



CITY OF  
BLOOMINGTON  
LEGISLATIVE WORK  
SESSION MEETING  
MARCH 14, 2016

# AGENDA



**CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION MEETING AGENDA  
OSBORN ROOM, 305 EAST ST., 2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR  
BLOOMINGTON, IL 61701  
MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016, 5:45 P.M.**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call of Attendance
3. Public Comment (*15 minutes*)
4. Legislative Work Session to Discuss Recommended Legislative Proposals, State of Illinois Budget and Financial Issues, and Major City Capital Needs.
5. Adjournment (*approximately 6:45 PM*)

**RESOLUTION NO. 2016 - 05**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE 2016 ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE'S  
LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

WHEREAS, since 1913, the Illinois Municipal League (IML) has been the collective voice of cities, villages and towns; and

WHEREAS, the IML currently represents nearly 1,300 communities including the City of Bloomington; and

WHEREAS, by educating members about current legislative issues and advocating on their behalf, the IML ensures that local elected officials and their constituents are represented in the decision-making process; and

WHEREAS, The IML has established a Legislative Agenda for 2016, focusing on five key areas; and

WHEREAS, many of the issues included in the IML's 2016 Legislative Agenda are of key importance to the City of Bloomington and other communities throughout the State of Illinois.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS:

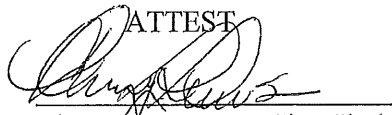
That the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Bloomington hereby endorse and support the 2016 Illinois Municipal League's Legislative Agenda.

ADOPTED this 22<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2016.


APPROVED this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of February, 2016.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tari Renner, Mayor

ATTEST  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cherry L. Lawson, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeffrey R. Jurgens, Corporation Counsel





# 2016 IML LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



Educate. Advocate. Empower.



# IML Legislative Issue Areas

## MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

The operation of municipalities is a complex task that requires partnerships with both the federal and state government. The enactment of laws and regulations that preempt local authority only hinders the ability of municipal officials to meet the needs of residents and address community problems. Municipal officials must maintain the autonomy necessary to fulfill their appropriate responsibilities to those who elected them.

## MUNICIPAL REVENUE AND TAXATION

Illinois municipalities continue to require additional revenues. The League commends the State for the provision of revenue sharing to Illinois municipalities. This successful partnership must be continued in good faith and in recognition that most of the services that benefit Illinoisans are provided by local government. Municipal governments must also have the autonomy to address their local revenue needs.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Local governments and Illinois taxpayers benefit from the broad authority that allows local governments to cooperatively pool resources and share services. Service cooperation and consolidation reduces the cost of local governments, eliminates redundancies and appropriates resources wisely and effectively.

## MEETINGS, PUBLIC RECORDS AND NOTIFICATIONS

The Illinois Municipal League believes that a vibrant democracy requires the active participation of an engaged citizenry. Citizens elect their local leaders and have an obligation to hold their leaders accountable. The Open Meetings Act, Freedom of Information Act and public notification laws are essential accountability mechanisms. These laws must be balanced to consider staff obligations, personnel information sensitivities, evolving technology and occasional abuses of the process by those seeking public information.

## LABOR LAW, COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

As with the private sector, compensation and benefits decisions involving local government employees are appropriately made by the employer. Wages and benefits must balance the interests of the employee, employer and taxpayer. The General Assembly and Governor must avoid approving policies that increase the costs of municipal compensation, benefits and personnel without providing revenues to offset the financial obligations created by their actions. Existing state labor and employment policies must also be reexamined with the intent of ensuring that local governments can maintain personnel costs at sustainable levels.



# The Illinois Municipal League 2016 Legislative Agenda

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## **AUTOMATIC APPROPRIATION AUTHORITY FOR LOCAL FUNDS** SB 3019 (Sen. T. Cullerton)

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### **Issue:**

Annual appropriation authority is required for Motor Fuel Tax (MFT), casino gaming, video gaming, Use Tax and 9-1-1 revenues to be distributed to municipalities. As we learned during the 2015 fiscal year, an annual appropriation requirement can prevent these funds from being distributed, despite the fact that they are non-General Revenue Funds and do not affect state government budgets.

### **IML Solution:**

Amend the Motor Fuel Tax, casino gaming, video gaming, Use Tax and 9-1-1 revenue laws to make them continuing appropriations so funds are automatically distributed (as with Local Government Distributive Fund revenue) without the need for an annual appropriation enactment by the General Assembly and Governor.

