

Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce 2010 Legislative Agenda

Transportation

1. Mass Transit

The Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce (LPCC) supports the efforts of the Regional Transportation Authority to develop and implement a comprehensive regional transportation plan and explore long-term funding solutions for the RTA transit agencies.

The LPCC will support a funding strategy that increases ridership, efficiently replaces our aging infrastructure and does not place additional burdens on local businesses. The LPCC supports transit as a growth and marketing tool essential to the success of Lincoln Park and its business community.

The LPCC will continue to work with the Chicago Transit Authority to share the pro-business, pro-transit message and distribute updates to LPCC members and their neighbors.

2. Parking

The LPCC supports a comprehensive, responsible parking strategy that incorporates the needs of residents while working to provide businesses with the customer parking necessary to support their commercial needs.

The LPCC supports pay-and-display parking on commercial streets as a tool to encourage turnover at local businesses. The LPCC recommends a continued study of the City of Chicago's 75-year meter lease including the conversion of many Pay-and-Display boxes to three-hour intervals to support restaurants and cultural institutions. The LPCC supports Mayor Richard M. Daley's proposed "Five-Minute Grace Period" ordinance for the boxes as a method to ease the negative stigma associated with parking in Chicago.

The LPCC will continue to research a comprehensive business parking permit program in areas affected by residential parking permit. The LPCC will work with businesses, other chambers of commerce and City officials to develop and implement this initiative.

The LPCC will continue to work with the DePaul University Transportation Subcommittee to help address the needs of residents, students and businesses in the DePaul area. The LPCC supports the University's efforts to create incentives to encourage students and faculty to park on the three campus lots including lowering parking fees. The LPCC also supports the University's efforts to encourage students to ride public transportation.

3. Alternative Transportation and a Bicycle-Friendly Chicago

The LPCC supports the City of Chicago's efforts to make our streets some of the most "bike-friendly" in the United States. The LPCC will work to promote the Department of Transportation's messages and "bike-rack finder" as they relate to business issues.

The LPCC will work to form partnerships with local bicycle organizations to help mitigate traffic and pollution concerns while encouraging alternative transportation, health and wellness. The LPCC will champion responsible alternative transportation solutions for the area.

4. State Capital Expenditure Plan

The LPCC supports the creation of a comprehensive State Capital Plan that focuses on enhancing regional transportation, creates jobs and triggers business growth with a responsible, long-term funding structure.

The LPCC supports distribution of Stimulus Fund dollars to support enhancing transportation infrastructure affecting the local business community and leveraging dollars for the State Capital Expenditure Plan.

5. Regional Planning Board

The LPCC will monitor the work of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and when appropriate stress the importance of business input in its broad mission to coordinate regional land-use and transportation planning where it relates to the Lincoln Park area. The LPCC supports business and market based solutions regarding transportation planning.

Tax Climate

1. Modification of the Cook County Property Classification System

The LPCC supports modification of Cook County's property tax classification provisions to reduce commercial and industrial tax assessment levels that are significantly higher than other counties and other general reforms that improve the fairness of the system to all tax payers.

The LPCC supports rescinding the recently passed Cook County amendment to the real estate property assessment classification ordinance, which reduced the number of property classes to two -10% for residential and 25% for commercial and industrial property. Research done by the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce (CCC) indicates that establishing a 25% level for commercial property will result in a tax increase for businesses and commercial taxpayers. We support reducing the ordinance level of assessment to the actual or de facto level of assessment.

2. State, City and County Revenues

The LPCC will actively oppose any proposed new state, county or city taxes that are substantially detrimental to the Lincoln Park business community. The LPCC supports the recognition of Mayor Daley to freeze taxes at the city level in 2010 and cut wasteful spending amid the global economic crisis.

As a matter of public policy, taxes for the benefit of a particular government service should be raised from the segment of the economy most closely related to that government service.

3. Sales and Use Tax

The LPCC supports efforts to streamline and simplify the state sales and use tax collection and bring about uniformity among the states, while reserving the right to oppose certain provisions that may be detrimental to LPCC members. The LPCC also supports any administrative reforms in the state sales and use tax refunds procedure.

