



Platform

& Guide to Policy

★ 2019 ★



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Introduction

2019 Plano Citizens' Coalition Platform and Guide to Policy

The Platform and Guide to Policy serves as the Plano Citizens' Coalition's cohesive vision for Plano. This document consists of the organization's principles, policy positions, and research. It is a source of practical knowledge and a tool to promote positive change in the governance of our community.

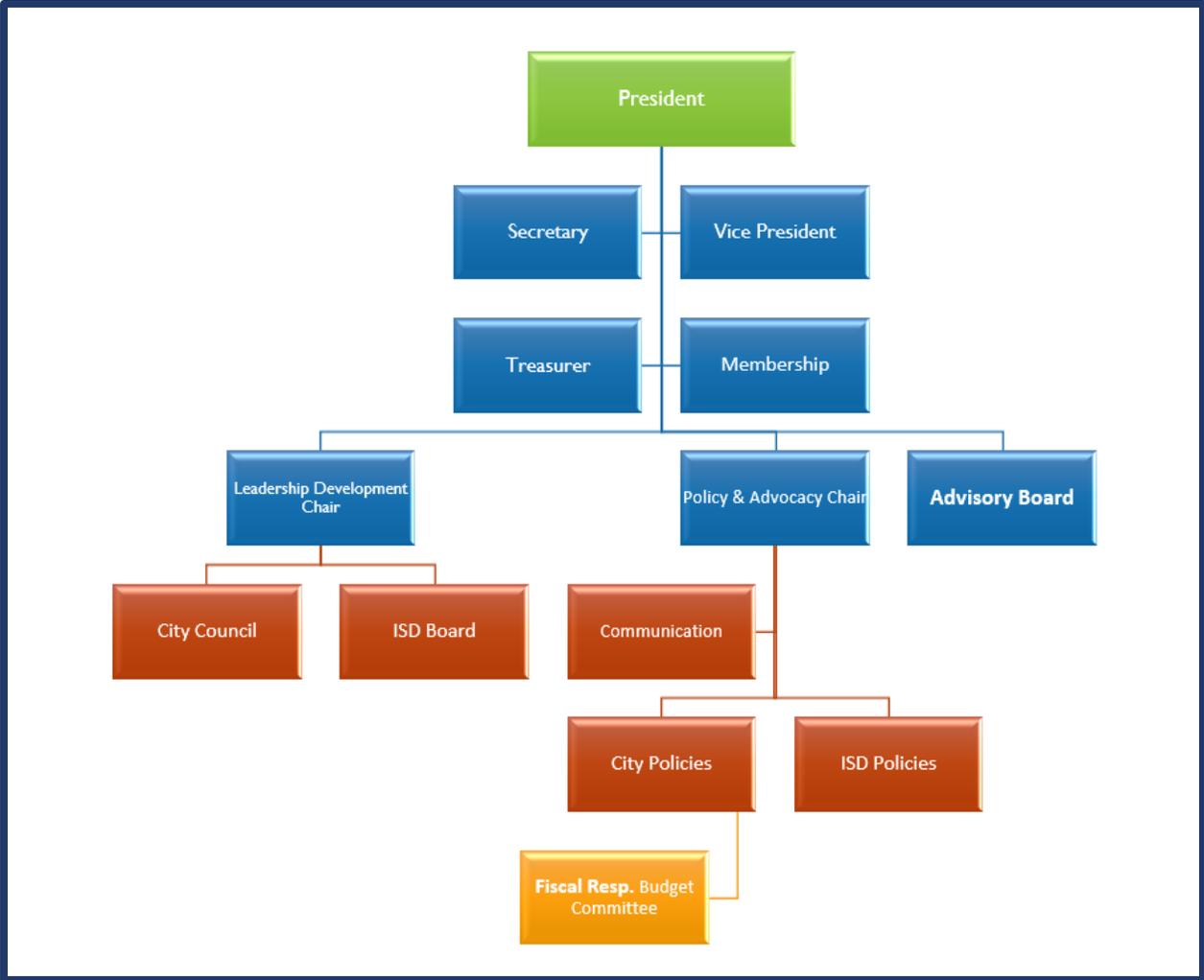
About the Plano Citizens' Coalition

The PCC was founded in 2016 with a unique goal of simultaneously developing community leaders, influencing municipal policy, and helping citizens become more informed. It exists to serve Plano residents and provide them with a means to be heard by their elected representatives.

The PCC has continued to grow in the years following its inception, and many volunteers have joined. Our leadership has successfully embraced an environment defined by diversity of thought, owing to the varied backgrounds of the Plano residents who participate. In the PCC, there is a way for every volunteer to put his or her talents to use in making a difference in the community.

Organization

The PCC is headed by the Executive Committee, consisting of elected officers and advisory board members. There are two main standing committees; the Policy and Advocacy Committee and the Leadership Development Committee. Included on the following page is a chart that visually outlines the structure of the organization.



Above is a simplified representation of the PCC’s current organization. As more volunteers join, new standing committees, subcommittees, and etc. may be formed for specific purposes.

General Principles

The following are principles adopted by the Executive Committee that do not neatly fit into a category such as Budget and Taxation or Development. Additionally, they are applicable to both the City Government and PISD.

Guiding Principles

Rule of Law - The rule of law applies to all. This is the foundation of our republic.

Limited Government - Government should be limited to its core functions.

Representative Government - Elected officials' actions should represent the will of their constituents, under the law, with transparency and probity.

General Principles

1. Any plan, whether it relates to development, budgeting, parks and recreation, and etc., shall be opposed if it contains policy suggestions in conflict with the PCC Platform. Plans should be specific in wording and intent to prevent abuse and lack of accountability through broad and ambiguous interpretation.
2. Elected Officials are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful to Citizens and fellow elected officials.
3. Elected Officials are expected to fulfill their campaign promises and operate in accordance to the principles they espoused prior to election or reelection.
4. The free speech of Citizens, as defined and protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, shall be upheld by the local government and not abridged in any way and in particular with regard

to the public comments portion of open meetings. Plano Citizens should be allotted a minimum of three minutes for speaking, and Plano residents should be allowed to speak before non-Plano residents.

5. The elected governing body shall establish policy and oversee staff's work to ensure compliance with that policy. Elected officials are obligated to scrutinize the actions of the staff through careful review of its actions.
6. No public funds or resources should be used for lobbyists directly or indirectly, for or against any public policy.

Budget and Taxation

Budgetary Principles

1. A city government exists to provide essential public services such as first responders, trash collection, roads, water, sewage, and facilities that support these activities. The City of Plano's first priority is to fund these needs which shall justify an amount of taxes imposed in order to do so. Other services such as libraries, parks, recreation centers, community centers, economic development, and etc. shall be considered in a manner that does not act as a major cost driver and budgetary constraint.
2. The size of the city government shall be limited to a number of departments and personnel necessary to provide essential services and other cost-effective services as defined in Budgetary Principle No. 1. The goal of the City of Plano should be to achieve the effective tax rate each year (plus inflation*). The exception is any case in which doing so would genuinely result in a shortfall in the funding of essential public services.
3. The 20% Homestead Exemption, being the maximum allowed under Texas Law, shall be preserved at its current percentage. Furthermore, the tax freeze preventing increased property taxes for Citizens older than 65 shall also be preserved.