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## **EXPANSION OF HOME RULE ELIGIBILITY** HJRC 38 (Rep. Smiddy)

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### **Issue:**

Municipalities of varying sizes must address similar problems and should have a broad array of powers available to meet community challenges. The Illinois Constitution automatically grants home rule status to municipalities that reach a population threshold in excess of 25,000 residents. Non-home rule communities are granted limited authority compared to home rule communities.

### **IML Solution:**

Grant municipalities with populations in excess of 5,000 residents home rule status. This would provide 173 communities with additional tools that they do not presently possess to address local issues. There are currently 211 home rule communities established either by population or referendum.

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## **PUBLIC SAFETY PENSION REFORMS** SB 2775 (Sen. Althoff)

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### **Issue:**

Public safety pension costs continue to increase and threaten to divert available municipal revenues away from funding other important programs and services intended to secure the health, safety and welfare of municipal residents.

### **IML Solution:**

Non-benefit reforms remain viable options for both short-term cost management and long-term cost reduction because such reforms would not be prohibited by the Illinois Constitution. These reforms would include changing funding requirements, actuarial methodologies and pension fund consolidation.

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## **PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEE ARBITRATION REFORM** SB 3105 (Sen. Althoff)

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### **Issue:**

Arbitrators are rendering decisions in labor disputes that compel local governments to offer wage and benefit awards that exceed available revenues. This results in budgetary difficulties, service reductions and layoffs to other employees.

### **IML Solution:**

Provide additional transparency in the arbitration process and require arbitrators to base decisions primarily on actual available revenues and a municipality's current financial status.

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## **FEDERAL DEFINITION OF "CATASTROPHIC INJURY" IN PSEBA LAW** HB 5786 (Rep. Ives)

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### **Issue:**

The Public Safety Employee Benefits Act (PSEBA) provides taxpayer-funded, lifetime health insurance benefits to police officers and firefighters, their spouses and dependents up to the age of 26. Eligibility for PSEBA benefits occurs when an employee is "catastrophically injured" while responding to an emergency. The absence of a definition of "catastrophic injury" within the PSEBA statute means that municipalities must pay lifetime health insurance premiums to otherwise able-bodied and employable individuals.

### **IML Solution:**

The ideal solution is to define "catastrophic injury" to mean an injury severe enough to preclude gainful employment. This would entail using the federal definition of "catastrophic injury," which is found in the federal Public Safety Officer Benefits Act (PSOB).

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## **UTILITY DEBTS COLLECTED THROUGH PROPERTY TAXES VIA SPECIAL ASSESSMENT** HB 2648 (Rep. Smiddy)

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### **Issue:**

Municipalities, just like businesses, face the problem of collection for services rendered. Each year, water, sewer and other utility bills go unpaid, and the cost for this is unfairly imposed upon other ratepayers. Municipalities may place a lien on the property and await a transfer of ownership, but this could lead to the municipality experiencing long delays in collecting utility debts.

### **IML Solution:**

Allow municipalities the ability to collect unpaid utility debts by filing for a special assessment to be collected as part of the property tax bill.





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**NUISANCE LIENS APPLIED TO ALL PROPERTIES OWNED BY VIOLATOR** SB 3038 (Sen. Jones)

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**Issue:**

Non-home rule municipalities have a difficult time collecting debts associated with removing specified nuisances on a property.

**IML Solution:**

All municipalities should have the authority to collect the costs for removing nuisances from a property by filing a pre-suit or a judgment lien against all real estate holdings owned by that property owner within the community where the nuisance exists.

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**ELIMINATE PENSION SPIKING** HB 4398 (Rep. Nekritz); HB 4509 (Rep. Sosnowski)

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**Issue:**

The Illinois Pension Code is susceptible to various practices where pension payments can be increased with unused sick and vacation time, as well as end-of-career salary boosts.

**IML Solution:**

The correction will require both legislation and an administrative rule change.

The legislative change involves making vacation and sick time distributions non-pensionable by scheduling the distribution to occur 90 to 120 days following separation of service. The rule change involves modifying the definition of “salary” for pension purposes within the administrative code.

