They’re Back…….

As you know, the 2020 Legislative session began last week with the Governor delivering his State of the State address on Wednesday. As is typically the case, the speech was heavy on headlines and light on detail but there were a few topics of interest including e-scooters, the legalization of recreational cannabis, the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, funding for upstate airports, and small cell deployment.

We will know more about these and other topics of interest including AIM and infrastructure funding when the Governor releases his Executive Budget, which is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, January 21. In the meantime, we have had several meetings with representatives from the Governor’s Office, the Division of Budget and the State Legislature on our 2020 Legislative Program and other priorities for the 2020-21 State Budget. Given the estimated $6 billion state deficit, we recognize this is going to be a tough year for anyone looking for additional state assistance, but we are making our pitch nonetheless.

NYCOM staff has also been working closely with NYCOM President Mayor Bob Kennedy from the Village of Freeport as he has been traveling around the state discussing our concerns about the criminal justice reforms that went into effect January 1. In particular, NYCOM objects to some of the drastic and far-reaching changes in the laws pertaining to discovery. The dramatic acceleration in the timing of providing evidence and the broadening of the types of charges to which the expedited discovery applies have significant cost and justice implications for cities and villages with police departments, justice courts, or code/parking enforcement departments. While the media and others are focusing more on bail reform, we have continued a steady drumbeat about our concerns related to the discovery provisions and need your help to make sure the members of the State Legislature are aware of these unfunded mandates and the harm they will cause your communities.

Finally, we hope you can join us at NYCOM’s Winter Legislative Meeting February 9-11 in Albany where we will speak with one strong and unified voice about the need for funding, tools and a true partnership with the State. This conference will also feature sessions on the Governor’s 2020-21 Executive Budget, fixing the criminal justice reforms, cyber security, collaborative code enforcement, aging in place and much more. Register today!