



# DUPAGE COUNTY

2016 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM



Daniel J. Cronin, Chairman, DuPage County Board  
*John F. Curran, Chairman, Legislative Committee*



# DUPAGE COUNTY

2016 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



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# DUPAGE COUNTY

2016 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



## DuPage County Board



**Daniel J. Cronin**  
Chairman  
DuPage County Board

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District 1	District 2
Paul Fichtner (R—Elmhurst) Donald E. Puchalski (R—Addison) Sam Tornatore (R—Roselle)	Elizabeth Chaplin (D—Downers Grove) Peter “Pete” DiCianni (R—Elmhurst) Sean Noonan (R—Elmhurst)
District 3	District 4
John F. Curran (R—Downers Grove) Gary Grasso (R—Burr Ridge) Brian Krajewski (R—Downers Grove)	Grant Eckhoff (R—Wheaton) Amy Grant (R—Wheaton) Karyn Romano (R—Glen Ellyn)
District 5	District 6
James Healy (R—Naperville) Tonia Khouri (R—Aurora) Tony Michelassi (D-Aurora)	Robert Larsen (R—Wheaton) Kevin Wiley (R-West Chicago) James F. Zay (R—Carol Stream)

### LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

John F. Curran  
Chairman



Peter DiCianni



Tonia Khouri



Donald E. Puchalski  
Vice Chair



Karyn Romano



James F. Zay





# DUPAGE COUNTY



## 2016 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### DuPage County, Illinois

*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.*

#### General Information

Incorporated January 1, 1838

#### Cities located entirely or partly in DuPage:

Aurora, Batavia, Chicago, Darien, Elmhurst, Naperville, Oakbrook Terrace, St. Charles, Warrenville, West Chicago, Wheaton and Wood Dale

#### Villages located entirely or partly in DuPage:

Addison, Bartlett, Bensenville, Bloomingdale, Bolingbrook, Burr Ridge, Carol Stream, Clarendon Hills, Downers Grove, Elk Grove Village, Glendale Heights, Glen Ellyn, Hanover Park, Hinsdale, Itasca, Lemont, Lisle, Lombard, Oak Brook, Roselle, Schaumburg, Villa Park, Wayne, Westmont, Willowbrook, Winfield and Woodridge

#### Unincorporated communities:

Cloverdale, Eola, Flowerfield, Keeneyville, Lakewood, Medinah, Palisades, Swift and York Center

