



State Legislative Agenda  
Will County, Illinois  
Fiscal Year 2023





# COUNTY OF WILL

WILL COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING • 302 N. CHICAGO STREET • JOLIET, ILLINOIS 60432

**Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant**  
Will County Executive

**Judy Ogalla**  
Will County Board Chair

Dear Legislators,

We are pleased to present you with Will County's 2023 State Legislative agenda for your review and future reference. We look forward to collaborating with all the stakeholders to make this year a successful one.

Will County remains an evolving county that has a rich diversity in our communities and unincorporated areas. We remain the fourth largest county in the state and one of the faster growing counties in the nation. As we continue our economic development efforts, we are also working to balance the growth with the quality of life for our residents.

Will County's priorities this year are focused on the continued improvement of our area. We ask for your support in protecting revenue streams so that we can continue to effectively manage our county budget, ensure our residents have access to quality healthcare, and protect our natural environment so that families have a great place to live and grow.

Will County recognizes and appreciates the efforts made by the Governor and the General Assembly to fund critical projects and we hope that you will work with us to ensure these projects are completed in a timely matter.

Most importantly, we welcome your ideas and suggestions on ways we can work together going forward to address the common challenges that all our communities face.

Sincerely,

  
Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant  
Will County Executive

  
Judy Ogalla  
Will County Board Chair

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT/CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

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***Will County opposes any legislation that removes authority and duties of the County Board or the County Board Chair and gives that power to another elected official or governing body.*** Additionally, the Will County Board opposes legislation that impacts or limits the authority of the County to pass ordinances deemed in the best interest of the people of Will County, causing loss of local control.

## Elections

***Will County Supports efforts to change the mandated fee associated with persons filing a petition for discovery.*** The current fee is set at \$10 per precinct specified for discovery. That fee does not cover costs of conducting an election recount. (10 ILCS 5/22-9.1)

***Will County Supports legislation and state funding to local governments for modernizing the voting system equipment.*** Most election equipment used by the Will County Clerk's Office has reached legacy status. A complete modernization of all voting equipment is essential to ensure the Will County voting experience is up-to-date and remains the most accessible and secure.

***Will County Supports legislation that provides additional state funding assistance for training for election workers.***

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT/CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

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## Veterans Assistance Commission

### *Will County Supports changes to the state law governing Veterans Assistance*

**Commissions.** P.A. 102-0732 was approved by the General Assembly and enacted into law on May 6, 2022. At the time of passage, it was acknowledged that additional changes would be necessary to address problems inherent in the policy with the goal being to improve the law for both veterans and counties.

Changes the County supports:

The tax levy identified as a funding source for VACs was intended to be exempt from the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL).

Unfortunately, the exemption language is not as clear as desired and must be amended to ensure that mandated funding is exempt from the tax cap and will not result in the County having to scale back or eliminate other important services.

The law provides VACs with significant authority to mandate that County Boards meet specific funding thresholds to support veterans. Despite investing VACs with authority to command these additional revenues, the law mandates that County Boards separately fund VAC operational and administrative costs. This funding should instead come out of any revenues mandated by the VAC and levied by the County Board under the new law.

The law should be amended to include transparency provisions concerning VAC finances. This would include an annual audit of VAC funds and any other germane financial reports to be shared with the County Board.

The law should be amended to require VACs to adopt existing policies of the County, including compensation and personnel policies.

Will County is concerned that elected County Boards are being mandated to approve funding to a county agency absent any oversight by the appropriating body. This disconnect can be resolved by either reinstating an oversight role for County Boards or by officially designating VACs as separate units of local government with boards elected by the public and invested with the power of taxation.

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# INFRASTRUCTURE & LAND USE

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## Transportation

Major delays to transportation projects can prevent critical infrastructure projects from being completed in a timely manner and lead to significant cost increases, placing an even higher burden on local governments and taxpayers.