Note: Inflation should be based on the Consumer Price Index. While municipal governments typically do not use this index, it would be more accurate to do so in order to maintain the purchasing power associated with the salaries of government employees.

Development

Development Principles

1. Plano should remain a suburban city, and any attempts to increase the population density shall be opposed on the basis that a suburb offers a unique quality of life suitable to families, and the fact that infrastructure and public safety services are limited.
2. The zoning process is not a tool for elected officials to utilize for the purpose of reconfiguring the community. It exists to resolve conflicts with surrounding residents and to facilitate the implementation of the diverse interests of landowners in close proximity to one another.
3. Any attempts to construct locally tax-funded affordable housing at any specified income levels shall be opposed on the basis that the redistribution of wealth is an injustice to hard-working taxpayers. This is not a core function of city government.
4. Economic development should consist of businesses independently locating to Plano purely as a result of identified viable investment opportunities. The use of tax dollars as Chapter 380 incentives for firm relocation or retention shall be opposed, and the Economic Development Incentive Fund should be abolished.
5. Property Tax reductions are a desired free market alternative to existing economic development policies, as they award businesses and individuals an equal opportunity to further benefit from increased innovation and productivity.

Policy Appendix

Policy Initiatives

While the PCC Platform summarizes the organization's core positions on municipal policy, additional research is often done on specific topics. Often times, this often leads to ideas for policy change and reform. Documents that are in current use for the aforementioned purpose are referred to as active policy initiatives. Similar to how the PCC Platform is organized, policy initiatives are sorted under the Policy Appendix by category such as Budget and Taxation and Development.

Active Budgetary Policy Initiatives

Budgetary Policy Initiatives are policy documents intended to encourage revisions to existing fiscal policies or revisions to existing ones.

The PCC currently has one active Budgetary Policy Initiative, known as "Stabilize". Stabilize encourages the creation of a new Budget Stabilization Fund (commonly referred to as a Rainy-Day Fund). It is intended to address budget shortfalls caused by economic recessions or extraordinary circumstances by setting aside a portion of the City of Plano's General Fund Unappropriated Fund each year.

The PCC's position on the FY 2018-19 City of Plano Budget and Tax Rate is also included in this section.

Stabilize

Establishing a Rainy Day Fund for Plano

Budgetary Policy Initiative

Introduction

Budget Stabilization Fund

The purpose of “Stabilize” is to encourage the creation of a Budget Stabilization Fund, or commonly known as a Rainy-Day Fund. A BSF exists to incrementally set aside some of the available, unrestricted funds of a government for the purpose of offsetting shortfalls in revenue that occur during economic recessions or as a result of natural disasters. Appropriation from a BSF should only occur as needed; it should be inaccessible from spending that is less than essential yet not overly difficult to access in true times of need.

An Opportunity to Innovate

Municipal Rainy-Day Funds are still not as commonplace as those utilized by state governments. However, this is a trend that is slowly starting to change. Many local governments have realized the usefulness of devising a way to address the inevitable shortfalls that occur in each recession. Plano has long upheld a reputation of excellence in its governing standards. Making use of the budget surpluses that arise in this particular manner is fitting for a City Government that routinely takes on the challenge of innovation and proactively anticipating potential issues. If enough funds are available to offset shortfalls in the initial stage of a recession, tax increases could even be avoided.

A Starting Point

“Stabilize” is not a fully developed proposal for a new Budget Stabilization Fund. Instead, it is a study as to why the City Council should officially request that the Department of Budget and Research begin studying the subject in further depth.

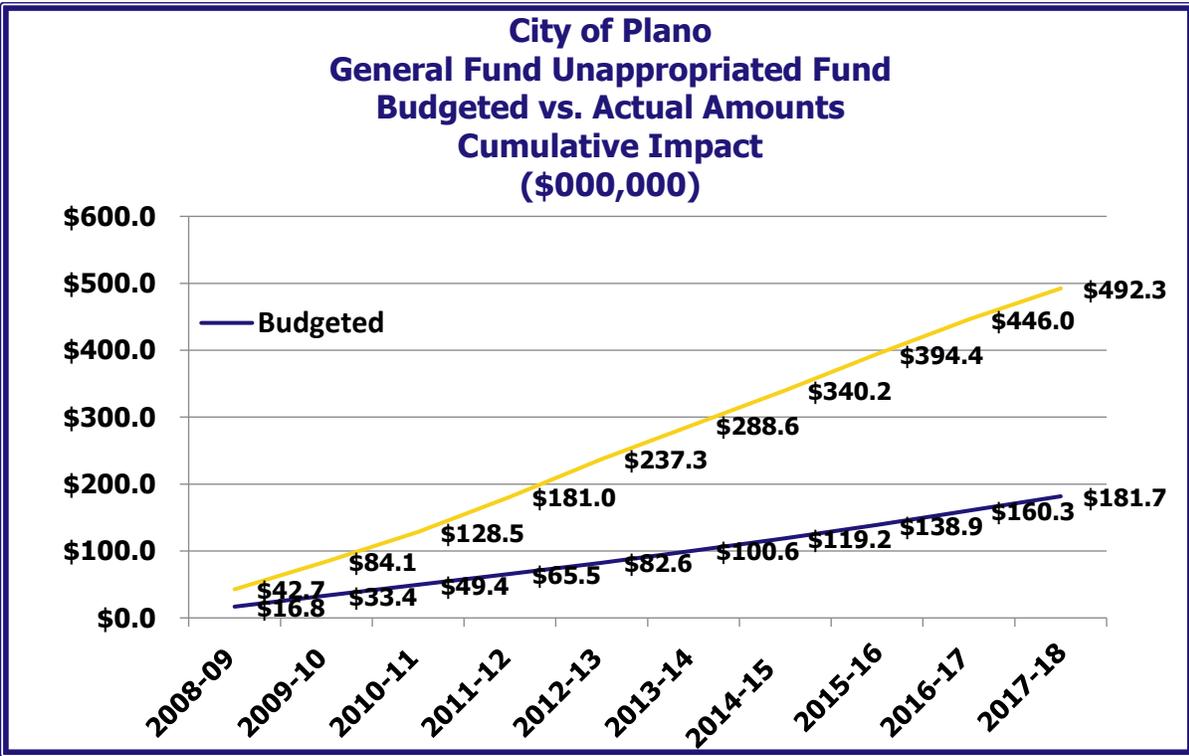
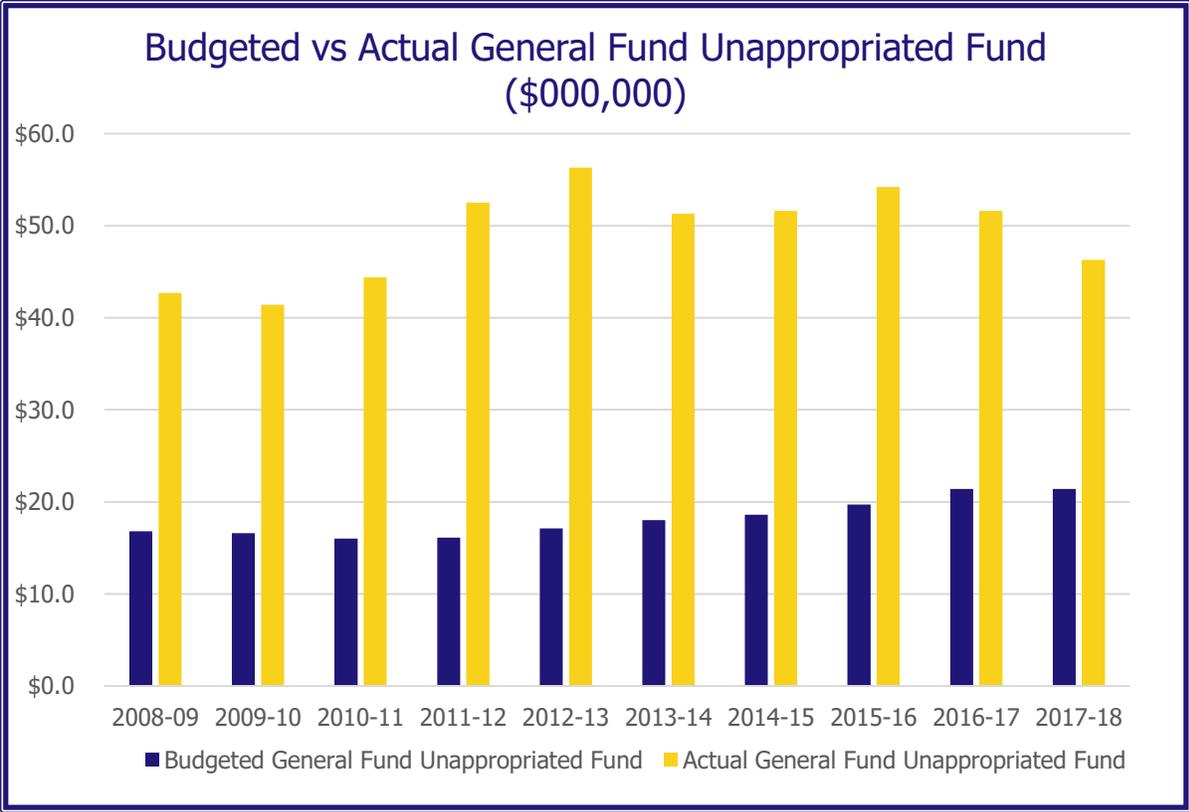
It should also be noted that reserves do exist within the budget at present. However, unmarked reserves are very different from a true BSF in the sense that they lack a stringent withdrawal policy and are thus unrestricted as to future use.