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**CORRECTING PENSION CALCULATION ERRORS** HB 5811 (Rep. B. Wheeler)

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**Issue:**

The statute that allows for correcting mistakes in pension benefit awards involving public safety employees is flawed in that it allows for correcting clerical and administrative mistakes while making it difficult to correct mistakes that result from benefit miscalculations.

**IML Solution:**

The same standard that allows for the correction of mistakes in pension benefits for state employees, legislators and judges should be applied to public safety employees. Corrections should apply to any and all benefits that were calculated improperly to the advantage or detriment of the pensioner. Additionally, interest payments should be owed to the pension fund when a mistake inflates a pension benefit in the same manner as the pension fund is obligated to pay interest to the pensioner in the case of an underpayment.

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**SENSIBLE CHANGE TO BIDDING MUNICIPAL SERVICES** HB 5595 (Rep. McDermed)

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**Issue:**

Non-home rule municipalities are prohibited from seeking up-front cost information for services provided by architects, engineers and land surveyors if those services are likely to exceed a cost of \$25,000. This process is known as Qualified Based Selection (QBS). Only after a firm has been selected can a municipality and the selected individual or firm begin negotiations for fees. Using QBS may prevent the local government from finding the best value among firms that meet the necessary qualifications because the traditional bidding system is not allowed.

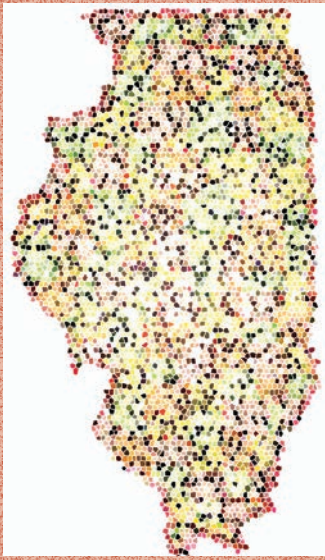
**IML Solution:**

Adopt the federal financial threshold for QBS, which would allow municipalities to use the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process for projects that cost below \$150,000. This process allows municipalities to use a conventional bidding process for hiring professional services.

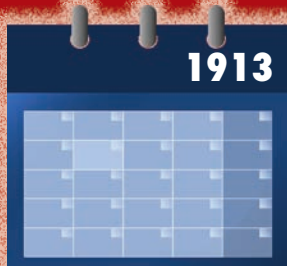




## IML AT A GLANCE



**1,297**  
COMMUNITIES  
REPRESENTED



**FOUNDED IN 1913**



**1,890**  
2015 CONFERENCE  
ATTENDEES

**140,096**  
WEBSITE VISITS  
IN 2015



**12,776**  
ANNUAL MAGAZINE  
SUBSCRIPTIONS

## ABOUT THE IML

Municipalities across Illinois provide critical services that citizens rely upon every day. These local municipalities are uniquely qualified to govern themselves, effectively managing their resources for the benefit of their citizens and the state.

Since 1913, the Illinois Municipal League (IML) has been the collective voice of cities, villages and towns. By educating members about current legislative issues and advocating on their behalf, the IML ensures that local elected officials and their constituents are represented in the decision-making process.

## ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE CORE PRINCIPLES

- Maintain Local Control
- Preserve Home Rule Powers
- Oppose Unfunded Mandates
- Preserve the Right of Municipalities to Decide Employee Wages and Benefits
- Protect State-Shared Revenues



Educate. Advocate. Empower.



**TOM GRAY**  
Village President  
Chatham  
IML President



**KAREN DARCH**  
Village President  
Barrington  
IML First Vice President



**EUGENE WILLIAMS**  
Village President  
Lynwood  
IML Sergeant at Arms

## Contact Us

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**Jenifer L. Johnson, General Counsel**

**Joe McCoy, Legislative Director**

Illinois Municipal League  
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Springfield, IL 62701  
Office: 217.525.1220



**[www.IML.org](http://www.IML.org)**



January 4, 2016



Illinois Municipal League

# News Release



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
February 23, 2016

**Contact:** Brad Cole, 217-525-1220  
[bcole@iml.org](mailto:bcole@iml.org)

Ryan McLaughlin, 312-969-0255  
[ryan@macstrategiesgroup.com](mailto:ryan@macstrategiesgroup.com)

## **Municipalities Announce “Moving Cities Forward” Legislative Package**

**SPRINGFIELD** – Municipal leaders across the state today outlined a comprehensive legislative reform package titled “Moving Cities Forward” geared towards driving more efficiencies that would maintain the health of local governments which are crucial to Illinois’ economy.

