

Resolution 2019-001

(A) Resolution encouraging a state-wide review of the effectiveness of all economic development incentives and urging a community-first approach to economic development

(B) We, the members of the Utah League of Cities and Towns find:

Whereas, Utah's rapid and disparate growth, its accompanying opportunities, and infrastructure challenges have spurred a state-wide review of economic development policy tools, strategies, objectives and definitions; and

Whereas, economic development strategies within Utah are implemented on multiple levels, including the neighborhood, community, city, county, region, and state; and

Whereas, the residents of Utah's cities and towns elect mayors and councilmembers to be stewards of their communities which includes ensuring economic development occurs in a manner, location, and scale that is appropriate and compatible with their respective communities; and

Whereas, community-first economic development policies are designed to address the specific needs and objectives of the community, as developed by their local elected officials; and

Whereas, the purpose of economic development is to provide economic sustainability, opportunity, and balance to residents in Utah's communities, both current and future; and

Whereas, the success of economic development projects is contingent upon the entities who provide for and enhance the physical and service infrastructure supporting economic activity; and

Whereas, economic development largely occurs on privately owned land within the boundaries of cities and towns, which provide services to accommodate growth; and

Whereas, changes to economic development statutes should be conducted judiciously and involve stakeholder participation; and

Whereas, economic development approaches differ by municipalities' ages and cycles of development; specifically, rural communities have different community assets, objectives, and challenges in development than those of urban communities; and

Whereas, economic development is most beneficial when all affected stakeholders collaborate and contribute towards a mutually beneficial outcome; and

Whereas, economic development begins and occurs at the local level and local municipalities are eager to partner reciprocally with other stakeholders, including but not limited to the State of Utah, the Economic Development Corporation of Utah, counties, neighboring municipalities, associations of governments (AOGs), school districts, property owners, residents, businesses, and chambers of commerce.

i) Examples of partnerships with counties, AOG's, special districts, other taxing entities, and the State might include resource development, technical assistance, infrastructure development, and access to additional tools for small jurisdictions; and

Whereas, municipalities are best suited to coordinate economic development with other local taxing entities; and

Whereas, cities and towns cannot support development proposals, task forces, commissions, districts, development authorities, or legislation that would deprive local governments of their traditional land use authority or control over their tax increment without their consent; and

(C) Therefore, we, the members of the Utah League of Cities and Towns resolve that:

1. Utah should promote a community-first model of economic development, which prioritizes sustainability and quality of life for all residents, old and new.
2. Collaboration in economic development should be encouraged and supported reciprocally in all levels of government, recognizing that economic development is most effectively and efficiently implemented locally.
3. Any comprehensive review of current tools and programs will only be successful with the involvement of cities and towns and must prioritize community-first economic development. Those tools and programs include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a) Agricultural grants;
 - b) Business expansion & retention programs;
 - c) Business recruitment and marketing efforts;
 - d) Employment center development (business parks, office buildings, retail developments);

- e) Entrepreneurship and innovation assets (creative capital, incubators, research parks, technology transfer, maker spaces, coworking facilities, industry-academic research partnerships);
- f) Housing development, which includes achieving the appropriate balance of housing types, including workforce housing, and other uses of land and infrastructure;
- g) Industrial rehabilitation and environmental reclamation;
- h) Local Economic Development Tax Increment Financing Tool (EDTIF) applications;
- i) Main street and downtown revitalization programs such as the National Main Street Program;
- j) Place-making, which includes arts & culture programming;
- k) Professional development education for local staff and elected officials that covers core concepts including many of the programs listed above; and
- l) Public infrastructure;
- m) Small business development support, including access to capital and mentoring/training program;
- n) The formation and capacity building of Redevelopment Areas (RDAs) /Community Reinvestment Areas (CRAs);
- o) Tourism development;
- p) Transportation strategies, including roads, transit, trail, rail, freight, and airports.

Submitted by:

Marlin Eldred, Lehi City Economic Development Director

Nick Duerksen, Sandy City Economic Development Director

September 9, 2019