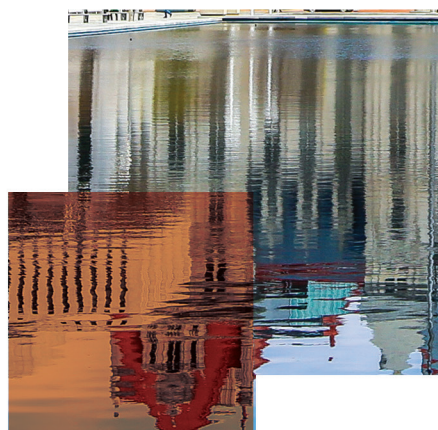


The New York State Assembly Annual Report



20 25



**Committee on
Cities**

Speaker Carl E. Heastie
Patrick B. Burke, CHAIR



Patrick B. Burke
Assemblyman 142nd
Erie County

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Committee on Cities

CHAIR
Great Lakes Taskforce

COMMITTEES
Banks,
Governmental Employees,
Environmental Conservation,
Science and Technology,
Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports
Development

December 15, 2025

The Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Speaker, New York State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 349
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Speaker Heastie:

It is my pleasure to present you with the 2025 Annual Report of the Assembly Standing Committee on Cities. This report highlights legislation and issues considered by the Committee this year.

Cities in New York State are vital economic engines and attending to their needs is important to me as the Committee Chair. The sixty-two cities of our State face serious challenges to maintain their economic and social vitality. From our State's smallest city to our largest, their diversity challenges the Committee with a wide range of issues. The Committee is dedicated to formulating legislative solutions to improve the quality of life for residents of all the State's cities.

I look forward to working with you and the members of the Assembly who represent cities in furthering the goals of this Committee.

Sincerely,

Patrick Burke
Chair
Assembly Standing Committee on Cities

2025 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON CITIES

Patrick B. Burke, Chair

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
II.	MAJOR ISSUES OF 2025.....	2
	A. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AID – ENACTED BUDGET.....	2
	B. SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION.....	4
	C. DEBT INSTRUMENTS/MUNICIPAL FINANCES.....	8
III.	PARKLAND ALIENATION LEGISLATION.....	9
IV.	PUBLIC HEARINGS.....	11
V.	OUTLOOK FOR 2026.....	12
	APPENDIX A.....	13
	APPENDIX B.....	14
	APPENDIX C.....	16

I. INTRODUCTION

The New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Cities is primarily responsible for the initiation and review of legislation affecting the State's sixty-two cities. The Committee's role in initiating and reporting legislation is influenced and, at times, restrained by the Municipal Home Rule powers provided to cities under the provisions of Article IX of the New York State Constitution. Article IX outlines the powers, duties and limitations of local governments and the State Legislature in the enactment of laws affecting specific local governments. These Home Rule powers generally limit the Legislature's ability to pass legislation that affects the property, affairs, or government of local governments except by way of (a) general laws, which apply uniformly to all local governments; or (b) special laws, on request of a local government by either two-thirds of the membership of the local legislative body or its chief executive officer and concurred by a majority of the membership of the local legislature.

Bills referred to the Committee on Cities are those that would amend city charters, the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the General City Law, the Second Class Cities Law, or the General Municipal Law. Bills that relate to cities and would amend general bodies of law such as Public Health, Housing, Energy, Transportation, Education, or Economic Development may also be referred to the Cities Committee if they have specific or local applicability.

The Committee is concerned with the enactment of laws that will further improve the ability of cities to address their unique problems, as well as prohibiting the enactment of laws that would impede city governments in their delivery of local services. Under the leadership of the Chair, Assemblymember Patrick B. Burke, the Committee monitors the problems of cities and works closely with state and local representatives to develop solutions.

II. MAJOR ISSUES OF 2025

A. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AID – ENACTED BUDGET

Aid and Incentives to Municipalities

Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM) funding is direct general-purpose aid provided to towns, villages, and cities (other than New York City). The AIM program was created in the 2005-2006 State Budget as a result of consolidating five separate funding categories. The 2025-2026 State Budget contained an appropriation of \$647 million for cities, representing no change from the previous year. For the second consecutive year, the State Budget included \$45.3 million in additional general-purpose aid for cities. Each city received a share of this additional aid proportional to the amount it received from the AIM program, up to a maximum of \$5 million.

