



ONE VOICE ~ PROJECT HISTORY

One Voice, under the leadership of the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council, is a pro-community campaign that started in 2006 and has brought together leaders from the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, McLean County, labor, local educational institutions and local private businesses. These groups have formed the One Voice Task Force. The goal of the campaign is to make McLean County a stronger economic force and a better place to live.

Each year the One Voice Task Force chooses local projects to support in their quest for federal funding. In the spring the One Voice Task Force travels to Washington D.C. to meet with our congressional delegation and show them our community stands united in support of the projects. Each project must meet three criteria:

- It must have an economic development impact in McLean County
- It must improve the quality of life in McLean County
- Federal funding must be formally requested in the project

Due to the earmark ban, in 2012 and 2013 the One Voice Task Force met with our congressional delegation to show them we supported community issues involving projects, initiatives and infrastructure improvements for transportation and agribusiness that required federal funding. In 2014 we returned to the initial focus of the One Voice Program by taking projects in need of funding. The trip became a “fact finding mission” in 2017 due to the change of presidential administrations, the primary focus was to determine what changes were being made to grant programs and funding policies and how our efforts could best be adjusted. The 2018 trip took two projects in need of funding and was also a fact finding mission.

Past Projects:

2018 Projects/Agency Meetings

- Connect Transit sought funds for a transfer center in Downtown Bloomington as a way to provide more capacity for buses and better passenger amenities
- The Town of Normal sought funds for a pedestrian and bicycle underpass near Uptown Circle and the Uptown Station Multimodal facility, also at the Department of Transportation
- Met with the U.S. Small Business Administration to build a relationship and learn about loan programs, capital investment networks and SBA grants to further build the entrepreneurship ecosystem in our community

2017 Projects/Agency Meetings

- Department of Justice: Sought information for further mental health and jail initiatives in McLean County
- Department of Education: Sought details on Perkins loans, Pell grants, and international student well-being due to international travel policy changes
- Department of Labor: Project for a future exhibit at the McLean County History Museum and also discussed workforce development initiatives and connecting labor to STEM programs
- Department of Transportation: Sought funds to finish a south side transportation corridor in Bloomington and to kick start development along the Main Street Corridor

2016 Projects

- McLean County criminal justice and mental health collaboration program
- STEM curriculum development
- Funding to finish a south side transportation corridor in south Bloomington

2015 Projects

- Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) facility in McLean County (**\$1,000,000 received to date**)
- Connect Transit funding for bus transfer stations
- BN Tech Town funding for technology & STEM education development

2014 Projects

- Mental Health Initiatives (**\$1.2 Million received to date – federal and state dollars**)
- Airport property – Information and resources to develop for best possible use

2013: Agribusiness Policy

- Provide agricultural producers with a clear roadmap to the future when it comes to tax policy
- Invest in critical infrastructure that grows the agricultural economy
 - Investment and improvement of locks and dam upgrades on the river systems are vital
- Passage of a multi-year Farm Bill is essential

2012: Transportation Policy

- Growth of rail systems by creating High Speed Rail corridor, improve freight rail and connect rail to surrounding communities and the Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA)
- Enhance funding for the maintenance of roads, highways and bridges
- Develop and maintain mass transit, bicycle and pedestrian opportunities within Bloomington-Normal
- Promote the Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA) to attract new business and retain current

2011 Projects:

- McLean County Recovery Court
- ISU/EDC Business Incubator
- Community-Scale Food Waste Composting
- "Encounter on the Prairie" Exhibit Renewal
- Bloomington Rail Yard Redevelopment
- Historic Route 66 Trail System

2010 Projects:

- MyEntre.Net Rural Entrepreneurship Program
- Village of Downs/City of Bloomington Water Project
- Community-Scale Food Waste Composting **(\$300,000 received to date)**
- U.S. Highway 136 Development

2009 Projects:

- Village of Downs/City of Bloomington Water Project
- Lexington Wastewater Treatment System **(\$400,000 received to date)**
- McLean County Business Incubator **(\$795,000 received to date)**
- McLean County Museum of History Exhibit
- MyEntre.Net Rural Entrepreneurship Program
- Normal Multi-Modal Transportation Center **(\$1,000,000 received to date, plus \$22 million TIGER grant)**

2008 Projects:

- Bloomington Regional Creativity Center for the Arts **(\$338,000 received to date)**
- Lexington Wastewater Treatment System
- McLean County Business Incubator
- Normal Multi-Modal Transportation Center

2007 Projects:

- Bloomington Cultural District
- Heartland Community College Workforce Development Center
- McLean County Business Incubator
- Normal Multi-Modal Transportation Center

