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Minutes
City of Fort Collins
Futures Committee Meeting
Regular Meeting
300 LaPorte Ave
City Hall
September 10, 2012
5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Wade Troxell
Lisa Poppaw
Gerry Horak
Darin Atteberry
Bruce Hendee

Committee Members Absent:

Guests:

Wendy Williams
Mike Becksted
Jessica Ping-Small
Dan Weinheimer
Josh Birks

Agenda Item 1: Revenue Diversification

Jessica gave a presentation which compared revenue data with like towns in Colorado and nationally. Through the help of the Economic Health Office, this report was completed.

The results show that the City relies on Sales and Use Tax, for about 45% of its revenue. The results of how we compare within Colorado and nationally are as follows:

- Fort Collins reliance on sales tax increased to 51% with KFCG
- Limited revenue diversification in other cities (diversity requires an increase in property tax or an income tax)
- Fort Collins is in the middle of the pack on citizen tax burden
- Fort Collins combined sales tax rate is on the low end
- Fort Collins is slightly above the average of 8.828 mills compared with other Colorado cities

One of the components of this is the RTD. We combine this in the report, if we were to take it out, our sales tax rate would rank higher within Colorado and the National Cities that were used to compare this study, however, this would not compare like services for like services. Once it is placed back in, we fall to the lower percent of Cities.

Conclusions of Comparison

- Only three Colorado communities analyzed achieve revenue diversity
- Revenue diversification in Fort Collins would require a three-fold increase in the property tax rate. The mill levy would need to be raised to 31.162
- Issue – How to reduce dependency on tax rates that sunset and carry the risk of non-renewal

Goal

Transform into a sustainable community – level of basic services that are acceptable to the community, example of Police, Fire and Streets.

Next Steps:

Create a detailed analysis of what it would be practical and feasible then come back with recommendation of a game plan.

Agenda Item 2: Pro-Active Approach to Federal Legislative Issues and Grants

Dan gave a presentation regarding how to be pro-active on legislative issues and grants. This includes policy, revenue, goals and alternative sources of funding for the City.

By having someone who had the knowledge and access to the different grants that are available, the use of staff resources would not need to be as great for these projects. The preparation and “having a story to tell” are very effective in obtaining these grants. Both before and after can be very time consuming and staff intensive. Having a group working together in aligning projects with grants would be useful. This group could track City projects, gain knowledge about the different opportunities available, focusing on putting the best applications possible to obtain the grant.

The innovation clusters have done this for us and are a good model for this type of administer. If we have tasks that have a specific goal for a project, there might be a grant available to aid in the funding.

Obtaining a letter of recommendation from a legislature is very important in the likelihood of obtaining a grant. Dan can ensure that proposals get the needed letters and then that legislative offices are promoting Fort Collins projects.

Thoughts

- CSU does a lot around Economic Development and innovation in seeking grants; perhaps we can align with them and work collaboratively
- On a strategic level, we need to be looking forward to what is coming and the ability to follow through with it
- Focus on the areas where we are doing well, where we are not and where are their opportunities to improve
- What are the things where we want to advance our community then look for grants related to that
- Do we have the capacity for going after the grants and the work involved with them

There are positive ripple effects from grants. Projects have been started by receiving a grant, then the benefits from there lead to other bigger projects in the future. This use of grant funding and innovation can blend together to promote future grant success and have a long term payoff for the community brand.

Next Steps: