

LONG ISLAND LOBBY COALITION

Long Island Lobby Day
February 9th, 2010



Suffolk Community Council, Inc.

CITIZENS
CAMPAIGN



Participating Organizations

*Coram Civic Association
Dowling College
Friends of Edgewood Preserve
Friends of Huntington Station
Glen Cove Business Improvement District
Gordon Heights Civic Association
Gordon Heights Chamber of Commerce
Hicksville Chamber of Commerce
Leadership Huntington
Long Island Housing Partnership
Mastic Beach Property Owners
Middle Island Civic Association
New York League of Conservation Voters
Plainview/Old Bethpage Chamber of Commerce
Renaissance Downtowns
Rocky Point Civic Association
Save the Forge River
US Green Building Council
Youth of Ethical Societies, Long Island Chapter*

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2010 AGENDA

A diverse coalition of organizations are working together to advance meaningful improvements to Long Island's quality of life and our economy. Our agenda includes five critical issue areas and ten action items. The mix of regulatory, budget and legislative actions that Albany must take to help Long Island may seem daunting but is entirely practical and reasonable to achieve.

1) Transportation

- a) Road Improvements – Fix it First
- b) Regional Bus- (A08520)
- c) Road Improvements - Complete Streets (S05711, A08587)
- d) Multimodal transportation solutions - Lighthouse and Heartland Town Square

2) Energy and Environment

- a) Offshore Wind
- b) Ban Pesticides on School Green Fields
(**Child Safe Playing Fields Act- S.4983a/A.7937**)

3) Human Services – Universal Design

4) Small Businesses, Jobs & Economic Development

- a) The Small Business Revolving Loan Fund
- b) The Excelsior New Jobs Program
- c) Restore New York
- d) Reducing LIPA debt

5) Sewers & Infrastructure: Funding and 6 Long Island Sewers Priority List

- a) Mastic/Shirley
- b) Bay Park in Nassau County
- c) Wyandanch
- d) Rocky Point
- e) Bergen Point, Babylon, Suffolk County
- f) Smithtown/Kings Park

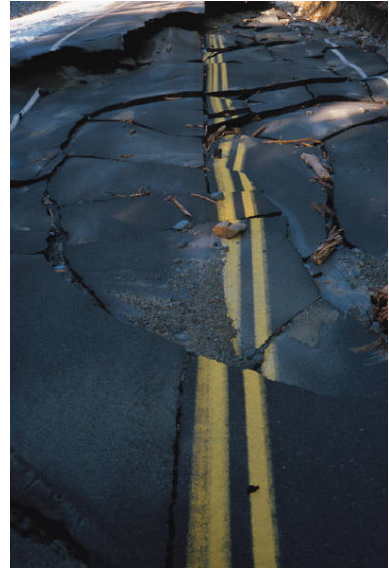
NYS Smart Growth Infrastructure Act (S5560/A8011)

1. Transportation

a) Road Improvements - Fix-it-First

New York's roads are among the worst in the country. A study by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) ranked the quality of the State's roads in the bottom five nationally. Motorists spend an additional \$405 a year in vehicle operating costs because of rough roads. This is \$70 more than the national average. Long Island's road and bridge network is no different than the State's.

Prioritizing the maintenance and repair of Long Island's roads will not only improve the roads and bridges on Long Island, but it will also generate construction jobs quickly. Unemployment in Long Island's construction industry stands at 35% despite the abundance of road and bridge needs. Emphasizing Fix it First projects will also generate more jobs than road and bridge expansion projects. In fact, a recent report by Smart Growth America shows that 16% more jobs are created by road and bridge maintenance and repair work than new construction. The New York State Department of Transportation, particularly on Long Island, needs to shift its prioritization of road and bridge expansion to the maintenance and repair of its existing road and bridge infrastructure. Shifting this priority is the first step to creating a sustainable and environmentally friendly transportation system and putting Long Islanders back to work.



b) Regional Bus (A08520)

Long Island Bus has historically been underfunded via an opaque agreement among Nassau County, the MTA, and the State. A regional bus system would end the annual funding battles and would integrate bus systems to create a fluid and seamless suburban transit system that would improve the quality of life of LI residents, support economic development and protect our environment.