Sources of Funding

General Fund Unappropriated Fund

The Unappropriated Fund is essentially the remaining balance within the General Fund of the City’s budget. It is currently budgeted so that enough remains to provide 30 days of working capital. In reality, this fund tends to be much larger than what is usually budgeted.

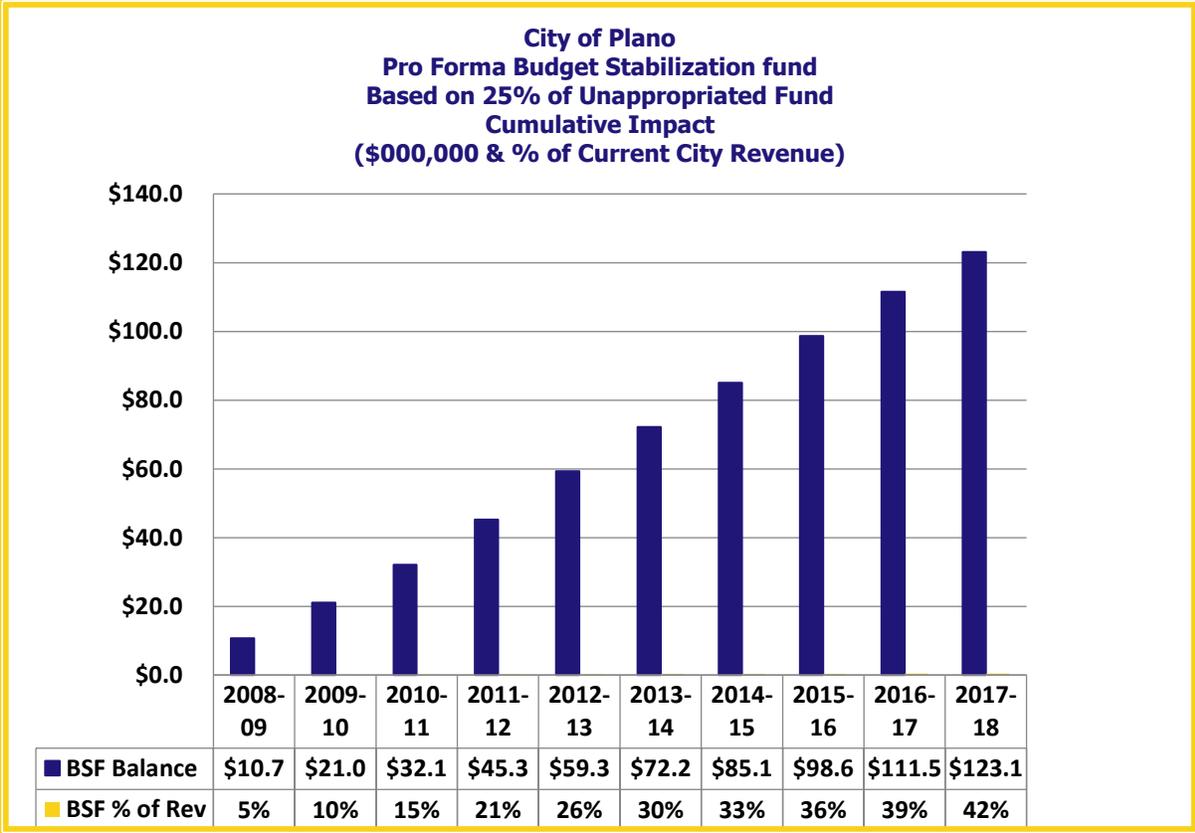
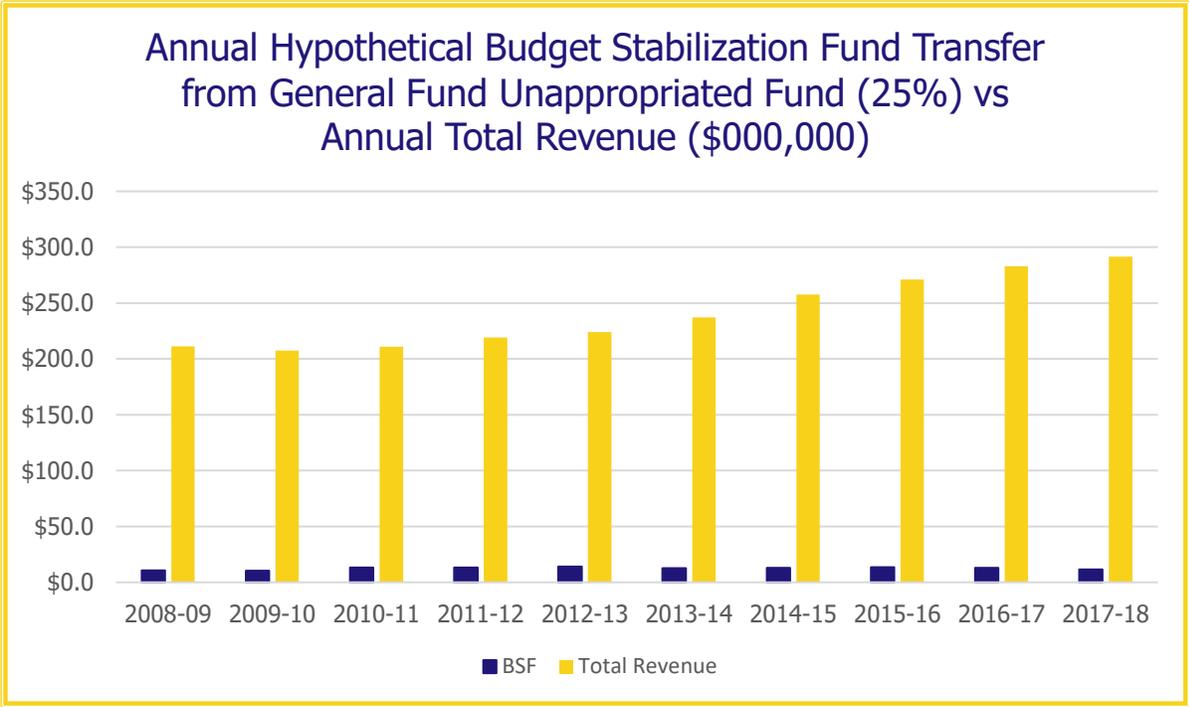
City of Plano General Fund Unappropriated Fund Annual Amounts (\$000,000)		
Fiscal Year	Budgeted	Actual
2008-09	\$16.8	\$42.7
2009-10	\$16.6	\$41.4
2010-11	\$16.0	\$44.4
2011-12	\$16.1	\$52.5
2012-13	\$17.1	\$56.3
2013-14	\$18.0	\$51.3
2014-15	\$18.6	\$51.6
2015-16	\$19.7	\$54.2
2016-17	\$21.4	\$51.6
2017-18	\$21.4	\$46.3