Local Government Performance and Efficiency Program

The Local Government Efficiency Grant Program (LGEG) provides grants to local governments, including cities, that have improved the overall efficiency of their operations leading to reduced property taxes through shared services and other cost-saving measures. The Local Government Performance and Efficiency Program received \$8 million for the costs associated with local government efficiency projects, municipal consolidation, and/or shared services, representing no change from SFY 2024-2025.

Citizen Empowerment Tax Credit and Citizens Re-organization Empowerment Grants

The Citizen Empowerment Tax Credit provides financial assistance to municipalities, following a consolidation or dissolution, to incentivize real property tax relief. The Citizen Re-organization Empowerment Grants provide local governments with up to \$100,000 to cover the costs of planning and implementing reorganization and consolidation efforts. The 2025-2026 State Budget contained an appropriation of \$35 million for these programs, representing no change from the previous year.

Financial Control Board

The New York State Financial Control Board manages and approves the financial plan, contracts, and borrowing of New York City. The 2025-2026 State Budget contained an appropriation of \$3.5 million for this program, representing no change from the previous year.

Increased Bonding Authority for the New York City Transitional Finance Authority

The Transitional Finance Authority (TFA) is responsible for financing parts of the New York City Capital Improvement Plan. The Budget increases the bonding authority for the TFA from \$27.5 billion to \$30.5 billion on July 1, 2025.

Financial Emergency Act for the City of New York Extender

The “New York State Financial Emergency Act for the City of New York” (FEA) established a Financial Control Board to monitor the city’s finances, a General Debt Service Fund to service the city’s debts and various other provisions governing the City’s budgeting and bonding practices. The 2024-2025 State Budget extended the FEA until at least July 1, 2035.

B. SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION

City Charter Revision Commission Reform

A.3665-A Simone; Veto 63

This legislation would repeal certain provisions of the Municipal Home Rule Law that prevent other local referendum questions from appearing on the ballot if a city charter revision commission created by the mayor places any question on the ballot. Repeal of these “ballot bumping” provisions would allow all referendum proposals, whether submitted by a city charter revision commission or by petition, to appear on the ballot in the same election.

Notification for Ceasing Fluoridation

A.8680-A Burke; Passed Assembly

This legislation would require any city that fluoridates a public water supply to publish notice of discontinuance on its website, social media, and in local newspapers 90 days before discontinuing the fluoridation of such water supply.

City of New York

Early Set Out of Trash and Recycling

A.2693-A Eichenstein; Chapter 705

This law prevents the New York City Department of Sanitation from issuing a notice of violation, ticket, or summons for violations of the Department’s trash and recycling collection rules that occur between 3 PM on Friday and 6 PM on Saturday due to placing solid waste or recyclable material out for collection earlier than would otherwise be allowed under such rules.

Bedford-Stuyvesant Volunteer Ambulance Land Conveyance

A.5615-A Zinerman; Chapter 608

This law authorizes the City of New York to convey 727 Greene Avenue in Brooklyn, New York to the Bedford-Stuyvesant Volunteer Ambulance Corps for the primary purpose of operating and maintaining a volunteer ambulance service. The law provides that the land shall revert to the City of New York if it should ever cease to be used for such purposes.

Gateway National Recreation Area

A.6468 Tannousis; Chapter 150

This law extends, until June 30, 2027, the authority of New York City to convey certain lands to the United States for inclusion in the Gateway National Recreation Area.

Analysis of Stormwater and Groundwater Issues in Southeast Queens
A.7992 Hyndman; Passed Assembly

This legislation would require New York City to conduct an analysis of stormwater and groundwater issues in southeast Queens that have resulted in increased flooding. A report of the city's findings would be submitted to the Legislature and include analyses on the feasibility and efficacy of installing reverse seepage basins, the status of stormwater sewer upgrades, and rehabilitation of former water supply wells for the purpose of combatting severe flooding.

SAIL Away Program Extender
A.8426 Cook; Chapter 318

This law extends, until December 31, 2030, the authority for City of New York to sell certain municipally owned parcels of real property without public auction or a competitive bidding process through the SAIL (Slivers, Accessways, Interior Lots) Away Program. The New York City Department of Citywide Administrative services has utilized the SAIL Away program to dispose of city-owned property that is difficult to develop due to size, shape, zoning, configuration, and topography by selling it to abutting property owners. Such property is required to be sold at fair market value and remains subject to the city's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure.

