

2020 State of Illinois Policy Agenda

For more than 85 years, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) has made the Chicago region a better place to live and work by partnering with businesses, communities and governments to address the area's toughest planning and development challenges. We care about the entire Chicago region—from its people and businesses, to its neighborhoods and transportation networks, to its lakes, rivers and parks. We understand that all of these **regional assets need to work together effectively** so that the Chicago metropolitan area can continuously unlock its potential. While MPC works to solve today's urgent problems—with a focus on economic development, vibrant neighborhoods, quality housing and transportation choices and well-managed natural assets—we consistently **think ahead to prepare the region** for the needs of tomorrow.

We support policies that ensure the Chicago region is growing and residents across all community can share in the benefits of a better, bolder, more equitable future.



Transportation

Improve mobility and infrastructure throughout the Chicago region and Illinois.

Our region is the transportation hub of the nation. The Chicago area has the second largest transit system in the country. However, we are in a period of rapid change in modes of travel. It's more critical than ever to stay focused on the outcomes we want our transportation system to provide and to ensure equitable funding of the most sustainable modes.

Create transparent, data-informed infrastructure planning.

- [HB5244 \(Buckner\) | Performance-based project planning](#)
Illinois decision-makers and residents deserve transportation infrastructure investment guided by transparent, data-informed criteria. Building on the RTA's adoption of this framework in December 2019, MPC supports legislation and departmental guidelines that create clear criteria for transportation project selection.

Equitably fund policies for all modes of transportation.

- [HB4276 \(Moylan\)/SB3125 \(Collins\) | ITEP Supplemental Funding](#)
Clarifies some important funding points related to 2019's capital bill funding for walking and bicycling projects. The goal is to maximize the potential for the funding to go to the highest need areas. More information is available from our partners at the Active Transportation Alliance.

- [HB5246 \(Moeller\)/SB3183 \(McGuire\) | Eliminate IDOT’s local match for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure](#)
Under current State of Illinois guidelines, local municipalities are required to contribute 20 percent of the cost of sidewalks and bikeways along IDOT-managed roads. MPC supports legislation and/or departmental guidelines that remove this local match requirement.
 - [HB2533 \(Mah\) | Transportation Benefits Act](#)
Incentivizes transit ridership by providing a state tax deduction for the cost of a transit pass.
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Housing

Ensure all Illinois residents can thrive.

Illinois has over 450,000 extremely low income households, but there are only 150,000 affordable units available to them. Additionally, the pressures of development and gentrification are reducing the supply of affordable housing in neighborhoods that are presently affordable. MPC supports policies that enhance affordability through the following four “Ps”:

Produce affordable housing.

- [HB5554 \(Ramirez\) | Build Illinois Homes Tax Credit](#)
Every year, Illinois developers are not able to take advantage of hundreds of millions of dollars in federal subsidies for public housing. Along with the Illinois Housing Council, MPC supports the creation of an Illinois Low Income Housing Tax Credit program to help developers close the subsidized housing financing gap.

Preserve existing affordability.

- [SB3529 \(Feigenholtz\)/HB5279 \(Welch\) | Preserve affordability in all market types](#)
MPC supports legislation that will reduce property taxes for new construction or substantial rehab that include 15 percent or more affordable units.

Protect residents.

- [HB4911 \(Ramirez\) | Seal eviction files](#)
An eviction filing can haunt renters for years, whether or not the tenant was ever evicted, and whatever the reason for eviction. MPC supports sealing court files on certain kinds of eviction proceedings.
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Equitable Development

Invest in communities wisely and fairly.

In addition to housing, Illinois residents need equitable development that invests in its communities wisely and fairly. Illinois is strongest when all residents benefit from growth. Smart development considers market trends, historic disinvestment, and the voices of neighbors. MPC supports policies that:

Target inclusive growth.

- [**SB3350 \(Sims\) | Southland Reactivation Act**](#)
Creates a property tax incentive pilot for vacant property in south suburban Cook County.

Create jobs and build wealth.

- [**HB5669 \(Welch\)/SB3429 \(Steans\) | Earned Income Tax Credit**](#)
Too many Illinois families work hard but can't get ahead. MPC supports modernizing and expanding the state earned income tax credit to put more money in the pockets of working families.

Create equity in education.

- [**SB2548 \(Glowiak-Hilton\) | College Accessibility for Students Facing Homelessness**](#)
Creates support services and housing to aid college students facing homelessness.

Reform inequitable criminal justice practices.

- [**HB3686 \(Ortiz\) | Cash Bail Reform**](#)
Tens of thousands of people languish in Illinois' local jails simply because they lack the ability to post bail. MPC supports abolishing this unjust practice by eliminating the use of money bail in most contexts.



