

[GLI] GREATER LOUISVILLE INC.
The Metro Chamber of Commerce

20
22

LOCAL AGENDA

From the CEO...



GLI's 2022 Local Agenda represents the top public policy priorities at the local level and complements GLI's advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels. In 2020, GLI published its first local agenda to address the pressing and unique needs that Louisville Metro faced as we grappled with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the social unrest that placed us at the center of national dialogue.

As our economy recovers from the ongoing and changing pandemic and Louisville Metro works to attract talent and workforce while grappling with equity and public safety concerns, GLI's focus on local policies remains more important than ever. Our advocacy team consulted with local policymakers, community organizations, and stakeholders to shape our priorities.

The 2022 Local Agenda has been reviewed by the Business Council to End Racism, GLI's six issue advisory committees, the Public Policy Council, and GLI's Board of Directors. We believe this document contains local pro-business priorities that will support the inclusive economic growth of our city.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Sarah D. Smith", is positioned above the title.

PRESIDENT & CEO
GREATER LOUISVILLE INC.

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Business Regulations

A predictable and flexible regulatory environment allows businesses to grow and thrive. Business regulations at the local level should adhere strictly to state or federal standards, be continuously reviewed for efficacy and impact, and come with clear and accessible guidelines.

- Businesses should be given increased flexibility as they adapt to new health and safety standards or pivot their business models in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Local governments and health agencies should play an active role in supporting and providing guidance to employers when complying with health & safety standards for employees and patrons.
- Local ordinances, regulations, and permitting processes should be viewed from the perspective of employers and should always consider stakeholder feedback to avoid unintended impacts—especially in terms of the cost of doing business.
- The intentional and systematic review of local ordinances, regulations, and permitting processes is strongly recommended as the regional business community continues to evolve.

Business Owned Minorities & Underrepresented Groups

GLI recognizes that economic inclusion is critical to economic growth and has placed an emphasis on this in the chamber's strategic plan. Local governments should prioritize strengthening the growth of businesses owned by underrepresented groups as part of their economic development strategies.

- Local governments should proactively establish partnerships with underrepresented business owners to increase access to public contracts, procurement opportunities, and other business opportunities with governments and corporate agencies.
- Strategies should be developed to increase access to government information and funding opportunities for business owners whose first language is not English.
- GLI supports efforts to develop targeted government funding opportunities to spur the growth and development of businesses owned by groups who have been historically underrepresented in the private sector.
- Business resources and mentorship programs to support start-ups and other enterprises owned by underrepresented groups should be developed and funded.
- Lenders and investors that help provide economic opportunity and financial stability to underrepresented areas should be supported and incentivized.

Environmental Regulations

GLI respects the important work carried out by the Air Pollution Control District (APCD) to implement the Clean Air Act (CAA). The regulated community looks forward to continuing to work closely with the APCD to improve air quality, attain National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), and address environmental justice concerns. Environmental policy at the local level should embrace the following concepts to simultaneously support APCD's implementation of the CAA and foster economic growth.

- Afford businesses regulatory flexibility and enforcement discretion in compliance matters during times of emergency, including COVID-19.
- Develop a regulatory framework for the completion of voluntary environmental audits with clearly defined requirements and penalty amnesty consistent with the U.S. EPA and Kentucky Department of Environmental Protection's environmental audit policies to promote and enhance compliance with air district regulations.
- Promulgate clear, accessible, and timely guidance for all District regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Attract and retain a robust staff of environmental professionals to provide permittees and the public with regulatory certitudes.
- Continuously review local environmental regulations for efficacy, applicability, and identify opportunities to streamline and simplify.

Homelessness & Housing

GLI supports efforts to address homelessness through close collaboration between community organizations and government partners. GLI urges local officials to work with state and federal governments to provide increased funding to support a comprehensive approach to ending homelessness.

- Safe, affordable housing is the solution to homelessness and should be targeted to those with the greatest needs in all areas of the community.
- Employment and job training opportunities, along with supports to make it possible for homeless persons to succeed, should be further developed and tailored to the unique needs of the homeless population.
- Louisville Metro should support and invest in clean and safe shelters paired with accessible wrap-around support services that help move people into housing and employment opportunities.
- Land-use policies and incentives should support density, the growth of our housing stock, and be in proximity to employers.
- Louisville's homeless population should have wide access to social workers, mental health services, and evidence-based substance abuse disorder treatment.
- Louisville Metro should invest in eviction prevention funding as a tool to prevent homelessness.