A primary source of funding for the Budget Stabilization Fund could be achieved through requiring that at least 25% of the Unappropriated Fund be deposited in the BSF.

The following data reflects the hypothetical 25% Unappropriated Fund Transfer Scenario.

City of Plan Pro Forma Budget Stabilization Fund Based on 25% of Unappropriated Fund Cumulative Impact (\$000,000)				
Fiscal Year	Actual Unappropriated Fund	Hypothetical Budget Stabilization Fund	City Revenue	BSF % of City Revenue
2008-09	\$42.7	\$10.7	\$211.2	5%
2009-10	\$84.1	\$21.0	\$207.5	10%
2010-11	\$128.5	\$32.1	\$210.9	15%
2011-12	\$181.0	\$45.3	\$219.1	21%
2012-13	\$237.3	\$59.3	\$224.1	26%
2013-14	\$288.7	\$72.2	\$237.2	30%
2014-15	\$340.3	\$85.1	\$257.6	33%
2015-16	\$394.5	\$98.6	\$270.9	36%
2016-17	\$446.1	\$111.5	\$283.0	39%
2017-18	\$492.4	\$123.1	\$295.1	42%



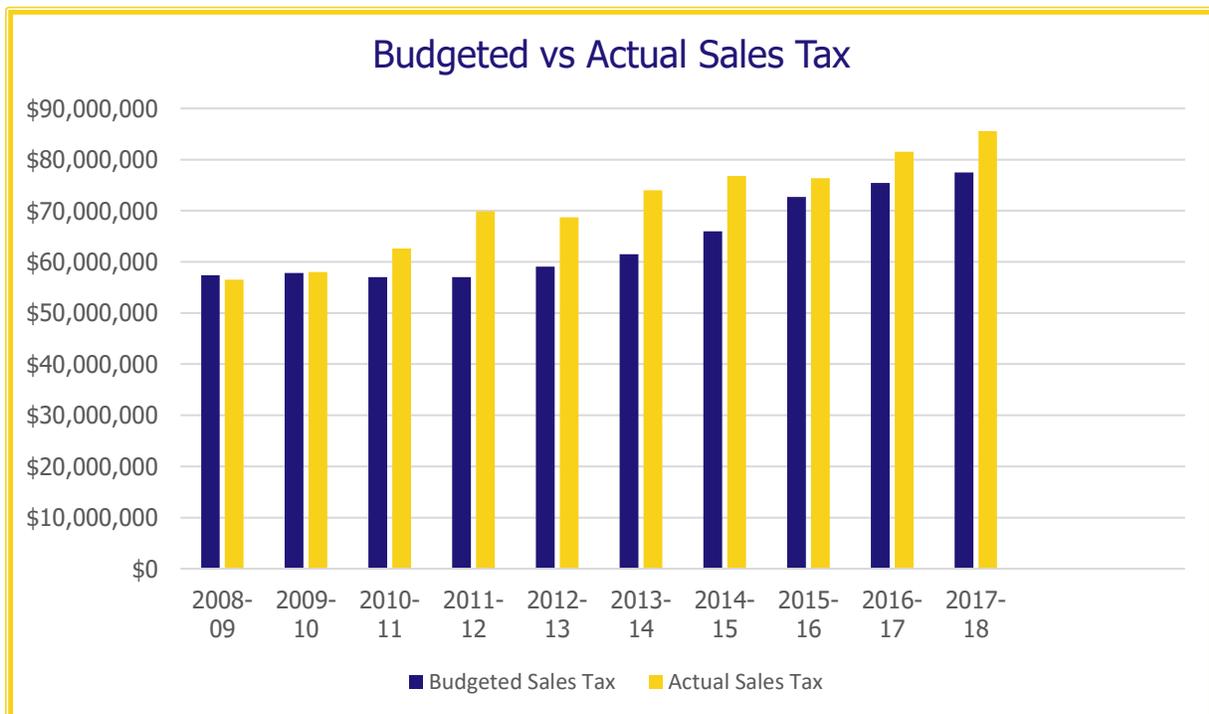
In comparison to the total amount of revenue available in the General Fund, the BSF fund at this percentage is quite small and would pose few if any constraints on the overall budget. Of the total revenue, the BSF in this scenario ranges from 4.998% -

6.228% of overall revenue from Fiscal Year 2008-09 to 2016-17. The accumulation of the money set aside (assuming that the BSF would have been adopted in 2008-09 and nothing was appropriated from the BSF) from 2008-09 to 2017-18 would amount to \$125,130,238 at 42.81% of the operating and maintenance revenue in 2017-18. This amount is more than enough to supplement any shortfalls that occur during the initial stage of a recession. In a normal economic cycle, the growth period typically provides enough time for significant accumulation in savings.

New Sales Tax Cap Policy

The Sales Tax Cap Policy currently allows Sales Tax Dollars in excess of the three-year average to be used for the following three options: providing additional funding to the Economic Development Incentive Fund (which is automatically funded by two cents of the M&O Property Tax Rate), the Capital Maintenance Fund, and one-time expenditures.

