



City of Chanhassen

2021 Legislative Priorities

1. **Support “Opt-Out” Suburban Transit Agencies:** Chanhassen supports opt-out cities and suburban transit agencies, in concurrence with the findings of the Office of the Legislative Auditors January 2011 Governance of Transit Report. Creation of these agencies provided residents and businesses with a desired service that met their needs while maintaining financial and management controls. The State should refrain from infringing on the ability of local agencies to provide and control bus services for the benefit of area businesses and residents. Suburban riders are an integral part of the suburban transit system.
2. **Building Code Fees:** The City believes strongly that development should pay for development and costs for those services should not be passed on to existing residents through increased property taxes. Local governments must ensure new developments meet established standards for the safety of future residents, and building permits play an important role in advancing these oversight responsibilities. Cities are in the best position to set these fees at the local level.
3. **Unfunded Mandates:** Chanhassen opposes both current and future statutory changes that create mandated tasks that require new or added local costs without a corresponding funding mechanism. Without a funding source, Chanhassen is potentially in the position of having to increase property taxes and/or fees. These unfunded mandates add to the responsibilities for cities and the ability to fund traditional service needs.
4. **Local Governance & Restriction on Local Government Budgets:** The City strongly supports participation in cooperative arrangements, but strongly opposes any effort to weaken the ability of local governments to provide the best services and benefits for their communities (levy limits, unfunded mandates, cooperative purchasing, and ability to grant variances). Local budgets are subject to intense public scrutiny. Inflation alone forces cities to spend more money to maintain current service levels. The people who know what is best for this city are the people who live and work here.
5. **Environmental:** Chanhassen supports protection of our environmental resources. However, compliance with regulations is often confusing and complicated. Wetland permitting processes are too time-consuming and can slow down development processes. Research should be conducted by the State on streamlining one or more of the following processes: Wetland Conservation Act, Clean Water Act requirements, EPA Standards and Regulatory Rules, etc., especially when it comes to Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) jurisdictional impacts.
6. **Transportation:**
 - a. Stable funding for the Municipal State Aid (MSA) program which supports local roadway improvements should be maintained to ensure local communities are able to address issues on key transportation network roads.

- b. Regional projects should have regional funding sources. Funding should be focused on reducing or eliminating local city contributions.
 - **TH 5 Project Improvements (West of TH 41 to Norwood Young America):** This is a joint project with MnDOT, Carver County, and the Cities of Victoria, Waconia, Norwood/Young America, and Chanhassen to expand corridor four lanes.
 - **U.S. Highway 212:** Continue development of Highway 212 from County Road 147 on the Chaska/Carver border to the City of Cologne.
 - **Highway 18:** Complete the two-mile gap in the County Highway 18 transportation corridor as a part of the Arboretum Area Transportation Plan.
7. **Water Resources Protection Funding:** The City is supportive of a program that would provide a stable funding source for water resource protection improvements. The program could be formula based, similar to the Municipal State Aid program for roadway improvements.
8. **Minnetonka Middle School West Intersection Improvements:** Work with Minnetonka School District to submit a bonding request to improve the intersection at TH 41 and the Minnetonka Middle School West entrance to address traffic and safety issues.
9. **Fiscal Disparities:** Explore modifications to the fiscal disparities program in order to reduce the imbalances inherent in the current formula. The fiscal disparities program was created in 1971, and although the population of the metro area has grown by over 1.5M people since that time, the formula for fiscal disparities has remained the same. As the population grows, the need for retail services to support residents grows with it. Individual cities and their property taxpayers take the lead in developing regional, retail, and service assets that support residents and visitors to the area. In addition to the cost of planning and developing these assets, retail and service industries consume significant city services, particularly in the area of public safety, as well as impose significant burdens on local roads, bridges, and other transportation infrastructure.

A 2012 report commissioned by the Minnesota Legislature demonstrates that the property taxes generated by these retail services do not pay for the additional services they require, an imbalance that is increased by the fiscal disparities program. Local taxpayers in communities that host regional retail assets are forced to subsidize the costs of city and county services while taxpayers in communities that use, but do not develop, these assets have their tax rates lowered.
10. **Remote Meetings:** Chanhassen would support changes to state statute that would allow for Council Members to participate in meetings remotely outside of an emergency order. Limitations may include number of meetings annually or under limited circumstances, such as work-related travel, as determined by the local government.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR OTHER AGENCIES:

[Metro Cities 2021 Legislative Policies](#)

[League of Minnesota Cities Legislative Policies](#)

[Municipal Legislative Commission Legislative Policies](#)