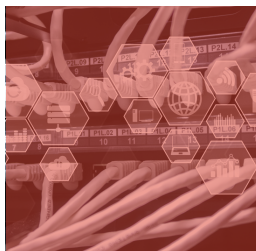
Infrastructure

GLI strongly supports the continued maintenance and advancement of all forms of critical infrastructure in our region. Local government policies should ensure that sufficient access to funding is available to public and quasi-governmental agencies responsible for infrastructure development and maintenance and provide for a pro-growth regulatory environment.



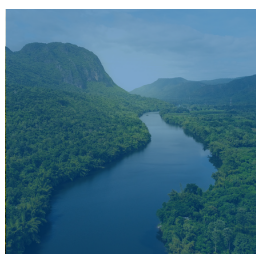
LOCAL ROADS

With limited resources available, Louisville Metro and other local governments must continue to strategically invest in road maintenance and development projects through data analysis, public input, and cost-benefit analyses. GLI supports efforts to continuously review road plans and designs of major thoroughfares in the region with the goal of optimizing existing roads and improving mobility. In addition, local officials should work closely with GLI to advocate for road-aid modernization and increased funding for local roads.



TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

GLI encourages a flexible regulatory environment that supports the development of infrastructure for advanced communications technologies. Reliable, available, and robust internet and cellular technologies are important to growing our economy, attracting top talent, and fixing the digital divide. Increased connectivity is also key to health care access and education. Regulations must support, and not impede, the development of these critical infrastructure assets by technology and communications providers.



RIVER

Louisville's riverfront areas and communities need sustained investment to maintain flood protection, which should include increased support for the important work of the Metropolitan Sewer District and funding for updates to our aging flood protection system. Louisville must also work proactively to ensure we are fully leveraging our ports through investment and planning in support of our manufacturing logistics sectors.



WATER, WASTEWATER & STORMWATER/INLAND DRAINAGE

Local water, wastewater, and stormwater/drainage agencies need to have adequate access to funding and capital to maintain and upgrade outdated infrastructure. Continued replacement and maintenance of these systems throughout our city is critical to maintaining service to residents and to business continuity. Sampling for COVID-19 markers in wastewater is a key component of Louisville Metro's testing plan and should continue to be supported to facilitate recovery.

Land Development

Land development and redevelopment help grow jobs, create more housing and urban density, revitalize and spur investment in underdeveloped areas, create new opportunities, and improve quality of life. Louisville must have in place policies that support and facilitate the important work of our professional land developers and redevelopers.

Providing flexibility and incentivizing development allows the markets to better meet the housing needs of the community. GLI encourages Louisville Metro to review and revise the current Land Development Code to provide more flexibility.

- Allowing greater variation in density by increasing zones where multiplex dwelling units are permitted, revising density maximums and lot size minimums, and decreasing parking requirements are all moderate relaxations of regulations that would have a significant effect on the availability of Louisville's housing stock.
- Implement changes that would allow for flexible maximum building heights in areas where mid-rise development would be appropriate based on context and form.
- Amendments regarding daycares in residential and industrial areas should be examined. While effects on traffic should be considered, allowing for the establishment of daycares in proximity to residences and workplaces will make daycare more accessible for working families.
- GLI supports incentives for desirable development types that are encouraged by Louisville Metro's Comprehensive Plan, rather than mandating new regulations. Providing reduced-cost incentives or greater flexibility for density or landscape requirements in exchange for meeting other design or Comprehensive Plan 2040 standards should be implemented.
- Establish density bonuses for developers who agree to set aside a portion of housing units within a development as designated affordable housing based on income requirements.
- Maintaining local neighborhood and business association input on the initial establishment of quality of place standards is important to preserve the diverse character of Louisville's many unique neighborhoods.
- Brownfield remediation and redevelopment programs are critical for reducing the prevalence of blight and hazardous properties in Greater Louisville. GLI supports programs aimed at assisting businesses and developers with brownfield remediation and redevelopment through assessment services and funding opportunities.

Streamlining the application and review process would create predictability and encourage positive investment in our community.