In conjunction with the Illinois Municipal League (IML), mayors across the state are calling for necessary solutions that can no longer be deferred, especially in the midst of the continued budget impasse at the statehouse. The reform package includes automatic appropriation authority (motor fuel tax, 9-1-1, use tax and gaming revenues), home rule eligibility expansion, workers compensation reform, prevailing wage exemptions and public safety arbitration reform. IML points out many of these issues have been long championed by mayors, while some are intended to address problems that have been exacerbated due the budget impasse.

“The ‘Moving Cities Forward’ legislative proposal is crucial to maintaining fiscal solvency for municipalities across the state,” said Brad Cole, executive director of IML. “Mayors have been advocating for these solutions for a number of years, but the continued budget impasse coupled with our tough economy has made matters more difficult on a local level. We hope leaders can come together to recognize the tough decisions their mayors have already made and to give local governments the ability to provide important services in a more efficient manner.”

While these certainly aren’t new priorities, there is a definite sense of urgency to reach a solution in light of the state’s problematic budget and financial outlook.

“Mayors and local leaders face challenges very similar to those of our state government, and we want the ability to address these issues in a way that empowers local government,” said Tom Gray, village president of Chatham and IML board president. “Moving Cities Forward contains immediate reforms that will permit local governments to creatively solve issues and govern with a community’s unique interests in mind.”

-more-

Many local leaders have expressed concern that the current situation at the state capitol will negatively impact local budgets, and in many cases, this scenario is already ringing true.

Karen Darch, village president of Barrington and IML board first vice president echoes the importance of this legislative package.

“Uncertainty statewide is negatively impacting our local budgets, and for many years, we’ve seen our local leaders have to make difficult decisions to remain financially sound,” she said. “Immediate reform is needed, and the necessary solutions we are proposing can no longer be deferred.”

IML appreciates the leadership demonstrated by the Governor and the General Assembly last year in providing local funding at a critical hour. IML believes this package will help alleviate these issues in the future.

### **“Moving Cities Forward” Priorities**

#### **Automatic Appropriation Authority for Local Funds**

The common sense approach to managing local revenue sources (motor fuel tax, 9-1-1, use tax and gaming revenues) is to put the distribution power back into the hands of local governments – and make that a seamless approach with automatic distributions to local entities. Currently, these fund distributions are dependent upon the state budget process even though these are non-General Revenue Funds and do not affect state government budgets. “Moving Cities Forward” recommends policy reform eliminating the need for annual appropriation enactments.

#### **Expansion of Home Rule Eligibility**

Municipal leaders across the state support expanding home rule eligibility to include communities of 5,000 residents and above. The current Illinois Constitution only grants automatic home rule status to municipalities in excess of 25,000 residents, or to municipalities that pass a local home rule referendum. Currently there are 211 home rule governments in the state, and if passed, the expansion would elevate another 173 communities to home rule status.

#### **Public Safety Arbitration Reform**

Arbitrators are rendering decisions in labor disputes that compel local governments to offer wage and benefit awards that exceed available revenues. What’s needed is more transparency in the arbitration process and a requirement that those decisions be based on actual revenues available to the city. The current process has led to financial hardships on local governments including budgeting difficulties, service reductions and employee layoffs.

#### **Local Control Over Prevailing Wage Decisions**

Municipalities are in favor of locally-elected boards and councils establishing exemptions up to a certain dollar amount for which prevailing wage rates would not be required. IML supports an update to the policy to allow the opportunity to establish cost reductions for projects currently covered by the Prevailing Wage Act, as well as exemptions for certain types of work entirely.

### Workers' Compensation Reforms

Employers are already faced with ever-increasing costs for doing business, and current workers' compensation policy has only contributed to the "It's hard to do business in Illinois" mentality. IML members are in support of reducing employer costs by amending Permanent Partial Disability benefit payouts, lowering the number of weeks that benefits are paid for shoulder injuries by clarifying the definitions of "Man as a Whole" and requiring arbitrators and/or the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission (IWCC) to strictly adhere to American Medical Association (AMA) guidelines when determining permanency ratings under the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act.