Suffolk Transit has also been underfunded over the years even as ridership has grown significantly. Though the funding stream for Suffolk Transit is not as difficult (since only two entities, State and County, are the funding source), expansion of service difficult due to limited resources. Including Suffolk Transit into a regional bus system is also worthy of consideration..

c) Road Improvements - Complete Streets (S05711, A08587)

Long Island’s roads are some of the most dangerous in the region to pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. From 2005-2007 alone, 184 pedestrians were killed on Long Island’s roads. An overwhelming number of these fatalities were among Long Island’s senior population. ‘Complete streets’ is a policy that designs and builds roads for all users and for all people of varying abilities. Users are defined as motorists, cyclists, pedestrians and transit users. People of all abilities include the elderly, children and people with disabilities. Other states have implemented complete streets legislation, including California, Oregon, Massachusetts, Illinois, and Virginia, and many others are also considering such policies. In March 2009, a federal Complete Streets Act was proposed. Designing roadways from a ‘complete streets’ perspective will create safer environments for all users, as well as, promote cycling and walking as viable forms of transportation.



d) Multimodal transportation solutions for Nassau HUB/ Lighthouse and Heartland Town Square

Multimodal improvements are needed for new developments at the proposed Lighthouse development in Nassau and Heartland Town Square at the former Pilgrim State property. Improved bus service, rail service and connections, pedestrian and bicycle access as well as roadway improvements on Sagitkos Parkway and Meadowbrook Parkway should be planned and funded.



2. Energy & Environment

a) Offshore Wind

There is a tremendous offshore wind resource both in the Great Lakes and in the Atlantic Ocean. New York State has been proactively developing land-based wind energy including the largest wind farm east of the Mississippi River, Maple Ridge Wind Farm in Lewis County, with an installed capacity of 231 MW, or enough to power 68,000 homes each year. Much of this clean, renewable wind energy is located in the upstate regions of New York but is also needed in the downstate region, which means wind development offshore.

We are encouraged by the New York Power Authority's recent announcement to advance offshore wind in the Great Lakes. NYPA released the Request for Proposal which will solicit proposals for the development of a utility scale, offshore wind power project in the range of 120 megawatts (MW) to 500 MW. The project would interconnect with new or existing transmission facilities. NYPA anticipates the due date for proposals is June 1, 2010. Any winning project(s) would be expected to be awarded by December 2010.

Now is the time to aggressively move forward with siting offshore wind for Long Island. We are enthusiastic about the recent announcement and collaboration between the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA), Con Ed and New York Power Authority (NYPA) in a public-private partnership to advance an offshore energy agenda. A joint feasibility study released by the two utilities concluded that an interconnection of up to 700 MW of wind power, located at least 13 miles off the Rockaway Peninsula in the Atlantic Ocean, would be feasible with upgrades to their respective transmission systems.

In December 2009, the Long Island - New York City Offshore Wind Collaborative, announced that consultants will begin "pre-development activities," such as desktop studies of the ocean's wind, wave and wildlife environment, as part of an effort to develop what could be the largest offshore wind farm proposal in the country. Approximately 30 wind developers and firms responded to the Collaborative's (www.linycoffshorewind.com) Request for Information (RFI) issued on July 1, signaling substantial interest in developing a wind farm in the Atlantic Ocean, 13 nautical miles off the south shore of the Rockaway Peninsula. The Collaborative expects to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) in the Spring of 2010. The current expectation is for the wind project to be designed for 350 megawatts (MW) of generation, with the ability to expand up to 700 MW.



Unfortunately, Long Island has fallen behind in siting needed offshore wind. We are hopeful that, under the Governor's and the Legislature's leadership, LI can catch up to other states and the upstate Great Lakes process. An aggressive process should be put forth to achieve the goal of releasing a RFP for the offshore wind project by April 2010 and to include LI stakeholders in this process to seek the most efficient and effective location for this wind proposal.

**b) Ban pesticides on outside school grounds for grades K through 12.
Child Safe Playing Fields Act- S.4983a/A.7937**

Toxic pesticides are often used on school playing fields. Children are more sensitive to toxic pesticide exposure due their developing and smaller bodies and are therefore at an elevated risk to the dangers associated with pesticides. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Academy of Sciences and American Public Health Association, among others, recognize the danger that pesticide exposure pose to our children’s health. The growing body of peer reviewed scientific evidence indicates that pesticide exposure can adversely affect a child's neurological, respiratory, immune, and endocrine system, even at low levels. Long-term exposure to pesticides has also been linked to cancer.



Health problems associated with short-term pesticide exposure include acute impacts, such as headaches, dizziness, nausea, seizures and respiratory problems. Researchers have found that pesticide exposure can induce a poisoning effect linked to asthma. Asthma is the leading cause of school absenteeism due to chronic illness in the nation, accounting for 14 million lost days of school annually. *Despite this evidence, these toxic chemicals remain in widespread use on green spaces and playing fields at our schools.*



Fortunately, schools can eliminate their use of hazardous pesticides while successfully and cost-effectively managing pest problems on playing fields and outside areas. Numerous municipalities, school districts, individual schools, and some states, have chosen to adopt school pesticide policies that require a school to prohibit the use of toxic pesticides and instead, use readily available and affordable non-toxic alternatives. Time and time again, schools that have eliminated pesticides have reported effective pest management and significant long-term financial savings. It is critical that the NYS Legislature pass the **Child Safe Playing Fields Act- S.4983a/A.7937**— a bill that bans the use of pesticides on outdoor school grounds for grades K-12.