Water Resources

Equitably manage water and natural assets.

Not all Illinois residents have reliable access to safe and affordable drinking water. Conversely, some residents have far too much: flooding destroys homes and ecosystems and threatens public health. MPC works to ensure equitable access to safe, sustainable and affordable drinking water and flooding protection. We also strive toward the long-term viability of our water infrastructure, coordinated intergovernmental solutions, and planning for resilience in the face of climate change. MPC supports policies that:

Protect the health of Illinois residents by ensuring reliable, safe water.

- [**SB2916 \(Steans\) | Lead service line replacement**](#)
There is no safe level of lead exposure. Exposure can cause behavior problems and learning disabilities in young children and also affects the health of adults. Illinois needs an adequately funded statewide program to eliminate its 680,000+ lead service lines from our drinking water supply. As a member of the Illinois Environmental Council, MPC is advancing a bill that provides a timeline, structure, and revenue source for lead service line replacement.
- [**SB3311 \(Peters\) | Lead testing at parks**](#)
Requires all parks and recreation centers to test for and report lead in drinking water.

Increase drinking water affordability, equitable rate setting and access.

- [**HB4378+HB4379 \(Ford\)/SB2993+SB2994 \(Harris\) | Fund a statewide study of water rates**](#)
In 2019, MPC supported passage of a bill tasking UIC with studying Illinois' escalating water rates; unfortunately, it wasn't funded. MPC is advocating for \$318,000 per year for two years to accomplish this important study.

Reduce the incidence and impacts of urban flooding – especially on low-income communities and communities of color and increase Illinois' resilience to climate change.

- [**HB825 \(DeLuca\) | Stormwater fee**](#)
MPC supports creating a pathway for municipalities to charge fees for maintenance of stormwater infrastructure.
- [**SB3447 \(Fine\) | Wetlands conservation**](#)
Requires state agencies to avoid adverse impacts to unprotected wetlands. Creates the Wetland Conservation Fund to finance the preservation and acquisition of wetlands.



Effective Government

Drive collaborative and transparent governance at all levels.

Illinois leads the nation in the number of government bodies. Yet this proliferation of government doesn't produce better service provision or a more transparent, responsive government. MPC advocates for government streamlining measures that won't compromise services for residents. Ultimately, these steps will enhance the capacity of all units of government throughout Illinois to operate effectively, innovate and evolve. MPC supports policies that:

Deliver transparency, accountability, and data-informed decision making.

- [**SB1379 \(Harmon\) | Increase accuracy of real estate data reporting**](#)
Accurate assessments mean fairer tax distribution. MPC supports allowing the Cook County Assessor's Office to collect income and expense data for income-generating properties and for other County boards to adopt the standard by resolution.
- [**HJRCA41 \(Howard\)/SJRC18 \(Bush\) | Fair Maps Amendment**](#)
Effective government begins with fairly drawn political boundaries. MPC supports smart redistricting reforms including an independent commission and transparent map-drawing criteria.

Reduce barriers and create pathways to service sharing, streamlining and consolidation.

- [**HB4005 \(Mayfield\)/SB2461 \(Harmon\) | School district efficiency commission**](#)
MPC supports creating a School District Efficiency Commission to study the effects of school district consolidation across Illinois.
- [**SB3239 \(Rezin\) | Allow sharing of school district administrators**](#)
Illinois is the only state in the country with more than \$1 billion in school district administration expenses, despite being fifth in the number of students. To reduce these costs, MPC supports allowing voters to direct superintendents to share administrative staff with other districts.
- [**HB4121 \(Demmer\) | Consolidate Coterminous townships**](#)
As of 2016, there are currently [19 coterminous townships in Illinois](#), meaning the city and township exist within the same geographical area. The bill would consolidate township government duties within the City, resulting in better service coordination and potential administrative cost savings.



Additional bills we support

Supporting policies that make a better, bolder, more equitable Illinois and advance the goals above.

