

PROTEC

The Michigan Coalition to Protect Public Rights-of-Way

www.protec-mi.org

Mayor Maureen Miller Brosnan **Mayor Kenson J. Siver** **Mayor Abdullah Hammoud**
City of Livonia **City of Southfield** **City of Dearborn**

PROTEC Fiscal Agent: Michigan Municipal League

Mike Watza, General Counsel

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Dear Friends, Colleagues, and Fellow Community Leaders,

For an amazing **30 years**, PROTEC has diligently worked on behalf of local community governments across Michigan to address a variety of rights-of-way issues facing our state, as detailed in PROTEC's 2026 **Annual Report, available online at www.protec-mi.org**.

For many of us here at PROTEC, who have been hip deep in the Legislative, Congressional, Administrative and Judicial trenches daily and, for many of you who have supported our efforts representing Local Community Control and Self Governance of our own Rights Of Way (ROW) through almost three decades, it has often seemed a very "Long and Winding Road". And, it has been. But, it has also been very rewarding. We have helped make bad legislation at least a little better and occasionally, even terminated the worst. And too, our affirmative efforts have often proven successful, proving that the best defense is often a strong offense.

As we reflect back and, looking at the challenges we face today, we cannot help but realize how much we have accomplished with our partners and how much better off we all are because of this "community of communities". We have stood up daily to industry members like AT&T, Comcast, Charter, WOW, ITC, DTE, Consumers and others who are persistently seeking free and unregulated ROW and Public Property access. Often Out-manned, Out-spent and Out-politicked, we have endured and, our communities are better off as a result.

PREEMPTION IS OUR GREATEST THREAT

Perhaps our greatest antagonist in the World of Law and Public Policy the last 30 years is the constant harp by industry and their State and Federal supporters seeking preemption of local community control of our Rights of Way and other public property. All in the name of expediting the installation of their own particular industry infrastructure in, on or over our public lands. Preemption of local interests lurks at the heart of virtually every law and every order we have fought going back to the 1996

Electric Transmission Line Certification Act

<https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Act-30-of-1995.pdf> . PA 30 voids all local zoning related to those 150 foot tall towers ITC is building across our state and right through the heart of so many of our communities. And that was just the beginning, as the transmission companies are not alone in their coveting of the property we hold in trust for our residents. The wireless telecommunications industry has sought and obtained virtually free access to our ROW with their “Not So Small” Cell Towers which they plan to install on every street in every neighborhood across our entire state. Meanwhile, the telecommunications wireline industry paying their paltry nickel per foot ROW fee, have littered our ROW with their junction boxes serving as a growing menace to public safety and aesthetics. Aesthetics, which are so important to the vitality of our beautiful neighborhoods.

All this came about from thirty years of enabling statutes that have allowed these insults to local control. And these and other industries are not done. The recent solar fields legislation - 2032 PA 233, writes local government right out of our own backyards, fields and farms. Meanwhile, the multi-Billion Dollar Video Streaming industry seeks legislation to use our ROW without sharing community costs and without regulation of any kind. And this, just as these increasingly expensive video streamers are looking more and more like our traditional cable partners who DO pay a fair fee for ROW access and submit to rational local regulation.

Our local communities have suffered enough harm from these short-sighted, selfish, preemptive laws. It is time to say, “STOP”. Every industry wants immediate government approval of their particular “special” infrastructure. Setting aside long-standing local zoning, which local property owners have relied upon for development of their properties, must come to an end in order to protect what is left of our neighborhoods and communities. Communities WE Constitutionally designed and protected for Centuries.

THE TIME IS NOW. JOIN US

Reminders

- **PROTEC** meets monthly to discuss current issues, provides timely updates and lends assistance to communities facing immediate rights-of-way issues.
- **PROTEC** is active daily in monitoring, coalition building and promoting positive Rights-of-Way outcomes in the Courts, the FCC and Congress as well as the Michigan Legislature.
- **PROTEC** increased its social media presence on sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to keep members updated on rapidly changing telecommunication matters.

Our mission throughout Michigan is to coordinate actions that protect local community interests and inform municipal officials of significant developments in public rights-of-way management. PROTEC has taken a proactive approach to the many challenges faced by communities across the state. Now, more than ever, local governments must be diligent in protecting their interests in all rights-of-way issues.

Though we have made great strides in protecting our shared interests, it is crucial to remain committed to these efforts, to protect the gains that have been made, and to continue being a formidable voice in guarding our economic wellbeing.

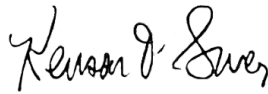
PROTEC relies completely on its members and contributing communities for its sole support. Your contributions allow PROTEC to participate in judicial, legislative and administrative activities, both on the state and federal levels, to protect local governments' rights concerning the use of public rights-of-way by cable, telecommunications, electric, pipeline and other utility industries.

Even after **30 years**, PROTEC has no paid staff. Please consider supporting the work of PROTEC by becoming a member or renewing your community's annual membership. Your dues and contributions will help ensure PROTEC has the resources necessary to continue its strong advocacy on behalf of *all* Michigan municipalities.

Respectfully,



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