

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
2008 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

1. Property Taxes

- Common Level of Appraisal (CLA): Pass legislation returning the minimum CLA to 100% following reappraisal, retroactive to January 1, 2007, thereby reducing this year's Village education taxes substantially via a credit on the FY 09 tax bill.
- Tax Fairness: Support, through charter changes or legislation, measures to ensure that village municipalities be taxed only for municipal services received by the community.
- P-12 Funding: Explore funding mechanisms for P-12 education which significantly reduce residential education taxes for all homeowners. Use the House Ways and Means Committee's proposal for an income-based education tax tied to local spending as a guide for action in 2008.
- Reappraisals: If property taxes continue to be a major source of education funding, provide a fairer, fully-funded system of frequent rolling reappraisals administered by the state.
- Public Transportation: Increase state funding for public transportation and fairly distribute the region's burden by seeking alternatives to funding through the property tax.
- Education Fund: DO NOT increase local property tax burden by using any funds earmarked for the education fund for other general fund needs.

2. Economic Development

- Circumferential Highway: Continue to support the entire CIRC highway and reject no-build options as unacceptable for public safety in the 21st century.
- Housing: Support measure to promote affordable housing by relaxing Act 250 permitting guidelines for larger projects in appropriate growth center locations. Work for bi-partisan solutions to break the current stalemate on housing issues.
- Downtown incentives: Maintain incentives for designated "downtown" and "village center" designations. Promote awareness of the value of Vermont villages as thriving autonomous governmental units and awareness of the negative financial pressures exerted on villages by outdated state laws related to tax authority.

3. Municipal Authority

- Home Rule: Support constitutional amendment or legislation to enhance municipal autonomy with legislative oversight of charter changes by exception only.

4. Phosphorus Reduction

- Support phosphorus legislation that addresses the largest sources of phosphorus pollution to the waters of the state at the most reasonable cost.