These issues are just a few of the priorities unveiled in "Moving Cities Forward". Please visit our website at [www.iml.org](http://www.iml.org) for more information regarding these IML legislative priorities, as well as our additional areas of focus listed below:

- Automatic Appropriation Authority for Local Funds
- Expansion of Home Rule Eligibility
- Constitutional Amendment to Limit Future State Mandates
- Public Safety Arbitration Reform
- Pension Cost Relief and Structural Reform
- Opt Outs for Future Unfunded Mandates Affecting Communities With Fewer Financial Resources
- Local Control Over Prevailing Wage Decisions
- Workers' Compensation Reforms
- Annual State Review of Mandates

###

### **ABOUT THE ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE**

The Illinois Municipal League is the statewide organization representing local communities throughout Illinois. Founded in 1913, IML has worked continuously for the benefit of all 1,297 municipalities in Illinois to provide a formal voice on matters involving common interests. The governing board is comprised of Mayors and Village Presidents.



# Illinois Municipal League

## POSITION PAPER

March 1, 2016

### Utility Debts Collected Through Property Taxes Via Special Assessment

Many cities provide utility services to their residents that are funded by billing of the residents for the service.

#### The Issue:

In some cases, property owners or inhabitants do not keep up with the payments for utility services. Cities must have recourse to collect what is owed to fund operations and prevent the unpaid costs from being unfairly absorbed by other municipal residents.

#### IML Solution:

Municipalities should be authorized to place a lien on any property associated with an unpaid utility bill. The lien would be treated as an existing, judicially-approved special assessment. The municipality may collect the costs as a special assessment on the property tax bill for those properties with unpaid utility bills.

Bill Number:

**HB 2648**

Sponsor:

**Rep. S Middy**

**(R - 5<sup>th</sup>)**

IML Position:

**SUPPORT**

**HB 2648 WILL EXPEDITE THE COLLECTION OF UNPAID UTILITY BILLS.**





# Illinois Municipal League

## POSITION PAPER

March 1, 2016

### Pension Calculation Factors

Public sector pension plans offer a valuable employment benefit and, unlike most plans available in the private sector, provide a guaranteed retirement pension. Public pension plans are more expensive than pension plans available to private sector employees, with much of the costs being paid by taxpayers. Because taxpayers help fund public employee pensions, there must be protections in place to ensure that loopholes are not exploited with the intent of padding a pension benefit upon retirement.

Bill Number:

**HB 4398**

Sponsor:

**Rep. N. Iekritz  
(D - 15)**

IML Position:

**Support**

### The Issue:

The Illinois Pension Code is susceptible to various practices where pension payments are increased by applying unused sick and vacation time, as well as end-of-career salary boosts. This pension spiking burdens taxpayers already funding these expensive public pension obligations. More corrosively, these incidents of spiking become public and tarnish the reputations of governments and public employees.

### IML Solution:

The Pension Code should be amended to prevent compensation for unused sick and vacation time from being factored into employee pension benefits.

**HB 4398 IS A REASONABLE MEASURE TO CONTAIN RISING PENSION COSTS**



# Illinois Municipal League

## POSITION PAPER

March 1, 2016

### Eliminate Pension Spiking

Public sector pension plans offer a valuable employment benefit and, unlike most plans available in the private sector, provide a guaranteed retirement pension. Public pension plans are more expensive than pension plans available to private sector employees, with much of the costs being paid by taxpayers. Because taxpayers help fund public employee pensions, there must be protections in place to ensure that loopholes are not exploited with the intent of padding a pension benefit upon retirement.

Bill Number:

**HB 4509**

Sponsor:

**Rep. Sosnowski**

**(R-15)**

IML Position:

**SUPPORT**

#### The Issue:

The Illinois Pension Code is susceptible to various practices where pension payments are increased by applying unused sick and vacation time, as well as end-of-career salary boosts. This pension spiking burdens taxpayers already funding these expensive public pension obligations. More corrosively, these incidents of spiking become public and tarnish the reputations of governments and public employees.

#### IML Solution:

Accumulated sick and vacation time distributions should be made non-pensionable by scheduling the distribution to occur 90-120 days following an employee's separation from service. The employees will receive their payment, but it would not be applied to their pension benefit.

