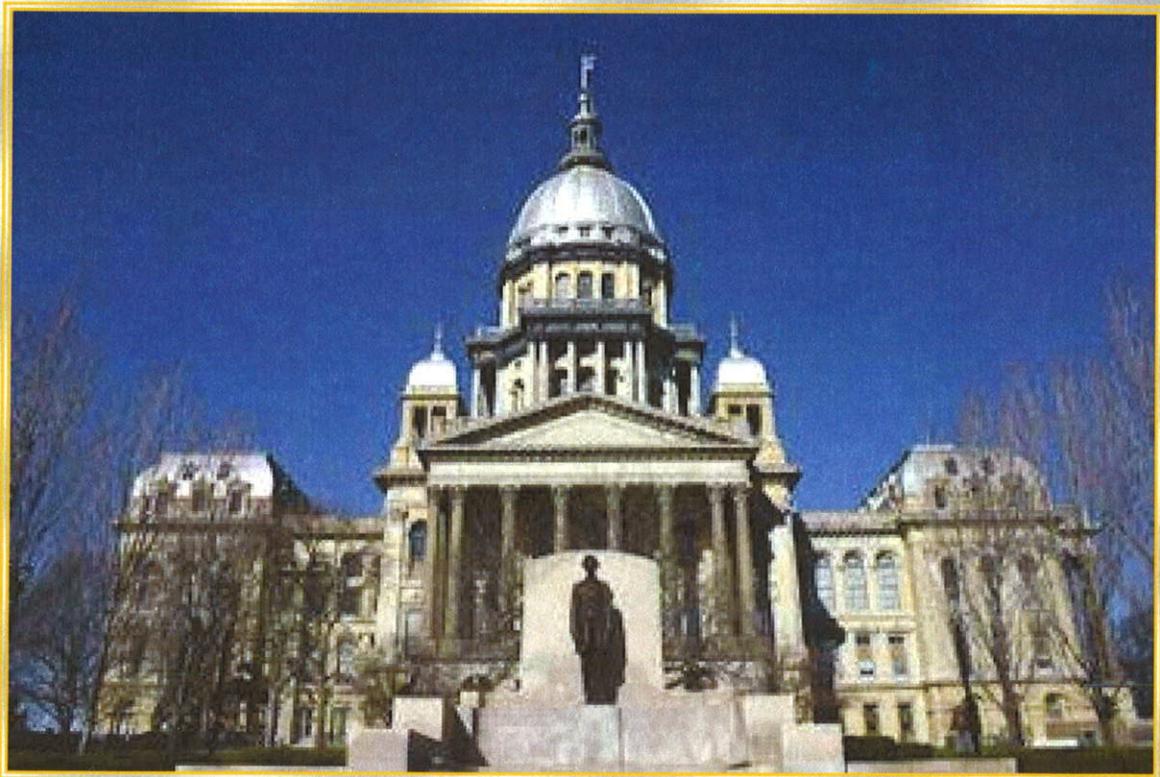
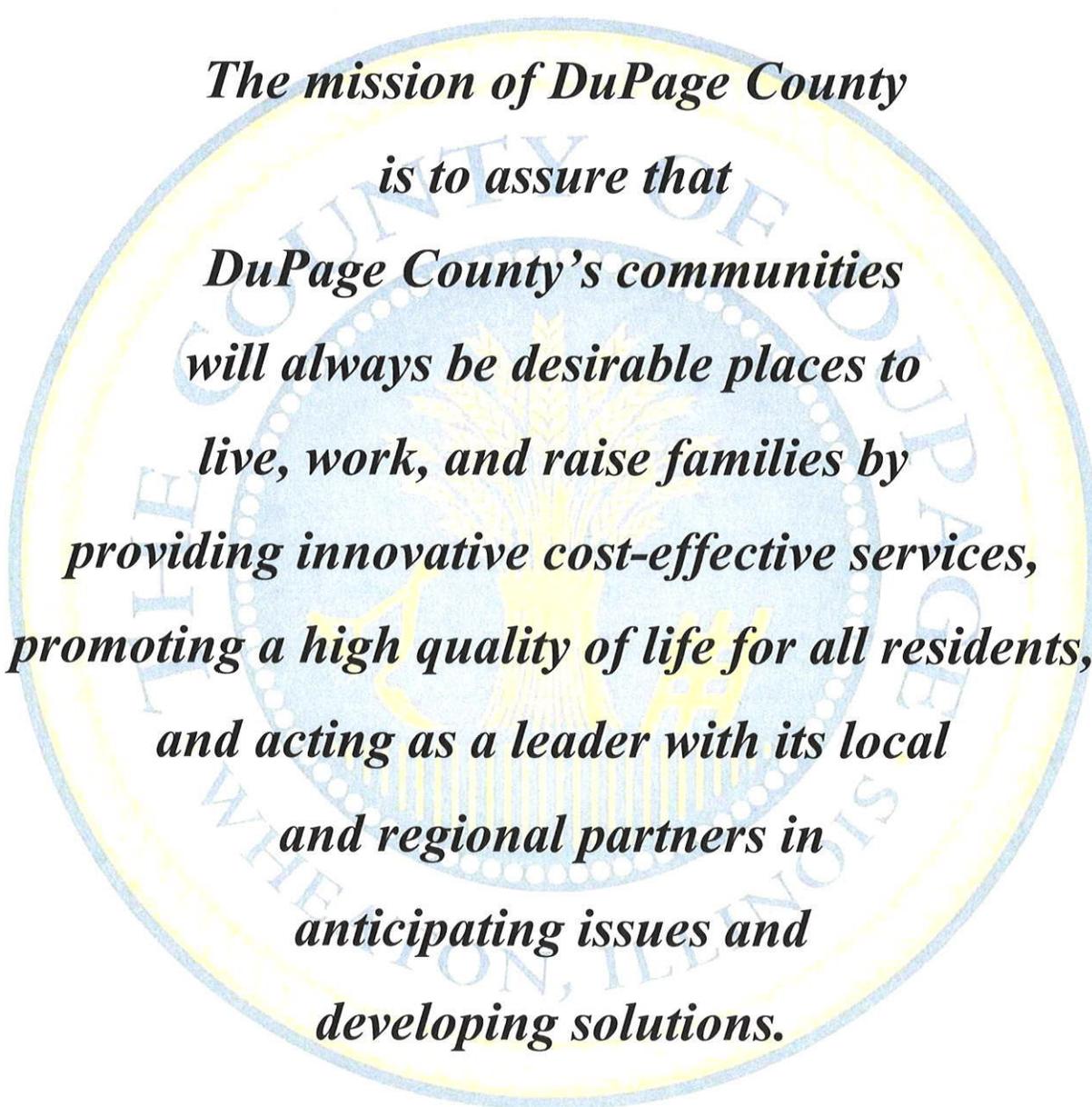