Sales Tax revenue is one of the largest sources of the General Fund. Sales Tax surpluses are typically larger in times of economic growth than in periods of decline. As a result, excesses could be put to better use in supporting the Budget Stabilization Fund.



A new Sales Tax Cap Policy should set aside a percentage of the excess over the three-year average for allocation to the BSF, Capital Maintenance Fund, and One-time

Expenditures. The option of additional funding for the Economic Development Incentive Fund is replaced by additional funding for the BSF.

General Fund Transfers

The City Council should also, at its discretion, be able to transfer any sum of unmarked reserves to the BSF. In this sense, if the need arises for a larger-than-automatically-provided-for BSF, the Council can allocate adequate funding. This action should, however, be exercised with caution as not to create undesired budgetary constraints.

Withdrawal Policy

Process for Utilizing the BSF

Appropriation from the Budget Stabilization fund should be authorized by a two-thirds majority vote of the City Council Members. The motion to permit appropriation from the BSF should be distinct and separate from the motion to adopt the annual budget. BSF appropriations should always be placed on the agenda as items for individual consideration and never on the consent agenda. In addition, spending from the BSF should require a public hearing. Citizens would then be allowed to voice their opinions on the decision to spend the City's savings.

Limitations on Usage of BSF Funds

The BSF should be used to offset shortfalls in revenue that fund the core responsibilities of the City Government. Thus, legal limitations for what the BSF may be used for should be established.

The areas of the budget which the BSF may supplement should be Public Safety (Police and Fire), Public Works, the Capital Maintenance Fund, and administrative activities which support the operations thereof.

Source of Data used in "Stabilize": City of Plano Budget Statements, Audits, and Monthly Financial Reports.

Position on the FY 2018-19 Budget and Tax Rate

Several months prior to the September City Council meeting in which the FY 2018-19 Budget and Tax Rate were adopted, the PCC formed a budget committee consisting of business owners, CPAs, and other competent individuals. The Citizens' Budget Committee conducted a lengthy analysis of the city budget. Based on its findings, the PCC then advocated for the adoption of the Effective Tax Rate (the official tax rate required to generate the same amount of revenue from existing properties as in the prior fiscal year). It was determined that core budgetary needs could be met without another year of property tax increases.

The PCC Communications Subcommittee authored an open letter to the Plano City Council communicating the aforementioned findings and reason to prevent further property tax increases. Several articles on the subject were also released, including one authored by PCC President Mark Reid which provides a basic summary of the Budget Committee's findings.

Open Letter

"We at Plano Citizens' Coalition urge the city council to adopt the effective tax rate in order to halt the unsustainable trend of property tax increases from year to year. Burdening Plano citizens with a greater cost of government puts our entire community's future at stake. It is time to embrace a better vision for our local government in which the freedom of residents to keep as much of their earnings as possible is upheld. Plano Citizens' Coalition reaffirms that the effective tax rate can be achieved without cuts to essential services and funds, and we stand by the findings of our budget committee. We urge each council member to consider the vision of fiscal restraint that many Plano citizens share not for the sake of change in itself but for the benefits each individual and subsequently our community will reap from receiving local property tax relief.

There were two public hearings on the budget.

- 134 citizens voiced their opposition to the proposed budget/tax increase.
- Over 577 citizens signed an informal petition in favor of adopting the effective tax rate, which was presented to city council at the first public hearing.
- Only 38 were in favor of the proposed budget/tax increase

The citizens have spoken. What will you do? Below are your campaign promises." (see campaign promises at <https://planocitizenscoalition.org/news/f/an-open-letter-to-the-plano-city-council>).

Plano City Council Raises City Taxes in Split 5-3 Vote

By Mark Reid, PCC President

On September 10, Plano City Council voted 5-3 to raise our city property taxes again. As a result, the average Plano homeowner will see a 40 percent increase in their city tax bill in just five years. These increases are simply unsustainable.

Yes, it's true that most of your total property tax bill – roughly 65 percent – is paid to Plano ISD, and city officials have no control over this.

That's why we asked city officials to hold the line on what they do control: your city tax bill.

Simply put, city tax bills in Plano are rising because *council is not lowering the city tax rate enough to offset skyrocketing home values*. Some will say they “lowered the tax rate” for the third year in a row, implying they haven't raised your tax bill. But that's wrong: Council has forced the average Plano taxpayer to pay a higher city tax bill, while blaming everyone else but themselves.

The “effective” tax rate is the rate at which taxpayers in total will pay the same amount in taxes overall as they did the previous year, even though their property values increased. Every year, each taxing entity – including the city – calculates its effective rate.

This is the tax rate we asked council to adopt in 2018. It's already adjusted for growth and would still allow the overall budget to grow. By the way, Plano's population has only grown about one percent each year over the past decade. Contrary to what the city claims, adopting the effective rate would give the city additional revenue from new properties added to the tax rolls – \$5 million over and above last year, or 1.7 percent more.

On top of new property revenue collected each year from tax hikes, our Citizen Budget Committee discovered the city runs huge budget surpluses. Plano routinely under-forecast its revenue and over-forecast its expenses, generating \$13 million to \$20 million in surplus revenue each year. At the same time, they spend far less than what is budgeted. Yet they base the next year's budget on the previous budget, rather than what was actually spent.

This creates a huge surplus that is never returned to taxpayers. Never.

This excess revenue rolls into the next year's budget or into surplus accounts, which is why we have more than \$500 million across dozens of surplus fund accounts. It's also

why our committee asserted the city could adopt the effective rate in 2018 without cuts to any program or department. No spending cuts. Zero.

After four years of city tax hikes, we asked the city not to raise the average tax bill again for the fifth year in a row. If the wishes of our budget committee – and more than 1,000 residents who signed a petition – had been granted, the previous four years of tax hikes would still be maintained in the budget we supported.

All we asked council to do was hold the line and grow the budget at a slower rate than what staff wanted. But only three councilmembers – Anthony Ricciardeli, Rick Smith, and Tom Harrison – agreed.

If the vote had been 4-4, Plano taxpayers would have won, because state law requires a 60 percent majority of council to raise taxes in any given year. The 4.5 percent tax revenue increase passed 5-3, with support from Mayor Harry LaRosiliere and councilmembers Ron Kelley, Kayci Prince, Rick Grady, and Angela Miner.

Collin County, Colleyville, Wylie, Rockwall all adopted the effective tax rate in 2018, while Keller actually went below their effective rate. These are just a few examples.

Simply put, it can be done.

Active Development Policy Initiatives

Development Policy Initiatives are policy documents intended to encourage revisions to existing development policies or revisions to existing ones.

The PCC currently has one active Development Policy Initiative, known as “East Side Horizon”. East Side Horizon outlines policies for future development and redevelopment in East Plano’s Oak Point Area. East Side Horizon contributes new ideas, identifies positive elements of the City of Plano’s Envision Oak Point Plan, and offers points of revision to the Envision Oak Point Plan necessary for continued, vibrant, local development that builds on East Plano’s cherished suburban character.

East Side

Horizon

Boldly Encouraging a Brighter, *Suburban* Future for East Plano

Development Policy Initiative

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Introduction

On July 23, 2018, the Plano City Council approved a long-term plan called “Envision Oak Point” that would guide policy decisions corresponding with anticipated new development just east of US 75.

Envision Oak Point contained elements that were positive, but at the same time some provisions left the door open to detrimental land uses.

Nonetheless, the broader discourse on the current lack of development and the imminent potential for such in the Oak Point Area was much needed and is applauded.

East Side Horizon is a Grassroots Policy Initiative designed to prioritize key aspects of anticipated development in the Oak Point area and encourage revisions through updates to the adopted Envision Oak Point Plan.

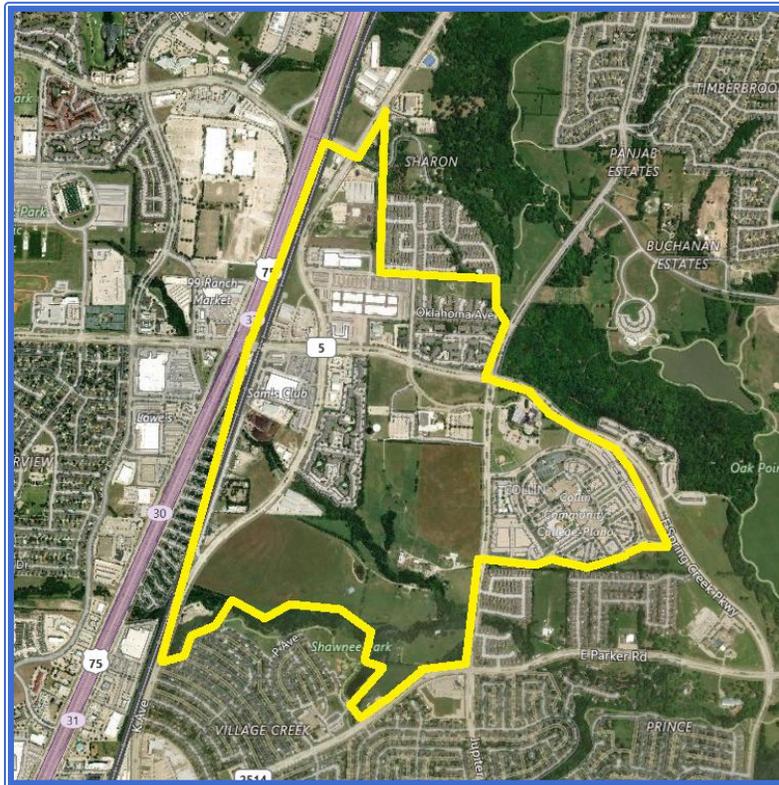
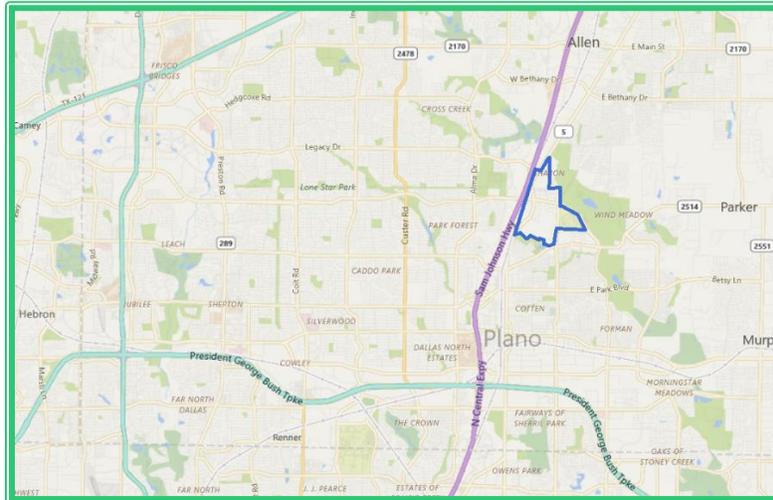
East Side Horizon is not meant to act as a substitute for any development plan produced by the City Staff but rather as a means to ensure that beneficial decisions are made as new development actively begins to take place. It is not a plan, but rather a policy guide.

It is also intentionally a relatively short document that purposely does not include any kind of map dictating future zoning classifications for any specific parcels of land. East Side Horizon is a [Free Market](#) oriented initiative that expects final zoning ordinances to reflect economically viable development interests of landowners while upholding current minimum building standards.

East Side Horizon expects that actions taken by the City of Plano to institute new relevant ordinances, public services, and additional infrastructure in response to future private development will be in compliance with the 2012 updated version of the still valid 1986 Comprehensive Development Plan, as Plano Tomorrow continues to face legal issues.

The Oak Point Area

As Defined by the Envision Oak Point Plan



East Side Horizon

Principles



Suburban Vision



Commercial Possibilities



Encourage Redevelopment



Land Preservation



Identify Public Costs



Suburban Vision

Future Residential Development in the Oak Point Area should consist of new Single Family Detached units.

East Plano has a reputation among its residents as one of the most suburban and open areas in Plano. It has been described as being 'less crowded' than areas further to the west. Houses throughout the broader area vary in both size and age. East Plano's suburban character has value in terms of livability and aesthetic appeal. New residential development in the Oak Point Area should reflect and preserve that value.

Components

- **Prevent the proliferation of excessive, large multifamily units**

The existing housing within the Oak Point Area **currently consists of 82.01% multifamily**. Although Oak Point is surrounded by both older and newer neighborhoods, single family detached is almost nonexistent within the area defined by Envision Oak Point.

Given the large supply of open land, there is a significant opportunity for the development of a **new neighborhood consisting of single family detached units**. Present market conditions make this particular type of residential dwelling especially viable.

From a community standpoint, this direction of development reinforces the suburban character of East Plano and will be viewed as a strong, beneficial long-term investment.

When reviewing requests for rezoning, the City Council should approve responsible zoning cases that eventually result in a housing mix that allows the overall composition to reach a balance between single family detached and multifamily that is characteristic of the overall housing composition of the City of Plano. Thus, the Oak Point Area will reach a population density close to that of the rest of Plano at approximately 3,820 people per square mile.

■ Coordinate with Plano ISD

The City of Plano must work closely with Plano ISD to identify educational needs resulting from new additions to the local community.

A determination must be made as to what effect the increase in students within the area will have on the existing capacity of the local school system.

It is not impossible that a new elementary school may need to be constructed, or that steps will have to be taken to ensure that existing middle and high schools can properly accommodate new students.

■ Encourage a Wide Variety of House and Lot Sizes

The City of Plano should encourage developers to consider offering a variety of house and lot sizes through the zoning process. It is possible that a large portion of the undeveloped land in the Oak Point Area could be utilized in the form of new subdivisions. Offering a variety in single family detached housing could greatly serve the needs and interests of existing and prospective residents in the immediate community. In particular, including smaller lots within the mix could be particularly accommodating to [younger, first-time home buyers](#) as well as [older residents throughout Plano seeking to downsize](#). Such a mix would also be consistent with the existing lot and house size variety throughout the East Side.

