

Memo

To: Mayor of City Six

From: Six City Council

Cc: Deputy Mayor of City Six, Director of Transportation Dept., Dir. Sustainability Dept., Director of FM, Director of Parks Dept., Housing Commission

Date: March 7, 2020

Subject: Policy Proposal Regarding Sustainable City Management

City council quickly identified multiple challenges to sustainable urban living within Six City, The Home of The World's Best Jelly Bean. In particular, the current construct contains overly isolated communities with insufficient walking, biking, and public transportation options, leading to car-intensive transportation, and other health repercussions. In turn, this causes significant emissions, high density of fine particulate matter, and inadequate job access.

These multiple issues necessitate a mix of economic and public works projects to address the various limitations of a collection of isolated communities all reliant on personal vehicle transport. As such, priorities year over year to affect change are a considerable challenge.

Deregulation of zoning likely spurs economic growth, but potentially at the expense of environmental impacts and personal property values. Significant investment in public transport requires revenue, but prohibitive cost can lead to underutilization and harm to lower income population. Moreover, the most efficient modes of transport require greater capital investment. Excessive punitive taxes can also lead to discontentment without necessarily decreasing emissions or vehicle use. Order of these projects also becomes a significant limiting factor, as revenue generation is required to sustain public projects, but public projects may be necessary to improve public health and access to jobs.

With the above in mind, our analyses reflect a time-sensitive and progressive approach mixing both regulation and deregulation where warranted, always with significant public engagement to support a variety of simultaneous activities and long term plans. We conclude that very low cost deregulation on zoning and building size is an effective method to quickly improve job access, decrease unemployment, and drive long term tax revenues. Meanwhile, imposition of regulations on emissions and facade standards maintains property values, increases the aesthetic of each neighborhood, and yields significant impact to emission reduction without requiring immediate public works investment. Additionally, pedestrian improvement projects provide significant gains in job access in a mixed-zone neighborhood in addition to health improvements at relatively low cost. Simultaneous investment in very high efficiency revenue generation via smart parking in high density areas is a method to dramatically increase revenues without imposing new taxes. Those revenues are capable of supporting high dollar but high efficiency public works in future. In that vein, rail projects represent higher efficiency, lower emissions

public transport options than bus projects. Moreover, continued investment in sidewalks, traffic calming, bike highways, and continuous buildout of the rail network pushes the city toward a more sustainable transportation environment while reducing emissions, improving public health, and increasing job access. Lastly, substantial work in promoting electric vehicle use supports the current vehicle-intensive infrastructure, but in a manner that reduces emissions, fine particulate matter, and gas usage.

Ongoing community engagement via public forums, websites, town halls, advisor boards, newsletters, social media, and polling are critical to build consensus in moving away from the current model toward a more sustainable and prosperous model. Individual burrough needs analysis must be continuous in order to effectively redress issues facing each community, from excessive commercial density, or minimal pedestrian access to overcrowding. As such, a degree of personalization is consistently required, even as uniformly greater walkability, public transport access, and economic viability are emphasized.

Chronological Policy Recommendations to Maximize Economic Viability While Improving Public Programs Access and Public Health:

1. Immediately and consistently engage with the community to generate the political will and reduce audience costs of decision making.
2. Rezone to increase job opportunities (focus on mixed use zoning) and deregulate building size limits reduce urban sprawl and decrease VMT (vehicle miles travelled).
3. Impose emissions regulations as soon as possible to limit CO₂ and fine particulate matter.
4. Create revenue drivers such as smart parking and access to good jobs.
5. Use revenue to build out multi-mode transportation networks and incentivize electric vehicles as personal and corporate fleet vehicles.
6. Reduce parking requirements and install traffic calming measures to incentivize use of these new transportation options.
7. Use the remaining budget to increase green spaces and urban forestry to improve carbon sequestration and reduce gray space.