and meeting the current deadline consumes growing amounts of local revenues. Extending the amortization deadline to 2050 is needed as it would provide immediate financial relief; the State should also continue to explore ways to further stabilize and ensure pension long term sustainability.

3. IMPROVE COMMUNITY SAFETY

Fund SAFE-T Act Requirements. Last year’s SAFE-T Act called for new regulations and opportunities for municipalities whose principle responsibility is to provide for, and maintain, the safety and well being of residents. We now face implementing requirements such as use of officer-worn body cameras that came as an unfunded mandate. Without additional funds, this presents a difficulty for many resource-limited local governments. In addition, we face an immediate crisis as we uniformly struggle to fill and retain police, fire, and EMT vacancies; and work to intervene with youth and break the cycle of crime in our communities. Providing training resources for EMS personnel, aligning state and national testing programs, and expanding behavioral health and mentorship opportunities can begin to address some of these systemic challenges and improve safety within our communities.

4. ENSURE STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Fund lead service line replacement and other important infrastructure investments. Lead pipes have long been a hidden threat to the children in our communities. With aging infrastructure and more and more system failures, this is now an environmental injustice crisis. Adequate State resources should be provided to eligible communities that have a backlog of critical infrastructure projects that are long needed for the well being of the community. Likewise, other important infrastructure projects should be fast tracked to spur inclusive economic growth and jobs, including the South Suburban Airport, a State Police Forensics Lab and Training Center at Lincolnway North High School, expanded highspeed broadband, and other transformative investments in the Southland.



SSMMA looks forward to working with Governor Pritzker and General Assembly members this year. Our Legislative Program reflects the collective consideration and position of member municipalities. Together, we hope that we succeed in accelerating transformational inclusive economic growth in the South Suburbs.

With the State's improved fiscal position and rosier future, we call upon lawmakers to partner with us to allow ALL Illinoisans to benefit and prosper. **Strategic investments today means communities across the Southland rebound and realize a strong and equitable recovery tomorrow.**

Please contact President Bob Kolosh, Legislative Chairman Richard Reinbold, or Executive Director Kristi DeLaurentiis if you have questions about SSMMA's 2023 Legislative Priorities or SSMMA communities' needs.

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SSMMA represents the communities of Alsip, Beecher, Blue Island, Burnham, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Chicago Heights, Country Club Hills, Crestwood, Crete, Dixmoor, Dolton, East Hazel Crest, Flossmoor, Ford Heights, Glenwood, Harvey, Hazel Crest, Homewood, Lansing, Lynwood, Markham, Matteson, Midlothian, Mokena, Monee, Oak Forest, Olympia Fields, Orland Hills, Orland Park, Park Forest, Peotone, Phoenix, Posen, Richton Park, Riverdale, Robbins, Sauk Village, South Chicago Heights, South Holland, Steger, Thornton, Tinley Park, University Park, and Worth.