3. Human Services

Universal Design

Incorporating universal design features in a home is one way to make it safer for its residents. The National Center for Disease Control states that one third of home accidents can be prevented by modification or repair. AARP suggests that even the smallest adjustment, like changing a light bulb or door handle can make a home safe and more comfortable.

At the beginning of 2009, Suffolk County passed a law requiring all new affordable housing to meet Universal Design and Visitability standards. AARP supported this law and collaborated with the County legislature to get this model legislation passed. This law has set a new standard for creating model initiatives that help people to age independently in their own home.

Suffolk County is the first county in New York and the third in the nation to pass a law requiring housing built with tax dollars to incorporate [universal design](#). Due to the urging of the Suffolk Community Council we now have five Long Island towns—Brookhaven, Islip, Southampton, Riverhead and Huntington—have adopted incentives, such as lower permit fees, to encourage builders to make new homes accessible.

Universal design is part of a two-pronged AARP and Suffolk Community Council initiative to encourage [livable communities](#). Changes to the NYS Building Code to allow Universal Design on a statewide level will go a long way towards addressing the needs of an aging population



Simply put, universal design means:

- an entrance that is free of steps or has a ramp;
- wider doorways and hallways for easy maneuvering;
- a bedroom and full bathroom with reinforced walls on the first floor.

4. Small Businesses, Jobs, & Economic Development



a) **The Small Business Revolving Loan Fund**, which was originally proposed by the Governor's Small Business Task Force, will provide much needed capital to small business throughout the state. In light of disproportionate unemployment rates amongst minorities, the \$25 million fund will target women, minorities, and other disadvantaged small business owners who have difficulty accessing regular credit markets. By synchronizing the goals of the State Division of Minority and Women Business Development with the State's overall economic development agenda, New York will grow in jobs, wealth, tax revenue, and equality.

b) **The Excelsior New Jobs Program** serves as a replacement for the controversial Empire Zone program, which failed to adequately address downtowns. To develop the program, the Paterson Administration has spent the past year reaching out to hundreds of businesses and communities across the state to find out how to best build a productive jobs program. The new program includes tax incentives for targeted growth industries, including high technology, biotechnology, clean technology, finance and manufacturing. The three types of tax credits include: 1) an Excelsior Jobs Tax Credit to provide a credit to firms which create and maintain a set number of new jobs in New York for five years, based on a portion of the payroll costs associated with those new jobs; 2) an Excelsior Research and Development Tax Credit to support the Innovation Economy will expand the definition of the existing Research and Development Tax Credit, which currently only includes businesses investing in capital equipment, and 3) an Excelsior Investment Tax Credit to support capital investment and expansion. To receive any of these three tax credits, a firm must demonstrate a commitment to job creation, as well as demonstrate compliance with all environmental and worker protection laws. Empire State Development (ESD) will monitor eligibility, and annual performance reports will be required to verify compliance and to qualify for benefits.

c) **Restore New York** - One of Empire State Development's flagship community revitalization programs is Restore New York, which seeks to revitalize urban and downtown areas, stabilize neighborhoods, and invite renewed investment into a community. The program places a strong emphasis on projects in economically distressed communities and seeks to attract new residents and businesses. Grants are awarded to projects that are sponsored by municipalities and will creatively reuse vacant buildings. The third round of Restore NY grants, totaling \$153.6 million, were recently allotted to 79 projects throughout the state, including \$2.4 million for the Town of Riverhead East Main Street Revitalization project and \$2.45 million for New Village in Patchogue.

d) **Reducing LIPA Debt**- Long Island ratepayers and businesses are burdened with one of the highest electricity rates in the nation. This is caused by LIPA's crushing, \$6.6 billion debt, associated in part with the shuttered Shoreham nuclear power plant, which arose from federal policies promoting this facility. Today, approximately 16% of every electric customer's bill goes to servicing LIPA's debt. Lowering electric rates by paying off this debt, or at the very minimum, obtaining federal assistance in refinancing the debt and lowering the interest rates, is crucial to helping Long Island ratepayers and businesses weather the current economic downturn. A decrease in LIPA debt will promote a vibrant future marked by green jobs, new industry and full employment.

Reducing LIPA's debt will benefit every ratepayer, business, school district and municipality on Long Island. Boosting Long Island's economy will, in turn, increase financial activity and investment throughout the region, improving the state and federal economies as well.