Single Family Residential Districts

Single-Family Residence-9

- "The SF-9 district is intended to provide areas for [large-lot](#), urban, single-family development protected from excessive noise, illumination, odors, visual clutter, and other objectionable influences to family living" - City of Plano Zoning Ordinance
- Minimum Lot Size: 9,000 square feet
- Maximum Coverage: 45% (principal and accessory buildings)
- Nearby Example: Santa Fe Estates

Single-Family Residence-7

- "The SF-7 district is intended to provide for areas of urban single-family development on **moderate-size lots**, protected from excessive noise, illumination, odors, visual clutter, and other objectionable influences to family living." - City of Plano Zoning Ordinance
- Minimum Lot Size: 7,000 square feet
- Maximum Coverage: 45% (principal and accessory buildings)
- Nearby Example: Village North

Single-Family Residence-6

- "The SF-6 district is intended to provide for **small-lot**, urban, single-family development protected from excessive noise, illumination, odors, visual clutter, and other objectionable influences to family living." - City of Plano Zoning Ordinance
- Minimum Lot Size: 6,000 square feet
- Maximum Coverage: 45% (principal and accessory buildings)
- Nearby Example: Plano Parkside

Patio Home District

- "The PH district is intended to provide for areas of detached, single-family development in a clustered lot pattern with a **common usable open space system** that is an integral part of the development." - City of Plano Zoning Ordinance
- Minimum Lot Size: 4,000 square feet
- Maximum Coverage: 60%
- Nearby Example: Villas of Pecan Creek



Commercial Possibilities

New commercial development should be open to a wide range of possibilities in order to promote the creation of new, private amenities or even work opportunities.

Commercial growth has been relatively gradual in the Oak Point Area, but new opportunities for entrepreneurship will undoubtedly coincide with the construction of new residential developments. Commercial possibilities will be practical in nature and will likely align with the economic demand of residents in and near Oak Point. Residents throughout East Plano have previously expressed desires for services such as new retail and quality dining. All of this could soon be conveniently located at the heart of East Plano.

Components

- **Retail and Commercial**

Retail developments are a staple in the Oak Point Area. Many existing non-residential developments in the area are zoned retail, as is typical of the standard four-corner model found throughout Plano. Should new development be defined by similar characteristics, a notable opportunity exists for the proliferation of small businesses. While it is impossible to predict who will come forward to develop land and for what purpose, the City's Zoning Ordinance allows for a myriad of specific uses for non-residential zoning classifications. Thus, **it is wise not to prematurely declare what should be built** to complement the more inevitable residential developments which will be implemented in close proximity. However, East Side Horizon will **explore** two likely land uses given the size and location of undeveloped land in Oak Point.

Retail District

- Retail Districts are highly suitable for providing basic shopping and dining activities in close proximity to neighborhoods.
- This is a land use that is often found at major intersections within Plano.
- Retail Districts vary in size throughout Plano. Many of East Plano's Retail Districts are smaller in comparison to those found further West likely due to having been constructed several decades ago.
- Nearby examples: Courtland Corners, Spring Wells (K Avenue and Spring Creek)

Light Commercial District

- A Light Commercial District varies from a Retail District mainly in what uses are allowed under the City's Zoning Ordinance.
- Basic retail activities can take place, but the land use also allows for some office space and other types of services.
- In other words, it is more multipurposed than a Retail District but often structures are of similar size.
- Nearby Examples: Watermark Church, Contractors Stone Supply
- Additional Example: Palisades Business Park

■ Office Use

Another practical possibility for non-residential development is the construction of office space. This is an excellent **alternative to retail** as it provides a location for many diverse and useful services to nearby residents. Zoning classifications for office developments can vary greatly in size. Given the proximity of the Oak Point Area to many residential neighborhoods, it is expected that any office developments will be limited in that respect. There are, however, two suitable zoning classifications that would likely be selected should a land owner be interested in constructing new office space. It should be noted, though, that office developments are sparse throughout East Plano and are somewhat uncommon at the present time. Office and Retail Districts can often be found in combination with one another.

Neighborhood Office District

- A Neighborhood Office District provides a small venue for services usually nearby residential areas.
- This district has the advantage of being able to establish a professional setting without creating a disruption to residents in close proximity.
- Structures are low rise.

General Office District

- A General Office District differs from a Neighborhood Office District primarily in size and the height of buildings.
- Structures can vary from low, mid, and high rise.
- Uses are also diverse and quite varied, and present a wide possibility for types of jobs added to the Oak Point Area's local economy.



Encourage Redevelopment

Redevelopment is a viable option that landowners could pursue and would further enhance the area through meaningful repurposing of existing spaces and structures.

While currently undeveloped, agricultural land is often the first thing that comes to mind when considering the potential of the Oak Point Area, there exists additional opportunities in the form of redevelopment. It may even become an important tool to ensure continuing success in Oak Point as it has in recent years. Redevelopment and renovation are not new ideas to this area, but nonetheless should be encouraged to continue as needed.

Components

▪ Opportunity Zone

As a part of the 2017 federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the opportunity zone program was established. It is a community development program that allows the executive of each state establish a geographic area in which long term investment in low income communities will occur. Governor Abbot recently designated a large portion of East Plano along US 75 which encompasses much of the designated Oak Point Area as such. The program provides a tax incentive that encourages investors to place unrealized capital gains into an 'opportunity fund' through which reinvestment in the opportunity zone will occur. The City of Plano, if not already doing so, could make an effort to inform landowners currently progressing through the zoning process of this program while it remains in effect.

▪ Area-Wide Sales Tax Reduction

Many municipalities throughout the United States have used sales tax reductions to incentivize development and redevelopment in a specific area. Often this is achieved alongside the use of other measures in what is often referred to as an Urban Enterprise Zone. The Texas Statutes governing the levying of sales and use taxes do not specifically provide any guidelines for the establishment of an Urban Enterprise Zone or sales tax districts with a lower rate than the overall sales tax

rate established by the municipality. Thus, City Leadership is encouraged to first evaluate the legality of outright lowering of the sales tax rate in the Oak Point Area. This action may also require authorization by the City's qualified voters. If state law does prohibit this practice, City Leadership should work with Plano's representatives in the Texas Legislature to legalize special sales tax reductions in geographically specified areas. As it provides all businesses within a given area an equal chance to experience accelerated growth, this is anticipated to become a useful development and redevelopment policy tool.

Businesses in the Oak Point Area could benefit immensely from a period of an increased volume of consumer spending. This could provide a source of funds existing businesses would need to implement improvements to their properties.

- **Prevent Increases in Property Taxes**

Property taxes that rise too quickly or remain at rates that are burdensome can impede the growth of business and any subsequent reinvestment in capital.

Businesses (with exception to those owning currently vacant lots) in the Oak Point Area paid (excluding any possible exemptions, deductions, etc.), on average, \$10,179.96 in FY 2012-13 and \$11,818.99 in FY 2017-18. In other words, the average business in the Oak Point Area has seen a 16.1% increase in City property taxes in five years. While not necessarily as concerning at present, this trend will, however, become an issue should property values begin to significantly increase in value as the Oak Point Area develops.