**HB 4509 WILL HELP CONTAIN RISING PENSION COSTS  
AND PROTECT THE REPUTATIONS OF GOVERNMENTS AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES.**



# Illinois Municipal League

## POSITION PAPER

March 1, 2016

### Sensible Change to Bidding Municipal Services

In many cases, municipalities are required to seek bids for contracts in excess of \$20,000. Upon receiving the bids, municipalities can compare and contrast the prices. Non-home rule municipalities seeking to hire an architect, engineer or land surveyor are prohibited from an up-front inquiry about cost if it is believed that the project or projects will exceed a value of \$25,000. Such projects trigger the use of an alternative system known as Qualified Based Selection (QBS) that requires the selection of the top three qualified firms. Once that selection is completed, cost negotiations may begin with the top qualified firm. If the negotiation is successful, the selection process is complete. If the negotiation is not successful, the negotiation is ended and that firm is eliminated from the process. This process may continue through the top three firms. If a contract is not reached with any of the three firms, the municipality is required to generate another list of three firms and repeat the process.

Bill Number:

**HB 5595**

Sponsor:

**Rep. McDermed**

**(R-17)**

IML Position:

**SUPPORT**

#### The Issue:

The QBS process allows non-home rule municipalities to negotiate over price only after a firm has been selected based upon their qualifications. This system can prevent municipalities from finding the best value among firms that meet the necessary qualifications because the traditional bidding system is not permitted.

#### IML Solution:

Illinois should adopt the federal QBS threshold of \$150,000. Any contract valued in excess of \$150,000 with an engineer, architect or land surveyor would remain subject to the QBS system. The federal government increased its threshold to account for inflation. Projects valued at less than this amount would be subject to the traditional bidding process.

**HB 5595 WILL ENSURE THAT MUNICIPALITIES  
RECEIVE THE BEST VALUE FOR TAXPAYER DOLLARS.**



## REGULAR AGENDA ITEM NO. 8E

FOR COUNCIL: March 14, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of approving Alternate 2 design for the Fox Creek Bridge replacement at the Union Pacific Railroad.

**RECOMMENDATION/MOTION:** That the Council approve Alternative 2 as the preferred bridge design option and direct staff and Alfred Benesch & Company to proceed with preconstruction work for bridge replacement and street improvements on Fox Creek Road from Danbury Drive to Beich Road.

**STRATEGIC PLAN LINK:** 2. Upgrade City Infrastructure and Facilities and 4. Strong Neighborhoods.

**STRATEGIC PLAN SIGNIFICANCE:** 2a. Better quality roads and sidewalks and 4a. Residents feeling safe in their homes and neighborhoods.

**BACKGROUND:** Fox Creek Road is the primary access point for neighborhoods in the southwest corner of Bloomington. The bridge over the Union Pacific Railroad currently has two lanes and no accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists. The bridge is inadequate for current and future needs of the community, as are the sections of street west and east of it. This stretch, from Danbury Drive to Beich Road, is the remaining section of Fox Creek Road south corridor in need of widening and other improvements and is exhibiting both pavement and shoulder deterioration.

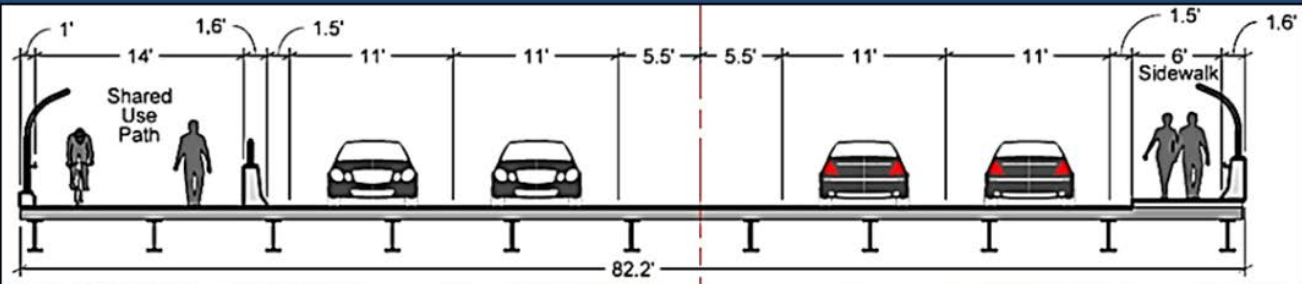
The City Council hired Alfred Benesch & Company, Chicago, in March 2014 as project consulting engineer. Benesch developed five alternatives. It used three criteria -- performance, public acceptance, and cost. Benesch narrowed the selection to two alternatives, Alternative 2 and Alternative 4, and presented them at a public meeting. Benesch concluded that Alternative 2 is the preferred option, and staff concurs. Alternative 2 also ranked higher than 4 in the public acceptance criterion. Staff requests Council concurrence before staff and Benesch proceed with additional planning and design phases. Benesch continued services are covered in the 2014 contract.