# 2011 State Legislative Agenda



DuPage County, Illinois

The seal of DuPage County, Illinois, is a circular emblem. It features a central figure, likely a personification of Justice or Liberty, holding a scale and a sword. The seal is surrounded by a ring of text that reads "THE COUNTY OF DUPAGE ILLINOIS". The seal is rendered in a light blue and yellow color scheme.

*The mission of DuPage County  
is to assure that  
DuPage County's communities  
will always be desirable places to  
live, work, and raise families by  
providing innovative cost-effective services,  
promoting a high quality of life for all residents,  
and acting as a leader with its local  
and regional partners in  
anticipating issues and  
developing solutions.*



# DuPage County 2011 Legislative Agenda

## County Board Chairman

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## Legislative & Governmental Affairs Committee

- James D. Healy - Chairman
- Dirk Enger - Vice-Chairman
- Jerry "JR" McBride
- Michael F. McMahon
- Patrick J. O'Shea
- Donald E. Puchalski

## County Board

### DISTRICT 1

Paul Fichtner (R) Elmhurst  
Rita Gonzalez (D) Addison  
Donald E. Puchalski (R) Addison

### DISTRICT 2

Patrick J. O'Shea (R) Lombard  
Jeff Redick (R) Elmhurst  
Brien Sheahan (R) Elmhurst

### DISTRICT 3

John F. Curran (R) Woodridge  
Brian J. Krajewski (R) Downers Grove  
Michael F. McMahon (R) Hinsdale

### DISTRICT 4

Grant Eckhoff (R) Wheaton  
Jerry "JR" McBride (R) Glen Ellyn  
Debra Olson (R) Wheaton