Tax Incentives for Business Relocation
A.8676 Lee; Chapter 171

The Relocation and Employment Assistance Program (REAP) was established to encourage businesses to relocate from south of 96th Street in Manhattan, or from outside New York city, to the four outer boroughs and Manhattan north of 96th Street, by providing these businesses with city income tax credits based on the number of jobs relocated. The Lower Manhattan Relocation and Employment Assistance Program (LMREAP) is a similar program originally intended to assist in post-9/11 revitalization efforts by offering tax credits to businesses that relocate jobs to eligible premises in Manhattan south of Houston Street. This law extends the City's authorization to provide REAP and LMREAP tax credits until July 1, 2028.

This law also authorizes the City of New York to establish a new Relocation Assistance Credit per Employee (RACE) program. In an effort to encourage office occupancy rates to return to pre-pandemic levels, this program would offer a \$5,000 tax credit per employee to businesses that relocate from out of state and purchase or lease at least 10,000 square feet in certain buildings anywhere in the city for up to ten years. Additionally, this law requires the mayor to annually report certain data on the REAP, LMREAP and RACE programs to the Governor and the Legislature until 2030.

Joint Bidding**A.8678 Burke; Chapter 627**

This law extends the authorization for New York City to award public contracts that also include private utility interference work in the same contract, a practice known as “joint bidding,” until December 31, 2026. Utility interference work involves privately owned structures that must be moved or altered for the completion of a public works project. Often, when New York City undertakes a public works project, private utility interference work must be done to complete the project. “Joint bidding” offers a more coordinated construction process.

Coordinated Construction for Lower Manhattan**A.8679 Burke; Chapter 628**

This law extends the Coordinated Construction Act for Lower Manhattan until December 31, 2026. The aftermath of September 11, 2001, left infrastructure and buildings in Lower Manhattan in disrepair. As part of the rebuilding efforts, the Legislature approved the Coordinated Construction Act for Lower Manhattan that assists both the State and City in streamlining reconstruction. This Act allows the MTA, in addition to State and City agencies, within a contract for a lower Manhattan redevelopment project, to include work to be done on non-publicly owned energy, telecommunications, or other privately owned facilities necessary for the completion of the project.

City of Rochester**Plumbing Inspectors****A.6953-A Bronson; Chapter 376**

City plumbing inspectors are required by law to be residents of the city in which they are appointed. The City of Rochester has a shortage of qualified plumbing inspectors, and this law would remedy this problem by allowing Rochester to appoint inspectors that reside outside of the city provided they are residents of Monroe County.

City of Little Falls

Little Falls Fiscal Recovery Act A.7902-C Smullen; Chapter 176

This law, requested by the City of Little Falls, authorizes the City to issue up to \$3.4 million in serial bonds to liquidate deficits of their general, golf, and water funds, which have accumulated as of December 31, 2025. The law also includes oversight provisions to ensure the City takes steps to avoid similar budgetary and fiscal problems in the future.

City of Dunkirk

City of Dunkirk Revenue Anticipation Note Refinancing Act A.8870 Pretlow; Chapter 183

The fiscal health of the City of Dunkirk has deteriorated following the closure of the NRG electric generation plant. Although the City of Dunkirk Fiscal Recovery Act, included as part of the 2024-2025 State Budget, authorized Dunkirk to issue bonds to liquidate certain deficits, Dunkirk faced difficulty marketing the bonds. This put Dunkirk at risk of being unable to pay a \$12.7 million revenue anticipation note with a maturity date in July 2025.

This law authorized a State appropriation of \$13.7 million to support a loan to Dunkirk for the purpose of paying the revenue anticipation note in the event the city was unable to secure enough funds to pay the full amount of the principal and interest owed. The loan and interest must be repaid using city revenues within 15 years. Additionally, for each year the loan is outstanding, the State may withhold state aid to the city and the mayor must provide an attestation that the city has made a good faith effort to issue deficit bonds or notes to repay the loan but has been unable to do so. The city's finances will also continue to be subject to oversight as provided under the Dunkirk Fiscal Recovery Act for as long as the loan remains outstanding.

C. DEBT INSTRUMENTS/MUNICIPAL FINANCES

City of Buffalo

Buffalo Bond Issuance

A.2734 Peoples-Stokes; Chapter 149

This law extends, until June 30, 2026, the authority for the underwriting or sale of bonds or notes for the City of Buffalo at private sale. This law provides Buffalo with additional fiscal flexibility by permitting the city to determine the timing of bond sales.