Both Alternatives have high performance for vehicular traffic and pedestrian and cyclist traffic. It should be noted that these improvements will serve a growing area, with access to parks and three schools, for decades to come.



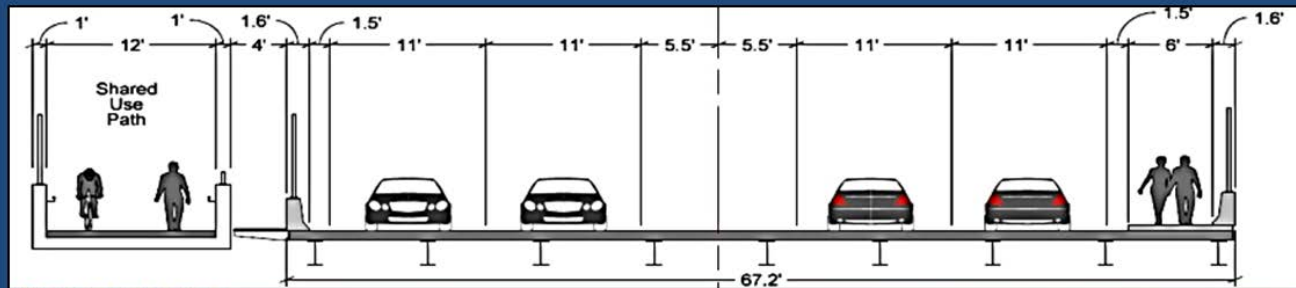


## Alternative 2



*Five-lane bridge; 14-foot shared path on north side; 6-foot sidewalk on south side.*

## Alternative 4



Five lane bridge 6-foot sidewalk on south; 2<sup>nd</sup> bridge with 12-foot shared path on north side.

## **Why Alternative 2 and not Alternative 4?**

- The primary difference between Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 is that Alternative 4 consists of two bridges – one dedicated to pedestrians-cyclist shared use. However, the pedestrian-bicyclist bridge in Alternative 4 provides marginal advantage over Alternative 2 in terms of safety and aesthetics. The pedestrian bridge wouldn't be a decorative, stylized bridge, and it would have to be linked to the vehicular bridge by a metal barrier fence so that no gap exists between the bridges. The barrier would collect trash and be difficult to clean and maintain.
- Alternative 4 would cost more to maintain and repair. Alternative 2 may cost slightly more to construct, but construction estimates for the two options are nearly identical.
- Alternative 4 would cause a traffic bottleneck during construction, which would last more than a year. Bridge construction would reduce traffic to one lane. Eastbound and westbound vehicles would take turns, regulated by traffic signals. The addition of the signals, plus added maintenance and operation cost, would add up to \$200,000 to the project. The other option during construction would be a full detour of Fox Creek Road traffic to Six Points Road, but staff believes the resulting disruptions to traffic and the increases in response times for police and fire protection would be unacceptable.
- Alternative 2 would allow two-way traffic during construction.
- The bike-pedestrian sidepath for Alternative 2 is two feet wider.

## **Next Steps:**

1. Negotiations with Union Pacific Railroad and the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC). The City wants to build a shorter bridge than exists today by building embankments on either side of the railway. This requires the approval of the ICC. If the City-Benesch plan for a single-span bridge (80 feet) is approved under Alternative 2, estimated bridge cost is about \$1.8 million. If the ICC requires the bridging of the entire railroad right of way (160 feet, three spans), estimated cost is \$2.8 million.
2. Final design and construction plans based on the ICC's decision, plus purchase of right-of-way.
3. Bidding, hiring of contractor.
4. Estimated Construction, anticipated to begin in 2018 and lasting 12 to 18 months. The most recent GCPF construction schedule shows the Fox Creek project programmed in the ICC's FY 2018 budget which begins on 7/1/2017. This timing will likely result in a Fall 2017 or Spring 2018 construction start. This estimated schedule differs from the preliminary schedule outlined in the Benesch report due to the timing and availability of the ICC Grade Crossing Protection Funds (GCPF). Final construction schedule will be determined by the ICC GCPF availability and may be impacted by State budget concerns.