### DISTRICT 5

James D. Healy (R) Naperville  
Anthony Michelassi (D) Aurora  
John P. Zediker (R) Naperville

### DISTRICT 6

Dirk Enger (D) Winfield  
Robert L. Larsen (R) Wheaton  
James F. Zay Jr. (R) Carol Stream



## Overview

### **DuPage County 2011 Legislative Agenda**

DuPage County is the second largest county in Illinois, approaching one million residents, and is comprised of 33 municipalities and 9 townships. DuPage is a major employment center for northeastern Illinois, home to over 700,000 jobs as well as 16 colleges, 7 hospitals, 2 federal research facilities, 300 miles of bikeways and 24,000 acres of forest preserve property.

Residents elect the County Board Chairman, nine other Countywide Officials, and 18 members of the County Board (three from each of six County Board Districts). Core county government services include public safety and the operation of the county jail, court administration, transportation, health and mental health care, stormwater management, workforce and employment training, public works, building and permitting, the operation of the convalescent center, community and senior services plus animal control.

Currently, the county is experiencing growth and population changes that are redefining DuPage. Few large tracts of land remain undeveloped, resulting in higher densities and redevelopment that are causing new demands on infrastructure, public safety, flood control facilities and transportation services. The population is becoming more diverse and a rapidly growing senior citizen population has increased the need for community services.

DuPage County has changed from a growing suburban county to a mature, urban environment. As a result, county sales tax revenues have slowed to little or no growth while the demand for county services continues to rise, particularly in the areas of health care, the courts, public safety, senior services and mental health care. Declining federal and state funding has also strained local resources, potentially impacting the delivery of services.

Maintaining a high quality of life for all DuPage residents remains the top priority of county government.



## *Legislative Priorities*

### **DuPage County 2011 Legislative Agenda**

**Equitable Application of Statutory Fines** – Currently, 55% of traffic offenders in DuPage County elect not to appear in court and are permitted to pay only their bail amount through the mail. Due to this current loophole in state law, those who prepay for their criminal offenses are not subject to any fees/fines enacted by the General Assembly as a penalty for committing the offense, such as the Children’s Center Fee or the Mental Health/Drug Court Fee. As a result, individuals who elect to appear in court are penalized for exercising their constitutional right to appear while those guilty of a similar offense are only required to pay their bail amount if they opt to pay by mail. One way to provide equity to the administration of justice would be to enact legislation to apply the statutory penalties already prescribed by the General Assembly to all offenders including those who do not appear in court.

**Extend 9-1-1 Surcharge for ETSB** – Extend the repeal of the Wireless Emergency Telephone System Surcharge beyond the present sunset date of April 1, 2013 until January 1, 2019. Currently, the DuPage (ETSB) receives .32 cents of a .50 cents per landline surcharge (charged monthly by phone companies) and .45 cents of a .73 cents per wireless line surcharge. Revenues are used to support dispatch and the ancillary services required to ensure a timely and appropriate response to all 9-1-1 calls placed in the county. As the demand for landlines and the resulting revenues decline, should the wireless surcharge not be extended, ETSB systems will lack the funds to support the cost of the advanced technology necessary to continue to protect the health and safety of our citizens.

**Self-Managed Pension Program for New Hires** – Although the General Assembly has enacted legislation that creates a Two-Tier pension system for new government hires as of January 1, the underperformance of state mandated pension plans in recent years will cost local governments millions of dollars in additional contributions over the next ten years. For 2011, DuPage County will contribute 10.41% for each (regular plan) IMRF employee and employees will contribute 4.5%. Local government employers struggling to sustain current state mandated pension programs should be provided with the authorization to offer new employees a self-managed (defined contribution) retirement option.



## **DuPage County 2011 Legislative Agenda**

**Oppose Alteration of RTA Appointments** – It is expected that legislation will be introduced during the spring session that removes the authority of the Collar County Chairmen to share in the appointment process of members to the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Metra and Pace Boards, including the RTA Chairman, and transfer that authority to the Governor. The present structure fosters regional cooperation and consensus between agencies, county, and local governments and was agreed to by all parties when the RTA was created in 1982 and reaffirmed in early 2008. Collar County taxpayers contribute financially to support the RTA/Metra/Pace and should continue therefore to be represented through the appointment process.