4. Maintenance of existing business tax structure

The LPCC supports the continuance or re-enactment of tax credits, exemptions and other provisions adopted to enhance the business climate and to encourage economic development and job creation.

5. Repeal of Remaining 0.5% Sales Tax Increase

The LPCC supports the efforts of the Cook County Board of Commissioners to repeal the first 0.5% of 2008's sales tax increase and will continue to advocate repealing the remaining 0.5% to help Cook County businesses compete with collar counties.

Zoning and Development

1. Zoning Variances

The LPCC is opposed to zoning exemptions and variances in Lincoln Park that are detrimental to the existing business community and we encourage an open process to include business and the community zoning questions that arise. The LPCC will act as a liaison between the business community and local elected officials when zoning disputes arise to ensure that the business community and economic interests of Lincoln Park are represented.

2. Development

The LPCC will proactively work with local elected officials to ensure any development in Lincoln Park is conscious of the potential economic impact on the community including traffic, parking and congestion issues.

The LPCC will continue to monitor plans for the future of Children’s Memorial Hospital and Lincoln Park Hospital sites and supports the responsible reuse of the locations. The LPCC will monitor proposals and distribute our position to community stakeholders.

3. Eminent Domain

The LPCC is opposed to Eminent Domain legislation that restricts positive economic development initiatives.

Business Climate

1. State, City and County Revenues

The LPCC will actively oppose any proposed new state, county and city regulation or fees that put an unfair economic burden of compliance on businesses in Lincoln Park.

The LPCC supports Mayor Richard M. Daley’s efforts to freeze current taxes and fees amid the difficult global economy. The LPCC also supports responsible consolidations, cuts and streamlined processes in all levels of government to lower costs and ease registration and regulation for businesses.

2. Business Development

The LPCC supports the provision of tax incentives for small and medium size enterprises and their investors across a diverse range of industry sectors to encourage business development and job creation.

The LPCC will support any proposal that will lead to funding grants, incentives or cuts for businesses to lower costs and increase profits.

3. Efficient Government

The LPCC supports working with local governments to improve business permitting, fee assessment, collection systems, and increasing regulatory efficiencies that allow businesses to better manage their licensing, permitting and regulatory obligations and responsibilities. The LPCC supports the efforts of Chicago’s officials in their commitment in 2010 to ease the financial and time burdens on local business owners.

The LPCC encourages elected officials across all levels of government to consider innovative cost structures and other procedures to effectively manage the needs of business.

4. Fee Accountability

The LPCC supports changes in the imposition of statewide fees, including criteria for establishing or increasing fees, analysis of costs and benefits, and regular review of fee-supported programs and their administration.

5. Health Care

The LPCC supports, and will proactively champion, any efforts by state, city and county governments to inform businesses on how to cut health care costs for employees. The LPCC also supports health and wellness and preventative health care programs for businesses.

The LPCC will continue to keep members informed of all proposed changes throughout the Health Care Reform debate. The LPCC encourages members and legislators to consider all of the health, wellness and cost of care facts when making informed decisions and will continue to provide members access to this information.

The LPCC opposes any expansion of health care coverage without legislative approval.

6. Public/Private Partnerships

The LPCC opposes legislation and regulation that restricts the ability to do business with the government.

The LPCC supports programs and initiatives that spur economic development through the collective leveraging of funds and resources for job creation, business growth and community well-being.

7. Education and Workforce

The LPCC believes creating education and workforce development systems that produce a qualified workforce is essential to the health of the Lincoln Park economy.

8. Green Technology

The LPCC supports programs and incentives that encourage job growth, new businesses and economic development through sustainable business practices and developing green technologies in Chicago and Illinois.

9. Entrepreneurial Spirit & New Business Creation

The LPCC believes that, and encourages support for programs that encourage entrepreneurial spirit, provide loans for small business investment or create job growth are vital to the success of Lincoln Park and the region.