## **Cost and sources of money**

Preliminary cost estimates show Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 have similar dollar costs. Alternative 2 provides a wider surface and slightly more expensive construction but Alternative 4 poses construction problems with detouring and would cost more to maintain and repair. The cost total for the project will depend on whether the railroad and the ICC allow a shorter bridge.



Sixty percent (60%) of the bridge cost will be covered by a state grant from the Grade Crossing Protection Fund. This will equal about \$1 million for a single span bridge, and \$1.4 million to \$1.7 million for a three-span bridge. The remainder of the project will be funded by Bloomington's portion of the state Motor Fuel Tax.

	3 span bridge (160')	Single Span (80')
<b>Bridge cost</b>		
Alternative 2	\$2,846,215	\$1,768,373
Alternative 4	\$2,607,310	\$1,705,026
<b>Roadway cost</b>		
Alternative 2	\$3,273,000	\$3,273,000
Alternative 4	\$3,486,000	\$3,486,000
<b>Total– bridge and roadway</b>		
Alternative 2	\$7,344,000	<b>*\$6,050,000</b>
Alternative 4	\$7,282,000	\$6,200,000
<i>*Recommended</i>		

**COMMUNITY GROUPS/INTERESTED PERSONS CONTACTED:** The Benesch project team and Bloomington Public Works hosted a public meeting on March 11, 2015, at Pepper Ridge Elementary School. Written comments were accepted then and after the meeting.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:** None at this time. To date the City has invested approximately \$120,000 for the bridge and roadway design work; the current contract with Alfred Benesch includes an additional \$350,000 to finish project design. Right-of-way purchases in FY 2017 are estimated at approximately \$50,000. This project is proposed to be funded in the FY 2018 Proposed Motor Fuel Tax Budget at a cost of \$5,950,000. Included in this funding is an estimate of \$1,060,000 in state grant funding. If this council memo is approved, additional funding will need to be budgeted in FY 2018.

Respectfully submitted for Council consideration.

Prepared by: Stephen Arney, Engineering Technician I

Reviewed by: Jim Karch, PE CFM, Director of Public Works

Financial & budgetary review by: Chris Tomerlin, Budget Analyst  
Carla A. Murillo, Budget Manager

Legal review by: Jeffrey R. Jurgens, Corporation Counsel

Recommended by:



David A. Hales  
City Manager

**Attachments:**

- Value Planning Design Study by Alfred Benesch & Company.

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Motion: That the Council approve Alternative 2 as the preferred bridge design option and direct staff and Alfred Benesch & Company to proceed with preconstruction work for bridge replacement and street improvements on Fox Creek Road from Danbury Drive to Beich Road.

Motion: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

	Aye	Nay	Other		Aye	Nay	Other
Alderman Black				Alderman Mwilambwe			
Alderman Buragas				Alderman Painter			
Alderman Fruin				Alderman Sage			
Alderman Hauman				Alderman Schmidt			
Alderman Lower							
				Mayor Renner			



## Hamilton Road – Bunn Street to Commerce Parkway

- ▶ **Project purpose:** Improve east-west access for traffic and provide economic development opportunities in the southeast portion of Bloomington, Illinois.
- ▶ **Project description:** The proposed, four-lane improvement will connect Hamilton Road from Bunn Street to Commerce Parkway. This includes an at-grade crossing with the NS track and the relocation of an NS siding and storage facility, both of which have been intermittently discussed with NS over the last 15 years. This project also will close the dangerous intersection of Morrissey Drive (U.S. 150) and Rhodes Lane near the Morrissey at-grade crossing.
- ▶ **Project benefits:** This 3,000-foot improvement will create a 7.2-mile, continuous east-west roadway from west of Veterans Parkway (I-55 Business) and the Fox Creek subdivision to Hershey Road and State Farm's south campus. The project will:
  - reduce travel time for State Farm employees who live south and west of the NS track;
  - relieve traffic volumes on over-capacity and substandard roadways;
  - likely serve over 15,000 vehicles per day upon completion;
  - improve safety by closing the intersection of Rhodes and Morrissey;
  - provide a safer connection to the State Farm's Research, Flex I and Flex II facilities off Rhodes Lane;
  - provide a more direct and safer route for students from the Fox Creek area to the new junior high school on Morrissey; and
  - provide direct multi-modal access to State Farm facilities via Constitution Trail.
- ▶ **Project need:** The city of Bloomington is seeking support for a TIGER 6 Grant in the amount of \$11.6 million, or assistance to secure other federal funds, to make this strategic project a reality.