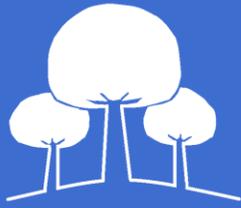
The **Effective Tax Rate** (official rate required to collect the same amount of tax dollars as in the previous fiscal year), should be adopted whenever possible to **support local business growth and reinvestment in land and facilities.**

- **Encourage Redevelopment of the Plano Market Square Mall**

The Plano Market Square Mall has seen better, more prosperous days. It currently only houses one tenant. Residents throughout the surrounding region have expressed an interest in seeing the property reutilized. While the city government cannot perform the task itself, there are some steps that can be taken to encourage eventual redevelopment.

Current and prospective property owners should be informed of the Opportunity Zone program and the potential advantages it offers while interacting with the city

government through the zoning process. Making use of both the aforementioned sales tax reductions and slowed property tax growth throughout the Oak Point Area will contribute towards [locally enhanced investment opportunities](#). Thus, the likelihood of a developer reutilizing the parcel of land the mall currently occupies in the near future will increase. The City of Plano should, as always, commit to facilitating an efficient and satisfactory zoning process in order to create appeal from a regulatory standpoint.



Land Preservation

New residential development should be complemented with aesthetically pleasing and cost effective open space.

The visual appeal of the open space that constitutes much of the present-day Oak Point Area has been appreciated by local residents for decades. As a result, there is an interest in seeing some of that space preserved. There are a number of unique, cost effective possibilities for achieving land preservation.

Components

- **New Neighborhood Park**

As it is very likely that new residential subdivisions could be developed, a new neighborhood park could be constructed to serve immediate residents. These parks are usually smaller in size and are funded through a fee charged to developers. Collected funds are used for acquiring land and any ensuing construction.

A large park would be unnecessary given the Oak Point Area's proximity to both Oak Point Park and Bob Woodruff Park.

- **Additional Open Space**

There are other options aside from a new park to preserve minimally developed land.

Some landowners might choose to keep the current land use zoning in place on their respective parcels. Thus, some small-scale agriculture could be still be found in the Oak Point Area, contributing to overall aesthetic appeal.

Referring back to the principle, Suburban Vision, constructing patio homes is often a unique way to **create small concentrations of open space within subdivisions**.

The City of Plano could seek private contributions and partnerships for additional public open space that exceeds the size of a neighborhood park. However, private

contributions should be received solely with the expectation that a project benefitting the community is the end result and not unspecified favors. Some landowners could also take a similar approach to find unique uses that could be beneficial to the surrounding community. The advantage of this approach is that it has a very minimized impact on taxpayers.



Identify Public Costs

There is an associated public cost that coincides with new private development. In the interest of proactively serving the needs of residents, new costs should be estimated.

A city government has core responsibilities to the citizens it serves. New residential and commercial development will contribute to an increased need for those basic services. While it is impossible to foresee all eventual needs, a well thought out comprehensive development plan should estimate major costs in likely scenarios. Envision Oak Point did not do this, and the plan should be updated with an accurate analysis of future public costs.

Components

▪ Bond Issuance

Infrastructure needs are primarily funded through **bond proceeds** or otherwise known as debt. This includes projects such as roads and city facilities. It is not impossible that significant road construction could take place considering the only major East-West roads are Parker and Spring Creek. There is also a limited number of access points to US 75 in the Oak Point Area.

Major bond packages are presented to voters for approval every four years. The next one will occur in 2021. Residents should be presented with a rough estimation of how large any bonds may be in order to meet **new infrastructure needs** coinciding with major new development in the Oak Point Area.

▪ City Services

Public safety is one of, if not, the most important services a city government provides. New population projections should be used to determine how many more people must be served by the Police and Fire Departments. A determination must be made as to whether their respective current service capacities are sufficient to meet the needs of a significant number of new residents. If new personnel, equipment, and etc. will be needed, an additional cost will be placed upon the general fund. These funding needs will hopefully be met by the additional

property taxes collected by new residents, but it is wise to determine in advance what those additional funding needs may look like. The same can be said of other departments such as Environmental Waste Services.

- **Future Impact on the Property Tax Rate**

A preliminary estimation of the combined impact of bonds and additional services on the total property tax rate should be devised for the sake of transparency to taxpayers. The interest and principal of **General Obligation Bonds** is funded by the **Interest and Sinking Property Tax**. Services such as public safety are funded by the general fund which draws upon Sales Taxes, the Maintenance and Operations Property Tax, and other sources. Thus, there is a fiscal element within development that should be considered and addressed.

Legislative Agenda

The Plano Citizens' Coalition is primarily focused on municipal policy in Plano. However, all governmental entities in Texas ultimately derive their authority from the Texas Constitution and Statutes. We recognize that some issues cannot be properly addressed within the jurisdiction of the City Council and School Board.

With that in mind, the PCC Executive Committee approved an agenda authored by the Policy & Advocacy Committee outlining priorities for Plano's elected representatives in the 86th Texas Legislature.



86th PLANO CITIZENS' Legislative Agenda

Introduction

While Plano Citizens' Coalition is focused on policy matters at the local level of government, we recognize that some municipal policy issues are best addressed by the State Legislature. We have established our *Plano Citizens' Legislative Agenda* for the purpose of encouraging our representatives in the Texas House and Senate to address such issues. This document details criteria for legislation in accordance with the principles espoused in the *Plano Citizens' Coalition Platform*.

Plano Citizens' Coalition supports **LOCAL CONTROL**. This means local **TAXPAYER CONTROL, NOT GOVERNMENT CONTROL**.

Plano Citizens' Coalition supports fiscally responsible governance where municipalities and school districts prioritize their **CORE FUNCTIONS** in a way that limits property tax growth to no more than the Effective Tax Rate plus inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

Plano Citizens' Coalition support transparency and the use of common language so every voter can understand governmental initiatives and express their support for, or in opposition to, these initiatives.

Accordingly, Plano Citizens' Coalition urges our State Representatives and our State Senator to support legislation that seeks to accomplish the following:

1. Increase taxpayer control of city property taxes by lowering the Property Tax Rollback Rate from the current 8% to 4% or less, and require that an increase in city property taxes exceeding the Rollback Rate be subject to an automatic election by the qualified voters of the municipality.
2. Eliminate the School Property Tax Recapture Law, commonly known as “Robin Hood” so that Plano ISD property taxes stay in Plano. Taking money from Plano taxpayers to fund schools around the state is “taxation without representation.”
3. Require that, until the elimination of the School Property Tax Recapture Law, the amount of recaptured property taxes is based on what was actually collected rather than what could have been collected.
4. End the practice of governmental entities paying membership dues with tax dollars to any organization that subsequently use those funds either directly or indirectly to lobby in opposition to taxpayers’ interests.
5. Strengthen and enforce regulations that prohibit the use of public funds and all other public resources to directly or indirectly advocate for political candidates, organizations, or initiatives.
6. Support legislation that clarifies the right and facilitates the process for citizens of a municipality or school district to conduct an initiative or referendum by petition, in opposition to adopted policies, including comprehensive development plans.
7. Support legislation that limits the power to award, increases transparency, and requires a cost/benefit analysis of any economic development incentives and tax abatements offered by municipalities.
8. Support legislation that limits the power of municipalities to directly or indirectly through zoning, permitting and other coercive measures effectively devalue the current use of existing private property.

Acknowledgment

Thank you to all the volunteers whose hard work made the 2019 Platform and Guide to Policy possible.