



December 17, 2015

Senator Dan Johnson, Co-Chair
Representative Rick Youngblood, Co-Chair
Urban Renewal Interim Committee
P. O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720

Via E-Mail

Dear Senator Johnson, Representative Youngblood and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Citizens of Rexburg and Madison County who have seen economic growth come to Rexburg through Urban Renewal Projects, we thank you for your work to review Idaho's urban renewal law. Urban renewal has been the only economic engine to accomplish growth for Rexburg. ***"Rexburg, Idaho has grown over 60 percent since 2000, increasing its population from 17,000 to just over 30,000 in 12 years"*** - Randy Shumway, Zions Bank Economic Advisor Category: *business* Published: 05 September 2015.

We understand you are again considering significant legislative amendments to Urban Renewal.

Attached is Resolution 2015-16, which was adopted at our City Council Meeting last night. Urban renewal is an issue of great importance to us, and we respectfully request that the Interim Committee fully support Idaho's urban renewal law. We also ask that you carefully consider ways to make this tool broader, easier to use and more effective rather than more restrictive.

As a tool, urban renewal benefits both large and small communities as an affordable option to remove blight, to promote, provide and receive public infrastructure, and to promote economic growth. This tool allows growth to pay for needed public infrastructure and other improvements through taxes collected over time, which benefits all citizens.

However, we need a more flexible and effective urban renewal tool. The entire state of Idaho has the ability and opportunity to become more competitive, increase its tax base, and be more successful. Our urban renewal law is a primary key to this success.

Please feel free to contact us regarding our strong support of urban renewal or to discuss what ideas and suggestions the City of Rexburg has concerning this important issue.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Woodland
Mayor

Council Members:

Council President Sally Smith

Donna Benfield

Jordan Busby

Christopher Mann

Jerry Merrill

Brad Wolfe



RESOLUTION NO: 2015 – 16

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF REXBURG, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF IDAHO, EXPRESSING THE REXBURG CITY COUNCIL'S SUPPORT FOR URBAN RENEWAL AND REQUESTING THAT ACTION BE TAKEN BY THE IDAHO LEGISLATORS AND INTERIM COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO PROVIDE THEIR FULL SUPPORT BY CONSIDERING AND ADOPTING MORE FLEXIBLE AND EFFECTIVE TOOLS AND SOLUTIONS THAT ALLOW FOR SUCCESSFUL ADMINISTRATION AND EXECUTION OF URBAN RENEWAL IN IDAHO.

WHEREAS, the City of Rexburg and its Council Members extend their gratitude for the service heretofore provided by the Idaho Legislators and Interim Committee Members for their support of urban renewal and economic development; and

WHEREAS, the City of Rexburg and its Council Members respectfully request increased support by the Idaho Legislators and Interim Committee Members as urban renewal is a topic discussed annually and is presently being considered for significant amendment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Rexburg and its Council Members wish to provide the following recommendations which provide more flexibility and effectiveness to be considered in preparation of future legislative sessions and code adoption:

1. Urban renewal law should be more flexible with more options and more opportunity, not less;
2. Urban renewal law should be reformed to help Idaho be more competitive by expanding its purpose and ability as a fully functional and streamlined economic development tool;
3. Urban Renewal law should allow greater local decision making and be more user-friendly with less bureaucracy and less impediments; and
4. Urban Renewal Boards should not be elected for various and significant reasons. Requiring the election of urban renewal board members could change an independent public body, corporate and politic, into a political subdivision of the State of Idaho. This would make said governing body subject to Article VIII Section 3 of the Idaho Constitution which would require a 2/3 vote of the electors, of the political subdivision, to vote on any debt that exceeds the income and



revenue of the agency for that year. Such a change may not be legal under the current laws of the State of Idaho. Therefore, Urban Renewal Agencies should be appointed by the local legislative body; and

5. Due to the currently required public process, Urban Renewal Plans and Agencies should be officially acknowledged by the Legislature as plans and bodies that do have representation and oversight by the locally elected officials; and
6. There should be a minimum number of years set by law restricting any considerations to make changes to the urban renewal laws at the legislative level. The annual visitation of the urban renewal laws hinders our ability to convince potential investors that Idaho is not a risk. Additionally, a bill should be specifically written to protect existing urban renewal plans, TIF increment and debt payment assurance from legislative change.

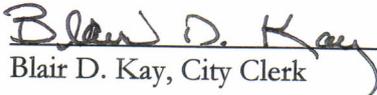
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF REXBURG, that the City of Rexburg and its Council Members hereby support and encourage the Idaho Legislators and Interim Committee Members to fully support urban renewal in Idaho and carefully consider ways to make this tool broader, easier to use, and more effective in future legislative sessions and potential code adoption.

RESOLVED this 16th day of December, 2015.

CITY OF REXBURG


Richard S. Woodland, Mayor

ATTEST:


Blair D. Kay, City Clerk