City of New York

Interest Rate Exchange Agreements

A.8416 Burke; Chapter 147

This law extends, until June 30, 2026, certain authorizations for the City of New York to issue bonds and notes at private sale with variable interest rates. The authorizations contained in this law have allowed the city to continue to sell its obligations in the public credit markets and utilize modern financing procedures.

City of Yonkers

Yonkers Bond Issuance

A.5298 Pretlow; Chapter 136

This law extends, until June 30, 2026, the authority for the underwriting or sale of bonds or notes for the City of Yonkers at private sale. This law provides Yonkers with additional fiscal flexibility by permitting the city to determine the timing of bond sales.

III. PARKLAND ALIENATION LEGISLATION

The issue of parkland alienation, or the conversion of parkland for non-park purposes, has been a great concern for the Committee. As a matter of public trust, it is a requirement that any use of public parkland for non-parkland purposes must be authorized by the New York State Legislature.

As part of the Committee's ongoing effort to protect the public trust as it relates to parkland, and in keeping with the Assembly's policy of preserving open space, the Committee strives to ensure that each proposed parkland alienation complies with alienation guidelines prior to it being reported out of Committee.

Committee guidelines for authorizing parkland alienation include specifying the number of acres proposed for alienation and requiring that the fair market value of such lands be dedicated for the purchase of replacement parkland of equal or greater fair market value or for capital improvements to existing parkland. The legislation must also include a legal description of the parkland proposed to be alienated, as well as language detailing any land proposed to be dedicated as replacement parkland (if replacement land is proposed for parkland). Finally, a home rule message from the municipality requesting alienation is required prior to the Committee acting on any parkland legislation.

City of New York

A.6781-B Hooks; Chapter 138

This law authorizes the City of New York to alienate parkland for the purpose of constructing and operating a gaming facility. The parkland will revert to the City of New York should construction of the gaming facility not begin within 15 years of a gaming facility license being issued.

A.7514-A Benedetto; Chapter 152

This law authorizes the City of New York to alienate parkland for the purpose of constructing and operating a gaming facility. The parkland will revert to the City of New York should construction of the gaming facility not begin within 15 years of a gaming facility license being issued.

City of Batavia

A.6916-A Hawley; Chapter 331

This law authorizes the City of Batavia to alienate certain parkland for the purpose of providing municipal parking and preserving the historic Brisbane Mansion for residential or hotel uses.

City of Albany

A.8342-A Romero; Chapter 333

This law authorizes the City of Albany to alienate certain parkland for school purposes.

City of New Rochelle

A.8559-A Otis; Chapter 335

This law amends a prior authorization for the City of New Rochelle to alienate certain City-owned waterfront and parkland. This law provides that the New York State Armory Building and its annex shall revert to the state in the event the deed fails to provide for the preservation of the Armory and annex; provided, however that the state's reversion interest shall be extinguished upon the owner's receipt of a certificate of occupancy for the Armory building and annex. Additionally, in the event the deed fails to provide for a dedicated space for veterans' organizations such dedicated space shall revert to the state.

City of Yonkers

A.8677 Shimsky; Chapter 337

This law authorizes the City of Yonkers to alienate certain parkland for the purpose of restoring the Color Gardens for public enjoyment.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Procurement

Each year, local governments across New York State, including cities, spend billions of dollars to procure a wide variety of goods, from office supplies to life-saving emergency equipment. State laws governing municipal procurement generally require purchase contracts above \$20,000 to be competitively bid and awarded to the “lowest responsible bidder,” or the bidder that represents the “best value” according to certain procurement criteria. As municipalities continue to navigate an evolving economic landscape, there have been calls for additional flexibility, transparency, and fairness throughout the procurement process, as well as questions concerning how technology may be better utilized to achieve these goals.

On November 12th, the Cities Committee conducted a joint public hearing with the Committee on Local Governments to examine current state laws governing local government commodity procurement to determine what, if any, changes are needed to make the commodity procurement process more transparent, fair, and efficient, and what role, if any, emerging technology should play in these efforts. The Committees heard testimony from a variety of municipal associations, local government officials, and advocacy groups.

V. OUTLOOK FOR 2026

In 2026, the Cities Committee will continue to work with all sixty-two cities of the State to implement effective policy measures intended to help revitalize urban areas, restoring them to strong and thriving cities. A primary goal of the Committee will be to achieve comprehensive solutions that will assist our cities. The Committee's other areas of oversight will again range from the protection of public parklands, sales of bonds, and other issues relating to municipal finances.