- [HB 825 \(DeLuca\) | Stormwater fee](#)
Enables water utilities to assess a fee for stormwater management.
- [HB0158 \(Welch\) | Local Government Distributive Fund](#)
Increases funding percentages distributed into the Local Government Distributive Fund.
- [HB1565 \(Crespo\) | Inspector General](#)
Establishes independence of inspector general offices established in Illinois State government.
- [HB0924 \(Crespo\) | Property Tax School Districts](#)
Limits property tax extension for school districts with substantial reserves.
- [HB3624 \(Williams\) | Clean Energy Jobs Act](#)
A comprehensive clean energy bill for Illinois. See more at the [Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition](#).
- [HB4329 \(Howard\) | Ban on leaded garden hoses](#)
Prohibits sale or manufacture of leaded garden hoses. Companion to SB3547.
- [HB 4427 \(Carroll\) | TIF Reporting](#)
Creates accountability around use of TIF districts by requiring municipalities to report on various aspects of TIF districts.
- [HB 4495 \(Ugaste\) | Define “Blighted Areas” for TIF](#)
For purposes of TIF districts, defines “blighted areas” as those with a household income less than 100% of amera median income.
- [HB 4496 \(Ugaste\) | Statewide process to dissolve townships and road districts](#)
Enables every county in Illinois to dissolve townships by ballot referendum.
- [HB4541 \(Welch\) | State Website Modernization](#)
Directs the department of Innovation and Technology to create a plan to improve the provision of digital services, including modernizing websites and enhancing the use of data analytics.
- [HB4691 \(Keicher\) | Decennial committees on local government consolidation](#)
Forms a local government committee excluding cities and counties to study efficiencies, in their operations, including consolidation, and create a recommendations report at least once every 10 years.
- [HB4704 \(Harper\) | Right to garden](#)
Allows the State or a unit of local government to regulate gardens on residential property unless the statute or regulation has the practical effect of precluding gardens on residential property entirely.
- [HB5075 \(Welch\) | Multi-township assessment district](#)
Allows for the formation of a multi-township assessment district for 2 or more contiguous townships. Allows townships without township assessors to be a part in forming such districts.
- [HB5126 \(Thapedi\) | Distribute census info](#)
Requires school districts to distribute census information to students and parents.

- [**HB5253 \(Hurley\) | Design/build contracts for forest preserves**](#)
Enables forest preserves and conservation districts to enter into design/build contracts. Companion to SB2999.
- [**HB5350 \(Edly-Allen\) | Income tax credit for native plants**](#)
Creates income tax credit for Illinois residents who landscape with native plant species.
- [**HB5465 \(Willis\) | Housing is Recovery Pilot**](#)
Creates a pilot program to provide housing for people with substance use disorders and serious mental illnesses.
- [**HB5574 \(Ramirez\) | Public housing access**](#)
Reduces barriers to public housing for people who have experienced incarceration.
- [**HR0703 \(Connor\) | Financial transparency reporting**](#)
Encourages adoption and utilization of XBRL accounting standard by all Illinois municipalities and state agencies in their financial reporting to increase transparency, decrease costs, and more easily permit comparison of financial data.
- [**SB1980 \(Bennett\) | Soil and water conservation districts**](#)
Broadens scope and authority of Soil and Water Conservation Districts to include soil health, water quality, and climate resilience.
- [**SB2341 \(Bush\) | Lake County township assessors**](#)
Enables Lake County to dissolve all township assessor's offices.
- [**SB2276 \(McConchie\) | Unit school district consolidation**](#)
Mandates that all school districts need to consolidate into unit districts, districts that are both elementary and high school districts, within three years of passage.
- [**SB3064 \(Barickman\) | Composting and Rainwater Systems**](#)
Protects condominium owners' rights to install composting and rainwater collection systems.
- [**SB3109 \(Hunter\) | School lead testing**](#)
Creates enhanced lead testing and reporting regulations at schools in Illinois.
- [**SB3112 \(Peters\) | Legislative accessibility**](#)
Requires Illinois General Assembly to make all efforts to increase the accessibility of the General Assembly for people with disabilities.
- [**SB3154 \(Ellman\) | PFAs Reduction Act**](#)
Bans use of PFAs - a toxic and increasingly common chemical in drinking water - in firefighting foam.
- [**SB3220 \(McConchie\) | County Shared Tax Savings Plan**](#)
Creates the Countywide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Division in each county consisting of a representative of all municipal and townships in the county and additional units of local government by invitation. The County chairperson prepares a shared services plan for County board approval, and approval by the panel.
- [**SB3341 \(Murphy\) | School district consolidation**](#)
Requires consolidation of certain school districts into unit districts.
- [**SB3412 \(Glowiak-Hilton\) | Dissolve mosquito abatement districts**](#)
Allows any county board to dissolve a mosquito abatement district by ordinance.
- [**SB3490 \(Collins\) | Equity for homeless registrants**](#)
Modifies overly-burdensome registration requirements for homeless Illinoisans on offender registries.

- [SB3436 \(Murphy\) | Mobile home water supply](#)
Ensures access to drinking water for mobile home residents.
- [SB3853 \(Castro\) | Housing is Recovery Pilot](#)
Creates a pilot program to provide housing for people with substance use disorders and serious mental illnesses. Companion to HB5465.