- GLI encourages Louisville Metro to coordinate initial agency reviews to identify problems from the outset and streamline the agency review process.
- Supportive changes should be made to the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Adjustment with the goal of increasing efficiencies of their operations and making service on the Commission more attractive.
- GLI encourages dedicated increased resources to support the important work of Louisville Metro Planning & Design staff and increasing staff capacity.

Local Economic Development Incentives

Growing businesses and attracting high-wage jobs requires a complementary mixture of business-friendly tax structures, targeted support from government organizations, and unencumbered access to capital. For the Greater Louisville region to grow and prosper, partners at every level of government should prioritize business-friendly policies to remain globally competitive, including robust economic development incentives.

- GLI supports the use of local government tax incentives as economic development tools to encourage the region's expansion and retention of businesses and high-wage jobs.
- For projects that overlap with multiple jurisdictional boundaries or layers – including across state lines – local governments should collaborate in offering competitive incentive packages.
- Policymakers should continuously work to explore new incentives and innovative strategies to help businesses grow and succeed.
- Incentive structures should be re-examined to align with community values of equity and access to quality jobs. Structure incentives that encourage businesses to actively participate and support workforce programs and remove barriers to employment such as contributions for child care vouchers and workforce training programs.
- Awarded and proposed incentive packages should always protect the private information of businesses and ensure confidentiality during the exploration and approval process.

Local Taxes

Louisville Metro and other local governments in the region must generate the necessary revenues to provide key services and invest in our community's future. But local tax structures must be conducive to business growth and allow Greater Louisville to aggressively compete for jobs and talent. This should include minimizing production-based taxes, easing compliance, and increasing uniformity across different local taxing jurisdictions.

- Local governments should work proactively and continuously to make compliance and payment as simple as possible for businesses and entrepreneurs. This should include the adoption of e-filing systems across all local taxing jurisdictions.
- GLI encourages increased uniformity and alignment among taxing jurisdictions wherever possible, including penalties for late payments, voluntary disclosure processes, and rules for calculating taxable income.
- For businesses based in our region that utilize remote workforces, rules for withholdings should be clear and accessible for business owners – especially in the era of COVID-19.
- Local governments in Kentucky should allow businesses to carry forward net operating losses indefinitely in determining net profits subject to local occupational licensing taxes.
- GLI supports robust and accessible processes for businesses to appeal local property tax assessments.

Local Taxes, Continued

- Anti-competitive taxes such as Kentucky's local occupational licensing tax or local insurance premium tax must be kept to a minimum, and rates should not be increased.
- GLI encourages local governments in Kentucky to continue working with the business community to advocate for state-level reforms to local government taxing authority.
- In addition to comprehensive tax reform at the state level, GLI encourages local governments to leverage local tax options that would provide flexibility for regions to offer additional incentives to attract economic development projects, including policies that incentivize the establishment or relocation of technology businesses in the Greater Louisville region.

Mobility

To facilitate the movement of consumers, workers, business owners, and tourists, GLI supports local initiatives to diversify and enhance regional mobility options.

- Adequate resources and sustainable funds must be dedicated to the Transit Authority of River City (TARC) to create a fast, frequent, and reliable transit network. This is a key factor in the growth of our region's workforce and strong economic development.
- The region should continue strong support for Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport and dedicate advocacy efforts for more direct flights to and from Louisville.
- Louisville Metro should strategically improve pedestrian and biking infrastructure to support talent attraction and retention efforts and provide for safer connectivity within and between workforce centers. It is important these efforts consider the traffic flow in each area.
- Connectivity between East and West Louisville, major tourist hubs and the airport, and Louisville and Southern Indiana should be continuously evaluated and improved based on demographic and economic trends and forecasts.

Public Education

GLI supports the work and mission of Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) and their efforts to increase student graduation rates and prepare students for college and careers through transition readiness. These crucial areas have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and JCPS must work to address the widening student achievement gap. Two key areas of public education that our region must continue focusing on are accelerating student achievement and increasing school choice.

Student achievement is crucial to the future success of our local economy, developing our workforce, and expanding economic opportunity.

Public Education, Continued

GLI supports the following measures and initiatives to improve student achievement:

- The JCPS Racial Educational Equity Plan that directly addresses student achievement gaps.
- The Academies of Louisville, SummerWorks, and other programs aimed at student engagement in the regional workforce.
- Innovation around talent attraction to JCPS to establish a representative staff that mirrors the student population and encourages additional incentives and compensation to teachers working in schools that require additional support.
- Differentiated compensation, incentives, and ancillary benefits for teachers and administrators based on responsibilities, qualifications, effectiveness, and service location.
- Increased local investment to support facility construction and maintenance, resources for the district's highest-need schools, support for racial equity initiatives, and allowing for additional student instruction time.