APPENDIX A

2025 SUMMARY OF ACTION ON ALL BILLS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON CITIES

<u>Final Disposition</u>	<u>Assembly Bills</u>	<u>Senate Bills</u>	<u>Total</u>
Bills Reported	11	0	11
To Floor	1	0	1
To Ways and Means	9	0	9
To Codes	0	0	0
To Rules	1	0	1
To Judiciary	0	0	0
 Bills Having Enacting Clauses Stricken	 1	 0	 1
 Bills Having Committee Referenced Change	 11	 0	 11
 Bills Never Reported, Held In Committee	 73	 5	 78
 Total in Committee	 96	 5	 101
 TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD			 4

APPENDIX B

Bills that Passed Both Houses

<u>Bill #</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Status</u>
A. 2693-A	Eichenstein	Prevents the New York City Department of Sanitation from issuing a notice of violation between Friday and Saturday for placing solid waste or recyclable material out for collection earlier than allowed under the Department's collection rules.	Chapter 705
A. 2734	Peoples-Stokes	Extends, until June 30, 2026, the authorization for the City of Buffalo to continue to issue serial bonds and notes at private sale.	Chapter 149
A. 3665-A	Simone	Repeals provisions of the Municipal Home Rule Law that prevent other local referendum questions from appearing on the ballot when a city charter revision commission created by the mayor places any question on the ballot.	Veto 63
A. 5298	Pretlow	Extends, until June 30, 2026, the authority for the City of Yonkers to continue to issue bonds and notes at private sale.	Chapter 136
A. 5615-A	Zinerman	Authorizes the City of New York to convey 727 Greene Avenue in Brooklyn to the Bedford-Stuyvesant Volunteer Ambulance Corps for the purpose of operating a volunteer ambulance service.	Chapter 608
A. 6468	Tannousis	Relates to the conveyance of lands for the establishment of Gateway National Recreation Area.	Chapter 150
A. 6781-B	Hooks	Authorizes the City of New York to alienate parkland for the purpose of constructing and operating a gaming facility.	Chapter 138
A. 6916-A	Hawley	Authorizes the City of Batavia to alienate certain parkland to preserve the historic Brisbane Mansion for residential or hotel uses.	Chapter 331
A. 6953-A	Bronson	Exempts plumbing inspectors in the City of Rochester from certain residency requirements.	Chapter 376
A. 7514-A	Benedetto	Authorizes the City of New York to alienate parkland for the purpose of constructing and operating a gaming facility.	Chapter 152
A. 7902-C	Smullen	Authorizes the City of Little Falls to issue serial bonds to liquidate deficits of their general, golf, and water funds.	Chapter 176
A. 8342-A	Romero	Authorizes the City of Albany to alienate certain parkland for school purposes.	Chapter 333

APPENDIX B

Bills that Passed Both Houses

<u>Bill #</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Status</u>
A. 8416	Burke	Extends certain provisions relating to the sale of New York City bonds and notes.	Chapter 147
A. 8426	Cook	Extends the authority for the City of New York to sell to abutting property owners tax lots that cannot be independently developed.	Chapter 318
A. 8559-A	Otis	Amends the authorization for the City of New Rochelle to alienate and discontinue certain parklands.	Chapter 335
A. 8676	Lee	Establishes the Relocation Assistance Credit per Employee program and extends, until July 1, 2028, the Relocation and Employment Assistance Program (REAP) and the Lower Manhattan Relocation and Employment Assistance Program (LMREAP).	Chapter 171
A. 8677	Shimsky	Authorizes the City of Yonkers to alienate certain parkland for the purpose of restoring the Color Gardens for public enjoyment.	Chapter 337
A. 8678	Burke	Extends, until December 31, 2026, the authorization for the New York City to award public contracts that also include private utility interference work.	Chapter 627
A. 8679	Burke	Extends, until December 31, 2026, the provisions of the Coordinated Construction Act for Lower Manhattan.	Chapter 628
A. 8870	Pretlow	Authorizes the State of New York to issue a loan of up to \$13.7 million to the City of Dunkirk.	Chapter 183

APPENDIX C

Bills that Passed Just the Assembly

<u>Bill #</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Status</u>
A. 7992	Hyndman	Requires New York City to conduct an analysis of stormwater and groundwater issues in southeast Queens.	Passed Assembly
A. 8680-A	Burke	Requires any city that fluoridates a public water supply to publish notice on its website, social media and in local newspapers before discontinuing fluoridation, of such water supply.	Passed Assembly