**Coordination of Medicaid Transportation & Ride DuPage** – The County's Department of Community Services is investigating how the County could potentially serve as a Model Demonstration project that would combine the separate services currently provided under the Ride DuPage program and the State's Medicaid Transportation program. Today, services are not coordinated yet often serve similar clientele in the same geographic areas. Should the transportation services be coordinated, Ride DuPage could benefit from an increased number of riders and the State's Medicaid Transportation program could benefit from reduced costs to transport Medicaid recipients to and from medical appointments from a locally bid, lower cost provider.

**Web Publication of Assessments** – With expanded use of the internet in recent years, County Assessors (and DuPage County) continue to support legislation to permit the publication of property tax assessments on an internet website in lieu of costly newspaper publication. During general assessment years, DuPage County spends over \$400,000 in taxpayer funds to publish assessment notices yet since 2004, the county's website has contained the identical information. DuPage County supports House Bill 9 and similar legislative initiatives that reduce or eliminate this unfunded mandate on county governments.



## *Supported Items*

### **DuPage County 2011 Legislative Agenda**

**Open & Deliberative Process** – During the closing days of the 96<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, a myriad of major policy decisions were addressed by lame duck legislators in a matter of days, often behind closed doors, including the largest income tax increase in over thirty years yet public notice that these significant issues were to be acted upon was limited to a few hours in some instances. This lack of transparency and openness in the governmental process left citizens without an opportunity to provide crucial input and members of the General Assembly without an opportunity to adequately examine major policy decisions that will dramatically impact the future of our State.

All other units of government are subject to the Illinois Open Meetings Act that requires at least 48 hours notice before a public body may act on a specific item (DuPage County Board Rules include a 72 hour posting requirement). The intent of the Open Meetings Act was to ensure that public business is conducted in public view, prohibiting secret deliberations and actions that should be discussed in a public forum. At a minimum, the General Assembly should be subject to all provisions of the Open Meetings Act in order to afford the public and other units of government such as DuPage County with the opportunity to at least offer comments to our legislators concerning bills that impact the operation of county government and our citizens.

**Government Consolidation** – DuPage County supports legislation that would authorize, remove barriers, or provide additional incentives to local governments to centralize, dissolve, or consolidate departments and services, thereby reducing over time the number of taxing districts in a region, while also providing greater efficiencies. Illinois currently has 6,994 local governmental units, more than any other state. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) lists government consolidation as a major priority as part of the region's "GO TO 2040 Plan."



## **DuPage County 2011 Legislative Agenda**

**Develop Guidelines for Public Hearings/Zoning Process** – The County’s Economic Development Committee supports working with legislators to set in statute common sense parameters for public input at zoning, variance, and re-zoning public hearings, providing preference to those neighborhoods and entities most impacted by a proposed development. The intent would be to support legislation that offers guidelines to help apply on a consistent and uniform basis a set of minimum rules of procedure to address all stages of the zoning review process that offers ample opportunity for public comment and review while also subject to some reasonable time and relevance standards.

**Pension Reform** – It is expected that a number of bills will be introduced during the 97<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to restrict the amount of growth in state and local government pensions and to potentially provide employers with the flexibility to offer employees a variety of retirement options versus the traditional defined benefit program. DuPage County will monitor and analyze these bills to determine a future course of action.

**Auditors Exemption to Open Meetings Act** – Currently, Internal and External Auditors are prohibited from meeting confidentially with a public body’s Audit or Finance Committee to discuss potential weaknesses in the areas of internal control. The Illinois CPA Society plans to initiate legislation this session to correct this situation by providing a very narrow exemption to the Open Meetings Act that will permit Internal or External Auditors to meet in Executive Session with the appropriate governing body. DuPage County supports this legislation as it will permit confidential communication between the Finance Committee and the County Auditor or the County’s External Auditors to address such issues as suspected fraud or employee misconduct. By providing an exemption to the Act, adequate records (minutes) will also be kept of the proceedings that will be released to the public at a future date.



## Appropriations

### **DuPage County 2011 Legislative Agenda**

**Probation Funding** – The state requires counties to provide probation services as part of a mandated state court services program yet over the years, the state has steadily reduced reimbursement for probation, detention and pretrial services from 100% to less than 65% of allowable costs. In 2009, additional cuts were made, further eroding support for county probation departments to less than 40% of costs (DuPage County received an additional cut of \$1.9 million).

