



# Southwest Conference of Mayors

## 2023 Legislative Program

The Southwest Conference of Mayors is a body of duly elected officials representing twenty-one communities in southwest suburban Cook County with a population in excess of 350,000. The Southwest Conference of Mayors was formed in an attempt to lower the cost of government; to improve services for our citizens and to promote managerial expertise for the individual and joint benefit of the Member Municipalities. The Southwest Conference of Mayors has the purpose to coordinate its membership experience and expertise on problems of mutual concern.

The Southwest Conference of Mayors advocates for Preserving Local Authority and Protecting Local Government Revenue. With the following measures being enacted, they will communities in the State of Illinois resources needed to face and address current and future challenges.

- \* Return the Local Government Distribution Fund to 10% so that critical and necessary services can be funded; public safety, pensions, infrastructure, and other critical obligations. The erosion to the LGDF has put a strain on municipal budgets and made it difficult to provide vital services.
- \* Extend the amortization period for Public Safety Pensions from the current 2040 to 2050 or later; which will help stabilize local budgets and secure public pensions.
- \* Protect all streams of local government revenue. The State must refrain from withholding, freezing, diverting, delaying or reducing any State-collected local revenue streams.
- \* The General Assembly must reject any legislations that will erode local decision-making authority. Municipal governments are in a unique position to best know the needs of their community.
- \* Oppose any legislation that created unfunded mandates for municipal governments. We urge the General Assembly to pass a constitutional amendment requiring a super-majority vote to pass any legislation creating unfunded State mandates.
- \* Recognize the ability of all municipalities to govern themselves, regardless of population. Removing the distinction between home rule and non-home rule would eliminate the barriers of non-home rule authority, giving all municipalities crucial local control.

\* Support preserving Tax Increment Finance Districts (TIFs) as an economic development tool for municipalities while not imposing any further restrictions on the use of TIF Districts.

\* Support programs and policies which provide funding for various transportation and infrastructure projects. The SCM supports the following projects that are necessary to contribute the economic growth of southwest Cook County and its adjacent areas: Harlem Avenue Corridor Project; Cicero Corridor Project; 95<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Project; Ridgeland Corridor Project; Expanded Service on Metra's Southwest Service Line; Expanded Service on Metra's Heritage Corridor Line; CREATE Freight Rail Plan and Interchange at Wolf Road and I-80.

The Southwest Conference of Mayors Supports the 2023 Legislative Priorities of:

- \* The Illinois Municipal League
- \* The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus
- \* The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

### ***Southwest Conference of Mayors Member***

|                             |                           |                          |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Village of Alsip            | Village of Bedford Park   | City of Blue Island      |
| Village of Bridgeview       | City of Burbank           | Village of Chicago Ridge |
| Village of Crestwood        | Village of Evergreen Park | City of Hickory Hills    |
| City of Hometown            | Village of Justice        | Village of Lemont        |
| Village of Merrionette Park | Village of Oak Lawn       | Village of Orland Hills  |
| Village of Orland Park      | City of Palos Heights     | City of Palos Hills      |
| Village of Palos Park       | Village of Willow Springs | Village of Worth         |

### ***Southwest Conference of Mayors Officers***

Gerald R. Bennett, President ~ Mayor, City of Palos Hills  
David R. Brady, Vice President ~ President, Village of Bedford Park  
Robert S. Straz, Vice President ~ Mayor, City of Palos Heights  
Rhonda Hyde, Treasurer ~ Treasurer, Village of Bedford Park  
Victoria Smith, Executive Director

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