School choice, giving parents, guardians, and students more choice in selecting educational pathways, is key to a successful public education system. The growing number of options for students is valuable to current and future residents.

GLI supports the following measures and initiatives to increase school choice:

- Student assignment strategies that strive to balance the dual goals of providing family choice among school options with diversity in school enrollment.
- The enactment of policies to empower parents to have all choices available to them in terms of education which includes but is not limited to, traditional, magnet, reside schools, and charter schools.
- The implementation of equitable policies for magnet school exits that work with students and families to assess student achievement and performance prior to exit.
- The incorporation of charter schools following the resolution of funding on a state level, specifically targeting charter schools that support underserved student populations.

Public Health

The work of local public health departments plays a key role in supporting health outcomes and improving the health of our workforce, especially throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

- As public health concerns continue due to the changing COVID-19 pandemic, GLI urges continued support for vaccine distribution and increasing the testing and contact tracing capacities of the Louisville Metro Department of Health & Wellness.
- As the Department of Health and Wellness works to enforce new health and safety regulations, it must also communicate clear, timely, and consistent guidelines to businesses to assist them with compliance and implementation.
- While GLI recognizes the need for local health departments to receive the resources necessary for protecting public health, regulatory fees imposed on businesses should be reasonable, and any increases should be considered in the context of economic conditions.
- GLI encourages Louisville Metro to allocate more resources to support the work of the Department of Health and Wellness to reduce nicotine and vaping usage and help address the substance use disorder crisis.
- GLI encourages Louisville Metro to prioritize spending using social determinants of health as a focus to improve equity and outcomes in our community.

Public Safety & Criminal Justice

With Louisville facing an alarming increase of violent crime and homicides, it is imperative that elected officials, law enforcement, and community groups work together to find creative solutions for crime reduction. Crime and violence negatively affect economic development, talent attraction and retention, and quality of life. Elected officials in Louisville Metro must ensure the safety and protection of private property and public investments throughout our community.

GLI supports strategic local investments in public safety and proven measures to reduce crime and violence. These steps should include initiatives to significantly decrease incarceration rates, facilitate the successful rehabilitation of convicted offenders, offer increased wrap-around services, fully eliminate implicit bias and racism in our criminal justice system, increase accountability and civilian oversight, and improve the relationship between law enforcement and our community. Additionally, elected leaders should focus on recruitment and retention of qualified officer candidates and support for officers including additional training and access to mental health services.

Public Safety & Criminal Justice, Continued

Louisville Metro should strive to set an example for the country to follow for effective and equitable public safety and crime reduction strategies.

- LMPD must implement an intelligence-led policing approach, focusing on a collaborative effort combining problem solving, enhanced intelligent operations using technology, and information sharing to effectively fight and prevent crime in our community.
- Initiatives focused on reducing gun violence in communities, like the Group Violence Intervention program, must be prioritized and receive continued support and participation from local government and community groups.
- A greater emphasis should be placed on alternative sentencing and restorative justice – especially for juveniles and for non-violent offenses such as vandalism and criminal mischief.
- Individuals who interact with the criminal justice system should have wide access to mental health services and substance use disorder treatment as well as training and education opportunities.
- Programs that emphasize substance use disorder treatment as an alternative to incarceration, such as the Living Room and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion programs, should be revitalized and strengthened.
- Louisville Metro’s collective bargaining agreement with local law enforcement should be reexamined to support a robust discussion of changes to local policing and increased accountability and civilian oversight.
- Collective bargaining agreement should also support increased wages for LMPD officers to make the department more competitive with surrounding law enforcement agencies and to encourage more qualified and educated officers to choose a career in the department.
- To support quality candidates and officer job performance, pre-employment screening should be conducted including a comprehensive background check for all law enforcement candidates, including group affiliations and social media screens for racial bias.
- Implicit racial bias and de-escalation training should be increased for local law enforcement and criminal justice professionals.
- To ensure officer well-being, LMPD should provide resources for mental health review and connection to services for officers undergoing routine high stress.