***Will County Supports the Will County Department of Transportation efforts to pursue legislative action authorizing the use of quick-take proceedings for the following transportation projects:***

Widening and reconstruction of Bell Road from 143<sup>rd</sup> to 151<sup>st</sup>

Reconstruction of West River Road from IL 53 to Coal City Road

Reconstruction of Cedar Road from Francis Road to Lenox Street

Reconstruction of Exchange Street from IL 394 to Country Lane Road

Widening and reconstruction of Laraway Road from US Route 52 to Cherry Hill Road

***Will County Supports legislation that streamlines the review process for local transportation projects by the Illinois Department of Transportation.*** Delays in environmental and engineering reviews prevent local projects from being completed in a timely manner.

## Water Infrastructure

***Will County Supports efforts to secure state funding to support the DuPage River Study project.*** Will and DuPage Counties partnered on this effort despite the state's failure to fund its share of the DuPage River Feasibility Study. The study area has experienced rapid development over the past two decades, and currently includes 40 communities affecting approximately 4,300,000 people. Major storm events occurred in the basin in 1996, 2008, 2009, and most recently in April 2013, resulting in significant overbank flooding in over 20 communities and significant damage to residential and nonresidential structures and critical infrastructure and the closure of two major interstate highways (I-80 and I-55) for several days. Average annual flood damages are currently estimated at \$30 million.

## HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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***Will County Supports increased state funding for the Local Health Protection Grant from Illinois Department of Public Health which provides financial support for public health services:*** investigation of disease outbreaks, inspection of restaurants, inspection of private water well, and regulation of private sewage disposal systems.

***Will County Supports legislation providing additional state funding to hire and support Behavioral Health Professionals.*** Local health departments struggle when competing against the private sector providers for healthcare professionals and clinicians.

### Housing Stability

***Will County Supports continued state funding for the Court-Based Rental Assistance Program.*** The Illinois Court-Based Rental Assistance Program (CBRAP) provides funding to Illinois tenants and landlords across the state who have pending cases in eviction court.

***Will County Supports legislation to expand the eligible conditions for tenants seeking to seal eviction records.*** Having an eviction filing on your record is a serious obstacle to finding housing, even if a court didn't decide the case against you. The COVID-19 Emergency Housing Act passed in 2021 made temporary changes to state law regarding mandatory, automatic and discretionary sealing of eviction records, but these provisions sunset in 2022.

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# ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

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## Waste Management

***Will County Supports legislative efforts to establish a statewide paint stewardship program.*** Will County offers several collection events each year to target and recover materials that can be recycled but not in a typical curbside program. The County spends an average of \$220,500 on recycling and disposal of latex and oil-based paint.

***Will County Supports legislative efforts to establish a statewide carpet stewardship program to help facilitate recycling of nylon and polyester carpet from both residential and commercial consumers.*** The program will make it easier for construction and demolition recyclers to make identification and recovery of these materials easier and help divert these materials from the landfill.

***Will County Supports legislative efforts to establish a statewide packaging stewardship program.*** A program would require the manufacturers of packaging materials (glass, aluminum and tin to cardboard, plastic, and paperboard) to assist in covering the costs of collection and recycling of the materials it produces. It would relieve some of the costs of collection and market fluctuations experienced by local government, residents and businesses of all sizes that choose to recycle.

# **PUBLIC SAFETY**

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## **Emergency Management**

*Will County Supports legislative efforts to increase grant amounts awarded to counties through the State's Nuclear Safety Preparedness Grant Program.*

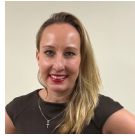
*Will County Supports legislation that provides state funding to enhance the safety and security measures at K-12 schools and Higher Education campuses.*

## **Criminal Justice System**

*Will County Supports legislation that provides state funding for all unfunded mandates placed on counties as a result of the implementation of the provisions of the SAFE-T Act.*



Will County State Legislative Agenda 2023  
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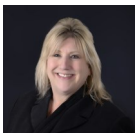


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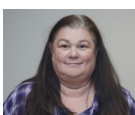


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# Will County Elected Officials

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# Will County Leadership

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Chair of the Will County Board

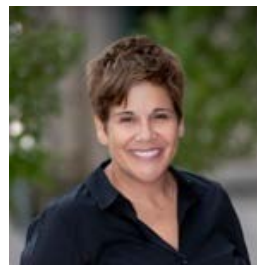


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