Several counties have taken the drastic step of laying-off probation officers, refusing to shift the financial burden of the cost of probation services onto county taxpayers. As one downstate county chairman stated, probation services are an integral part of public safety and are an extension of state government as defined under the Illinois Probation and Probation Officers Act. DuPage County supports a restoration of these dollars and an acknowledgement by the state of their responsibility to fund mandated court services.

**DuPage Convalescent Center** – The DuPage Convalescent Center provides nursing and rehabilitation care for 360 residents. The Center's three main issues for the spring session include:

1. Finalization and implementation of the Healthcare Family Services (HFS) alternate payment methodology for county nursing homes;
2. Ensuring that the recently enacted bed tax benefits the Convalescent Center financially;
3. Ensuring that the new nursing home rate methodology to be developed by the state (as of July 1, 2012) nets a positive outcome for the facility. Currently, 79% of the Center's population is on Medicaid.



## **DuPage County 2011 Legislative Agenda**

**Community Services** – The County’s Department of Community Services has a number of priorities/goals for the session including:

1. **Preventive Care** - Prevent cuts to critical programs that save state and federal resources by preventing people from utilizing more expensive services to meet their needs. Community based services for example help to keep seniors living independently in the community, preventing or delaying premature nursing home placement, which costs the state and federal government at least 3 times the cost of community based care.
2. **Coordinate Databases** - Cross matching more of the state databases and improving the state’s IT resources. The Illinois Department of Central Management Services needs to increase the coordination of government databases that would allow county staff determining eligibility for specific programs to: 1) work more efficiently by reducing duplicative data entry; 2) provide better customer service by eliminating the need for clients to produce the same documentation multiple times; 3) provide more comprehensive services by enabling workers to view what benefits clients may not be receiving; and 4) prevent potential fraud through the ability to verify eligibility requirements like income and household composition. Cross matching with LIHEAP and other databases would assist agencies in better serving clients and ensuring those in greatest need receive available services.
3. **Increase in Self-Neglect & Elder Abuse Cases** - Funding of the Self-Neglect program that was authorized under the Elder Abuse Act several years ago has yet to receive funding the time and costs associated with assisting these clients (primarily hoarders) is very expensive and will likely increase with the Bed Bug issue. Adequate funding for the Elder Abuse Program is also an issue as referrals continues to rise.

**State Highway Projects** - Traffic congestion remains a top concern among county residents. **Attached** is a list of proposed State Highway Safety and Congestion Relief Projects as well as a list of County Highway and Trail Projects. If completed, these projects would enhance safety on our roadways, offer significant congestion relief for the region, and provide additional recreational opportunities.

# Highway and Trail Improvements in DuPage County

January, 2011 List

State Highway Safety and Congestion Relief Projects		
<u>DuPage County Priority</u>	<u>Scope of Work</u>	<u>Comments</u>
IL 38 at County Farm Road	Intersection Improvement	County requests project addition to IDOT multi-year program, estimated project cost of \$10M.
IL 83, I-55 to Ogden Avenue	Reconstruction and widening to complete 6 lanes	County requests project addition to IDOT multi-year program, estimated project cost of \$52M.
Finley Road at Ogden Avenue	Intersection Improvement	County requests project addition to IDOT multi-year program, estimated project cost TBD.

County Highway and Trail Safety and Congestion Relief Projects		
<u>DuPage County Priority</u>	<u>Scope of Work</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Glen Ellyn Road - at CHRR	Drainage Improvements	\$1.5M for Construction
75th Street - Adams to Plainfield	Capacity/Additional Lanes	\$12M for Engineering and Construction
55th Street - Main and Fairview	Intersection Improvements	\$2.9M for Engineering, Land Acquisition, and Construction
Gary Avenue - GWT to Lies Road	Multi-use Trail	\$2.2M for Construction
IL Prairie Path - at CNRR	Permanent at-grade Crossing	\$1.1M for Construction
Grand Avenue - Lake to Church	Sidewalk	\$400K for Construction
Fabyan Parkway - at IL 38	Intersection Improvement	\$9M for Engineering, Land Acquisition, and Construction
31st Street - Highland to Meyers	Multi-use Trail	\$250K for Construction