**Townships:** Addison, Bloomingdale, Downers Grove, Lisle, Milton, Naperville, Wayne, Winfield and York

#### Demographic Information

Population

Total Population: 932,126

Incorporated Population: 819,609

Unincorporated Population: 112,517

#### Race, Ethnicity, Gender

Caucasian: 81.7%

African American: 5.1%

American **Indian**/Alaska Native: 0.4%

Asian: 11.0%

Hispanic or Latino: 13.9%

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.1%

Identified by two or more: 1.8%

Male: 49.1%

Female: 50.9%

#### Colleges and Universities

College of DuPage

Wheaton College

Benedictine University

Elmhurst College

North Central College

Midwestern University

National University of Health Sciences

Northern Baptist Theological Seminary

#### Financial Information

County Budget: \$444.4 million

Sales Tax Revenue: \$102.8 million

Property Tax Revenue: \$49.1 million

Local Gas Tax Revenue: \$18.8 million

Income Tax Revenue: \$9.7 million

Fee Offices/Elected Officials: \$32.3 million

Funds on Hand: \$52.1 million

Other: \$179.6 million

Persons per Square Miles: 2,771.2

Undeveloped Land: 4.2% or 9,013 acres

Open Space: 20.8% or 44,941 acres

Total Area: 336.36 sq. miles

Total Incorporated Area: 245.26 sq. miles

Total Unincorporated Area: 91.11 sq. miles

District 1: 53.95 sq. miles

District 2: 51.01 sq. miles

District 3: 52.96 sq. miles

District 4: 39.25 sq. miles

District 5: 49.41 sq. miles

District 6: 89.78 sq. miles

#### Economic Information

Unemployment Rate: 4.2%

Number of Jobs: 544,363

Office Space Vacancy Rate: 16.9%

Industrial Space Vacancy Rate: 5.7%

Chicago Federal Reserve Midwest

Manufacturing Index: 97.4%

Bond rating: Triple A

Sales Tax Receipts: +5.56%

Housing Units: 356,625

Median Household Income: \$79,016

#### Education Attainment

High School Graduate: 19.2%

Bachelor's Degree: 28.5%

Graduate or Professional Degree: 18.2%

Percent High School degree or higher: 92.3%

Percent Bachelor's degree or higher: 46.7%



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## OVERVIEW

DuPage County is the second largest county in Illinois with 932,126 residents. The County is comprised of 9 townships, portions of 39 municipalities, and 336 square miles. DuPage is a major employment center for northeastern Illinois, home to over 544,363 jobs and 19 colleges, 7 hospitals, 2 national laboratories (Argonne National Laboratory and Fermi National Accelerator), 300 miles of bikeways and 23,000 acres of forest preserve property. Over 20% of the county is open space.

County residents elect the County Board Chairman at-large plus nine other Countywide Elected Officials: Auditor, County Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Coroner, Recorder, Regional Superintendent of Schools, Sheriff, State's Attorney, and Treasurer. The County Board includes 18 members who are elected from six County Board Districts (three members from each district).

Core county government services include the provision of: public safety and the operation of the county jail; administration of the 18<sup>th</sup> judicial circuit court; construction and maintenance of the county highway and trails system; economic development and planning; public health and mental health care services; flood control and prevention; job training and support services; water and sewer; building and permitting; zoning enforcement; the administration of countywide elections; the operation of the county nursing home; community and senior services; emergency management preparedness; and animal control.

County leaders continue to seek opportunities to reduce the size of county government in order to minimize the tax burden on residents. In addition to dissolving several county appointed agencies, the county's budget has been reduced by \$33 million since 2010 and for the eighth consecutive year, the county's FY2016 budget includes no property tax increase. DuPage continues to receive a AAA Bond Rating from the major credit rating agencies, a status achieved by less than 2% of all counties and municipalities nationwide. DuPage County government also accounts for less than 3% of an average homeowner's annual property tax bill.



# DUPAGE COUNTY

## 2016 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



### SUMMARY

**Reduce the Size, Scope and Cost of Local Government:** provide additional tools to units of local government to share services or consolidate as appropriate and empower local taxpayers to determine for themselves the level of governance they wish to support.

**Preserve LGDF:** monies allocated under the Local Government Distributive Fund do not represent a grant from state government but rather a share of income taxes paid by our citizens to be used for local purposes; the General Assembly should continue to honor this long-standing revenue sharing agreement.

**Maintain County Nursing Home's Enhanced Medicaid Rate:** restore the 12.6% cut that nursing homes received as part of the FY 2015 state budget fix and maintain the enhanced rate that county nursing homes like the DuPage Convalescent Center receive that predominately serve Medicaid recipients.

**Ensure Safe Housing for our Communities:** provide non-home rule counties and municipalities with the authority to enact Crime Free Housing Ordinances for rental properties to reduce crime and protect the safety of all residents.

**Support Non-Profit Community:** that provides a safety net for county residents through the delivery of critical services to those residents in need of our assistance.

**Protect the Public Health of County Residents:** expand access and training to first responders to administer epinephrine in emergencies.

**Provide Noise Relief for Communities Surrounding O'Hare:** support legislation that negates the impact of aircraft noise on neighborhoods and enhances the quality of life for residents.

**Expand Opportunities for Electronics Recycling:** formulate a long-term solution that offers consumers with ample opportunity to recycle residential electronics that are banned from landfills.