Regional Collaboration

Greater Louisville's economic prosperity is dependent on regional collaboration across local governments, community organizations, and the private sector. Close coordination and uniform branding throughout the region and within Jefferson County are key to growth and business attraction.

- Local governments should not only coordinate economic development efforts with the private sector and community partners but with other local governments within our region as well. This should include cooperation across and within county lines, especially in Jefferson County, which is home to more than 80 independent cities and Louisville Metro.
- GLI encourages local governments in our region to proactively collaborate with and support the Greater Louisville Regional Economic Development Partnership.
- Local government resources should be dedicated to amplifying regional branding efforts to help Greater Louisville speak with one voice to prospective employers and talent.
- GLI supports the continued economic development of Southern Indiana through the Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) and the formation of the Our Southern Indiana Development Authority. This multi-county partnership will allow the Greater Louisville region to leverage competitive state grant funding for economic development and quality-of-place projects.

Talent Attraction & Retention

Talent attraction and retention are vital to Louisville's future. Local governments must prioritize talent attraction and retention through bold and innovative efforts and continue to foster diversity and inclusion within our community.

- Increased resources should be dedicated to supporting key attraction efforts through the development of civic assets, including but not limited to, open communal space, parks, and cultural and sporting events.
- Louisville Metro should continue to strengthen its support of GLI's Live in Lou initiative.
- Louisville Metro should explore and consider efforts to utilize tax-based incentives to attract and retain talent, including relocation of workers through cash incentives or tax rebate incentives.
- Efforts to develop our high-skill workforce and foster a competitive tech sector in Louisville should continue to be prioritized.
- The work of the Louisville Metro Office of Globalization and regional refugee resettlement agencies should be amplified and continue to receive support.
- Louisville Metro should continue partnerships with primary and secondary education institutions to ensure their efforts around talent retention are aligned and complementary.
- More work must be done to transition veterans into our regional workforce as they leave our regional partner at Fort Knox.

Tourism

Tourism in Louisville—driven by bourbon, museums, festivals, the culinary scene, conventions and conferences, horse racing, athletic events, and the arts—is a multibillion-dollar industry, responsible for creating thousands of jobs and generating millions in state and local revenues every year. Local governments must remain committed to supporting and protecting our vital tourism industry, especially through the economic recovery from COVID-19.

- Louisville should promote policies to help cultivate perceptions of the area as a welcoming place and partner with GLI to oppose legislation that could create misperceptions of the region as unwelcoming.
- Local governments must collaborate closely in support of major tourism attraction events, including the Kentucky Derby, bourbon, craft beer, food events, river cruises, and Louisville’s emerging music festival scene. The businesses that drive events like these will need the full support and cooperation of local governments in the aftermath of COVID-19.
- GLI generally discourages increases to local fees and additional government surcharges on ticketed events in Louisville because of the potentially negative impacts on tourism and major attractions.

Workforce Development

To compete with peer cities for jobs and support the growth of businesses, Greater Louisville must be home to a competitive workforce. While the state and federal governments drive many workforce programs, local governments play a key role in supporting workforce development and training and retraining initiatives through innovative programming and targeted investment.

- Louisville Metro must continue investing in the vital work of KentuckianaWorks to develop, train, and retrain our regional workforce. GLI also supports the partnership between KentuckianaWorks and Southern Indiana Works that has been recognized by the Department of Labor as the first bi-state region under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- Local workforce development programs should receive continued support, including innovative programs that provide wrap-around services for job seekers and students who face barriers to employment and education.
- GLI encourages Louisville Metro and Jefferson County Public Schools to continue their support and collaboration with Evolve502 to remove persistent barriers to higher education for individuals in our community.
- The highly successful JCPS Academies of Louisville must be continually supported and championed by local governments through increased partnerships, resources, and funding where necessary.

GLI Public Policy Team

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to advocate for our region.



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GLI Public Policy Leadership

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Chair: Brian Cromer, Stites & Harbison

Transportation & Infrastructure

Chair: Chris Dickinson, Geosyntec

The image features a blue-tinted photograph of the Greater Louisville skyline at dusk or dawn. The Kentucky State Capitol building with its prominent dome is the central focus, surrounded by various skyscrapers. In the foreground, the steel truss structure of a bridge spans across the frame, with its reflection visible in the water below. The overall atmosphere is serene and professional.

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