5. Sewers & Infrastructure



a) Increase sewer funding through the Environmental Facilities Corporation fund and LI Sewer Priorities

Federal support for water infrastructure had dropped about 70 percent over the last two decades, delaying critical maintenance and necessary upgrades. Hundreds of sewage and wastewater treatment facilities have deteriorated and needs have been identified for establishing new infrastructure to assist existing communities. The basic federal contribution for wastewater in 2009 was \$74 million — the lowest level since the inception of the program, according to the state Environmental Facilities Corporation. A \$435 million boost in federal stimulus funds was part of a combined \$520 million the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allotted in 2009 for New York's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

Total spending in 2009 on wastewater infrastructure in New York was \$1 billion, \$400 million of which was grants. That is projected to be down to \$700 million in 2010, with \$117 million in grants. The state has more than 600 applications for wastewater projects around the state for 2010, but depending on the size and cost of those selected, officials anticipate funding between 70 and 80 projects.

Long Islanders agree that a key step in preparing for growth and maintaining our existing population is to ensure that sewer infrastructure is adequately maintained, upgraded and expanded in key communities. In order for downtowns to thrive, population density must increase and new businesses need to open. **Smart Growth cannot occur in communities without sewers.** With inevitable population growth imminent on Long Island—NYMTC predicts 307,000 new residents in Suffolk and 154,000 in Nassau by the year 2035—sewer infrastructure must be in place to ensure that growth is accommodated in an intelligent and protective manner. Dozens of LI communities submitted sewer projects to New York State for funding from the stimulus package, yet only two were funded in 2009 (the Village of Greenport and SUNY Stony Brook).



Funding and Long Island Sewer Priority List

LI Lobby Coalition is supporting funding for the following waste water infrastructure priorities on Long Island:

A) Mastic/Shirley Sewers and Infrastructure – The Forge River has become the poster child for environmental, economic and public health consequences attributed to a lack of sewer infrastructure. The benefits of sewers in this area include restoration of the Forge River, protection of the South Shore Estuary and revitalization of the community.

The need for the creation of a sewer district in the Mastic/Shirley areas dates back to the 1940's. In January 2009 the Suffolk County Department of Public Works completed a sewer study that provided a three phase plan for constructing sewers and provided possible sites for sewer treatment plants. Following that study the SC Legislature directed the Department of Public Works to create Maps and Plans for phase one, creation of a sewer district on Montauk Highway in Shirley/Mastic. The cost of constructing this is astronomical and will need the assistance of State and federal subsidies to become a reality. This is needed not only for economic development along the business corridor, but also to improve the discharge of nitrogen into our groundwater. The Forge River runs through Montauk Highway. Outdated septic systems have been identified as a major problem to the deterioration of the surrounding tributaries in the area.

B) Bay Park STP in Nassau County – This STP treats approximately 43% of Nassau County's wastewater and discharges 58.5 million gallons per day of treated effluent into the Western Bays, a sub-region of the South Shore Estuary Reserve. The plant does not remove nitrogen and chlorine from its effluent and this has taken its toll on the water body. The Western Bays continues to experience degraded water quality, excessive seaweed growth and increased shellfish closures. The bays remain on the DEC 303(d) list of impaired water bodies for pathogens since 1998 and were listed again in 2006 for nutrient pollution. The STP needs substantive upgrades to comply with new federal and state water quality standards.

C) Wyandanch – The Town of Babylon has been utilizing engineering assistance to develop a plan for revitalization of the Straight Path quarter. A sewer line of 2.5 miles would substantially allow this blighted area to undergo a needed renewal and allow for needed apartments, housing and business growth.

D) Rocky Point – Sewers would allow for the development of a "Main Street" with new businesses, expansion of existing businesses and affordable housing. A Main Street would strengthen and stabilize the local economy. Suffolk County is conducting a Rocky Point Sewer Feasibility Study.

E) Bergen Point, Suffolk County– This facility is showing stress signs in the outfall pipe which extends through the Great South Bay and discharges into the Atlantic Ocean. The pipeline has been determined to be at the end of its useful life. *A break in the line would create an unprecedented environmental, public health and economic crises for all of Long Island.* Funding is needed to replace over 14,000 feet of 72 inch diameter concrete pipe. Planning and engineering steps are underway. The overall project is valued over \$150 million and the initial stages for which funding is requested is \$5 million.



F) Smithtown/Kings Park – Suffolk County Sewer District 6 Expansion. Septic systems in this area are being adversely impacted by high groundwater levels and localized flooding. Sewer District 6 currently has a capacity of 625,000 gallons per day and the expansion is scheduled to double the capacity. To date, over \$2 million dollars have been expended on a feasibility study and a report outlining implementation is nearly complete. The Suffolk County capital budget has identified \$40 million dollars for this project for 2012 and additional funding is needed.