**Distribute Fair Share of State Tourism Grants:** increase discretionary grant funds to convention and visitor bureaus that generate significant economic returns on investment.

**Address Rising Costs of Court Operations:** develop a mechanism to help counties offset the increased costs associated with the operation of court facilities and programs including unfunded mandates such as Public Act 98-1132 that significantly increased the cost of jury compensation.

**Support Adequate Reimbursement of Probation Costs:** restore state funding/reimbursement of county probation costs that continue to rise largely due to the imposition of new state mandates.

**Capital Funding:** support critical infrastructure improvements to relieve traffic congestion, reduce flooding, and improve the health and safety of DuPage County residents.



# DUPAGE COUNTY

2016 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



## PRIORITIES

### **Reduce the Size, Scope and Cost of Local Government**

Illinois continues to lead the nation with the most units of local government, over 7,000, with nearly 400 separate taxing districts in DuPage County alone. The result; an inefficient, redundant system of overlapping government agencies delivering public services on a model established over 50 years ago that lacks accountability and wastes resources.

In order to “redesign” the structure of government at the local level, the DuPage ACT Initiative (Accountability, Consolidation, and Transparency) was created in May of 2012 to heighten the scrutiny of local government agencies and to implement a new model of governance focused on efficiency and responsibility. By challenging traditional service-delivery models, taxpayers benefit through the receipt of innovative and more cost-effective services. Government agencies benefit by maximizing the utilization of scarce resources.

In 2013, DuPage County received authority from the General Assembly to consolidate a small number of inefficient county-appointed agencies. To date, DuPage has dissolved three entities and is working towards the consolidation of three additional districts. DuPage County’s ACT Initiative can serve as a demonstration model statewide, paving the way for larger scale consolidation efforts across all levels of government.

Taxpayers would realize additional savings if the General Assembly would provide units of local government with greater autonomy and more tools to support collaboration across silos and existing boundaries. Requirements for citizen-led referendums to dissolve and consolidate local units of government should also be standardized and burdens reduced in order to place measures on the ballot.



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### **Preserve Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF)**

DuPage County currently receives an estimated \$9.7 million annually from the local government distribution of Illinois income tax proceeds. These monies do not represent a state government grant but rather a small share of the income taxes paid by our citizens to be used for local purposes. LGDF dollars meet local needs such as: support of community services; non-profit agencies; senior citizen programs; public safety and probation services; and the operation of the Convalescent Center.

DuPage County and its municipalities are subject to the same economic pressures as the state of Illinois. The County and its municipalities continue to struggle to provide basic services to our residents. Absent LGDF dollars, county leaders will have no choice but to slash or eliminate funding to local programs and services that will impact public safety, threaten our social services, and negatively impact our citizens' quality of life.

DuPage County opposes any attempts to divert the obligated local share of income tax revenues to counties and municipalities that utilize these funds to provide critical services to our residents.

### **Maintain DuPage Convalescent Center Enhanced Medicaid Rate**

As a county nursing home, the DuPage Convalescent Center receives an enhanced rate for the provision of Medicaid services from the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS). This enhanced rate (close to \$3 million annually for the Convalescent Center), was obtained through the adoption of an Intergovernmental Agreement with the state in 2011 after three years of negotiations between the county and the department. The rate was approved in recognition of the fact that the majority of county nursing home residents are Medicaid recipients (79% for the DuPage Convalescent Center). This rate was negotiated in recognition of the significant financial contributions made by county taxpayers to subsidize the care provided by county nursing homes that in part benefits the state's Medicaid program. County homes also generate a higher reimbursement rate from the federal government, providing much needed additional revenues for the state's Medicaid program.



# DUPAGE COUNTY



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Unfortunately, the FY 2015 state budget fix adopted last spring cut payments to all nursing homes by 12.6% for the remaining three months of the fiscal year. Moving forward, the original FY 2015 budget for county nursing homes should be restored and the enhanced Medicaid rate maintained.

