

## 2014-15 Budget Items of Interest to Towns

Public Protection and General Government, Chapter 55 of the Laws of 2014

### **Joint Provision of Technology Services**

Directs the Office of Information Technology Services to provide technology services via agreements with local governments and certain special districts, among others (Part F).

### **Aggregate Energy and Piggyback Purchases**

Extends, from 2015 to 2019, authority to purchase aggregate energy and fuel from the Office of General Services; purchase off of certain federal and county contracts, among other provisions. (Part G)

### **Environmental Protection Fund**

Adds \$5 million in funding for the Environmental Protection Fund, which provides mechanisms for open space conservation and land acquisition (Part I).

Revenue, Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2014

### **Direct Remittances for Late STAR Registrations**

Specifies that if the commissioner of the Department of Taxation and Finance accepts a late STAR registration after having directed the removal of the Basic STAR exemption, then in lieu of directing the exemption to be restored, the commissioner is authorized in his or her discretion to remit directly to the property owner or owners the tax savings that the exemption would have yielded had it not been removed, and to further direct the assessor to restore the exemption on a prospective basis without a new application unless the assessor has reason to believe that the property owner is no longer eligible for reasons other than a failure to register (Part B).

### **Real Property Tax Freeze**

See, <http://twnytowns.s3.amazonaws.com/articles/Enacted%20Tax%20Freeze%20Program.pdf> (Part FF)

### **Enhanced STAR Eligibility Expansion**

Allows a senior citizen to use a more current income tax year to determine enhanced STAR eligibility if, as a result of the death of his or her spouse, said senior citizen experiences a decrease in income such that he or she would qualify for the enhanced STAR exemption had that more current income tax year been used in determining his or her eligibility. For such eligibility, requires that the more current income tax return to have been filed with the appropriate state or federal agency and a copy thereof filed with the assessor on or before the applicable taxable status date, or other documentation of income eligibility filed with the assessor on or before the applicable taxable status date (Part NN).

Transportation, Economic Development and Environmental Conservation, Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2014

**Funding of Dedicated Highway and Bridge Trust Fund**

Redirects several NYS Department of Transportation charges, fees and penalties into the Dedicated Highway and Bridge Trust Fund. Adds rail and truck safety inspection services to the list of items for which monies from the Dedicated Highway and Bridge Trust Fund may be utilized. Redirects proceeds from certain Outdoor advertising and business directional sign registrations, charges and fees away from the Dedicated Highway and Bridge Trust Fund. (Part C).

**Reduction of the Temporary State Energy and Utility Service Conservation Assessment**

Reduces the Temporary State Energy and Utility Service Conservation Assessment by 0.37% for the 2014 state fiscal year, 0.75% for the 2015 state fiscal year and 0.77% for the 2016 fiscal year. Restricts the assessment from being reflected in a customer's rate after December 31, 2018 (Part S).

Health and Mental Hygiene, Chapter 60 of the Laws of 2014

**Grandparent Housing Study**

States that the New York state division of housing and community renewal, the office of children and family services, the New York state office of temporary and disability assistance, and the office for the aging shall be entitled to request and receive, and shall utilize and be provided with such facilities, resources, and data from any political subdivision, among others, that they may reasonably request to properly conduct the Grandparent Housing Study and in composing the subsequent report (Part K).

Aid to Localities Budget Bill, S.6353-E/A.8553-E, Delivered to the Governor

**AIM**

Flat funding for Aid and Incentives for Municipalities at \$715 million.

See, [http://twnytowns.s3.amazonaws.com/articles/2014-15EnactedBudgetAIM\\_towns.pdf](http://twnytowns.s3.amazonaws.com/articles/2014-15EnactedBudgetAIM_towns.pdf)  
(Miscellaneous -- All State Departments and Agencies: Local Government Assistance).

**Local Government Grants**

Provides \$4 million for continuation of the Local Government Efficiency Grant program, which is a competitive grant to local governments to plan for and implement service delivery efficiencies. Appropriates a total of \$35 million for Citizens Re-organization Empowerment Grants, a noncompetitive grant that provides funding to study, plan for and/or implement dissolutions and consolidations, and Citizen Empowerment Tax Credits, which provides up to \$1 million in annual aid to local governments involved in consolidations and dissolutions that is equal to 15% of the combined property taxes (Miscellaneous -- All State Departments and Agencies: Local Government Assistance).

Capital Projects Budget Bill, S.6354E/A8554E, Delivered to the Governor

**Extreme Winter Recovery Grants**

The 2014-15 Capital Projects Budget Bill (S.6354-E/A.8554-E) includes within the Department of Transportation appropriations a \$40 million capital grant to municipalities for extreme winter recovery. Like CHIPS, it is a reimbursement grant for eligible costs of local highway and bridge projects and the money is allocated via the CHIPS formula. Payments will be made on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June, September, December and March.

See, <http://www.nytowns.org/node/1279>

**CHIPS and Marchiselli**

Both transportation funding programs are continued at last year's levels, \$438,097,000 for CHIPS and \$39.7 million for Marchiselli Aid.