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#### **Ensure Safe Housing for our Communities**

Grant non-home rule counties and municipalities with the same local authority that home-rule municipalities (and Cook County) currently possess to enact Crime Free Housing Ordinances for rental properties in their communities.

Crime Free Housing Ordinances are an effective crime prevention tool that increases public safety for tenants and surrounding neighborhoods by reducing crime and the presence of drugs and gang activity on apartment properties. By working proactively with property owners, tenants, and local police departments to keep illegal and nuisance activity out of rental properties, safety and property values increase. A number of local communities in DuPage County including the Village of Hanover Park have implemented Crime Free Rental Housing programs that have successfully reduced activities which negatively impact the quality of life and threaten the safety of families residing in rental housing units.

#### **Support of Non-Profit Community**

DuPage County relies on the operation of our non-profit organizations to deliver many direct services to those residents in need of our assistance. As the county's "safety net," local organizations support children in poverty, seniors and families in need of food assistance, victims of domestic violence, the homeless, and people with disabilities.



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According to a recent United Way survey, over 80% of non-profit organizations are cutting programming and staff due to the lack of state funding. DuPage County urges the State of Illinois to honor its commitment to non-profit organizations and preserve the social services safety net.

### **Protect the Public Health of County Residents**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, there's been an alarming increase in food allergies in children since 1997. The incidence of childhood food allergies is up by more than 50%. This makes childhood food allergies a major public health concern as food allergies are the cause today for over 300,000 ambulance trips to hospitals for children under age 18. Tragically, a number of deaths have resulted from severe allergic reactions (Anaphylaxis) that can occur very quickly, within a couple of minutes of exposure to the allergen. Epinephrine auto-injectors (such as the brand EpiPens) if administered within minutes, can successfully treat such reactions and save lives. Although Illinois law permits certain school employees to administer epinephrine as needed, state statute does not require first responders to carry and use epinephrine. DuPage County supports efforts to draft legislation to explore best practices to provide expanded access to individuals authorized and trained to administer epinephrine in emergencies.

### **Provide Noise Relief for Communities Surrounding O'Hare**

Due to the new runway configurations at O'Hare International Airport, the number of noise complaints from homeowners residing in communities neighboring O'Hare, and extending to communities as far west as Hanover Park and Wayne, have risen sharply over the past year. An estimated 40% of complaints are now received from City of Chicago residents.

In 2014, DuPage County convened an Ad Hoc Committee on Airport Noise Mitigation to provide direction to the County on the local and regional issue of increasing and changing noise patterns created by air traffic at O'Hare International Airport. In 2015, recognizing that noise issues impact DuPage County residents' quality of life, DuPage County joined the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC). County representatives will bring a fresh perspective to the



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ONCC and represent the entire DuPage County population. DuPage County has also been instrumental in funding technical work through the Suburban O'Hare Commission. This work is designed to promote noise abatement and mitigation activities at the airport. These activities demonstrate a commitment by County leadership to bring stakeholders, communities, legislators, and technical experts together to recommend both short and long term solutions.

#### **Expand Opportunities for Electronics Recycling**

The Electronic Product Recycling and Reuse Act bans specified electronics products from Illinois landfills. The Act is set forth as a producer responsibility law that mandates electronics manufacturers fund the collection and recycling of electronics throughout the State. Over the last three years, DuPage County has experienced a significant loss of collection sites due in part to the lack of manufacturer collection programs within the County and the cost of recycling. The problem is perpetuated by the significant volume of electronic waste that is generated annually. DuPage County had previously collected electronics from more than 20 locations including one-day events but currently has only two municipal locations. The private sector collects some of the listed types of electronics at Goodwill, Best Buy, Home Depot and Staples locations, however not all items are collected and in some cases a fee is charged for a mail back or pick up service.

DuPage County urges the General Assembly to work on a long-term, easily accessible and zero-cost solution for the handling of the banned electronic waste. To comply with the statute, residents must drive their electronics to a drop off location that may be charging fees or they can choose to pay the cost of mailing the equipment to a recycler or for curbside pickup service. Governmental entities are experiencing the open dumping and abandonment of electronics on roadways, forest preserves and vacant land. The costs involved in recovering the electronics are continually increasing. The statute as it is currently implemented is costing local governments and residents as it was not designed to do.



### PRIORITIES

#### **Equal Share of State Tourism Grants**

Hotel/motel tax receipts continue to grow statewide, generating substantial economic impact for Chicago, suburban and downstate communities, and yet, convention and visitors bureaus have not seen a corresponding increase in tourism funding. The current state distribution formula caps larger certified convention bureaus (such as the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau, the county's certified bureau) at a specific dollar amount of the state hotel tax collections.

DuPage generates over \$18 million annually in state hotel tax collections, and receives 5% of that amount in convention and visitors bureau tourism grants to promote DuPage County. Of the \$232 million in state occupancy taxes collected from Illinois tourism annually, 84% is generated from the City of Chicago and the greater Chicagoland area, with 36% coming from suburban markets. Receiving the county's fair share of state tourism dollars benefits all hotels in the county by increasing marketing and sales efforts that attracts more meetings, sporting events, and trade shows in an increasingly competitive market. Attracting more visitors to DuPage County also raises much needed sales tax revenues for the county, all municipalities and the state.

DuPage County urges the Illinois Office of Tourism to continue to work collaboratively with local convention & visitors bureaus to develop a strategy to protect tourism and discretionary grant funds for bureaus that generate a substantial return on investment and exceed targeted business goals.

#### **Address the Rising Costs of Court Operations**

DuPage County is responsible for the administration of the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit of the State of Illinois, the second largest Circuit Court in the State. The costs associated with the operation of court facilities, related court functions, agencies and programs continues to rise due in part to a number of unfunded mandates.



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During the closing days of the 2014 veto session, Public Act 98-1132 was adopted that in some instances will triple the compensation paid to jurors. The legislation was adopted absent any communication with the 102 Counties in this State that will bear the cost of this unfunded mandate, **estimated to cost counties millions of dollars annually**. DuPage County requests that lawmakers work with county government leaders to develop a mechanism to help offset a portion of these increased costs.

### **Support Adequate Reimbursement of Probation Costs**

The State requires counties to provide probation services as part of a mandated court services program. However, state reimbursement of county probation costs has been cut dramatically and payment cycles reduced. In addition, a number of new unfunded state mandates such as the GPS monitoring of defendants and parolees have strained resources and increased costs.

For State Fiscal Year 2015, total salary reimbursement for probation and court services departments statewide reached approximately \$98.1 million which is an unprecedented amount in recent years. This resulted in funding for DuPage County at 100% of the maximum reimbursable level. For State Fiscal Year 2016 however, without an approved state budget, salary reimbursement funding levels have again been significantly reduced to reflect the levels of previous years (below 70% of allowed costs).

DuPage County supports the restoration of probation funding to required levels (at the maximum reimbursable level) consistent with state statute and AOIC policies.

### **Capital Funding**

DuPage County is responsible for a large portion of the County's Infrastructure including: the provision of water and sewer services to approximately 200,000 County residents; the operation and maintenance of countywide flood control facilities including sixteen reservoirs/dams and pumping stations; the operation of a number of facilities on the County's Main Wheaton Campus including the County Jail, Courthouse, Health Department, Animal Shelter, and Convalescent Center; plus the maintenance of 220 miles of highways and 92 miles of multi-use trails.



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## PRIORITIES

Attached to this document is a comprehensive list of (54) Flood Control, Transportation, Wastewater, Water, and other critical County Infrastructure projects that once completed, would significantly reduce flooding for homeowners and businesses, relieve traffic congestion, improve water quality, and enhance public safety for the County's 932,126 residents.