



City of Arts & Innovation

Economic Development, Placemaking and Branding/Marketing Committee

TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMAKING AND BRANDING/MARKETING COMMITTEE MEMBERS **DATE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2020**

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AND OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL COVID-19 RECOVERY IDEAS PROPOSED BY “THE LOCAL LEADER’S TOOLKIT: A STRONG TOWNS RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC”

ISSUE:

Review of the potential economic and public health recovery ideas included in the Strong Towns’ publication “The Local Leader’s Toolkit: A Strong Towns Response to the Pandemic”.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Economic Development, Placemaking and Branding/Marketing Committee receive and file a presentation on potential COVID-19 pandemic recovery ideas provided by Strong Towns’ publication “The Local Leader’s Toolkit: A Strong Towns Response to the Pandemic”.

BACKGROUND:

Councilmember Erin Edwards requested the potential COVID-19 pandemic recovery ideas provided by Strong Towns’ publication “The Local Leader’s Toolkit: A Strong Towns Response to the Pandemic” be brought before the Committee . Strong Towns is a non-profit organization that supports thousands of people across the United States and Canada in approaching community development and community building around values such as resiliency, incremental and iterative development, and continuous adaptation in a neighborhood-based framework.

DISCUSSION:

Recognizing local governments as being on the “front lines of our nation’s response to the combined public health and economic crisis created by COVID-19”, the Local Leader’s Toolkit document (Attachment 1) identifies three phases of actions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Phase 1: Immediate Response actions occurring in the first sixty days; Phase 2: Not Going Back to Normal actions occurring in the three to twelve months’ time frame of the

pandemic; and Phase 3: Building a Stronger Town activities one year and beyond the pandemic.

In the more immediate term, several recovery ideas are proposed for consideration, including waiving home occupation restrictions to allow for commercial activities; legalizing neighborhood essential services such as small grocery stores, hair salons, and other quintessential neighborhood-focused businesses; kick starting entrepreneurs with creative and inexpensive commercial spaces; legalizing alternative affordable housing alternatives such as accessory dwelling units; investing in neighborhood level walking and biking lanes; easing parking restrictions; growing more food locally; facilitating creative public-private endeavors; and measuring success according to shared values. Additional ideas include considerations to prioritize infrastructure maintenance over constructing new capacity.

Recommendations for longer term recovery efforts include creating healthy ecosystems within neighborhoods and among local businesses; expanding housing opportunities, leveraging public spaces, and limiting municipal debts and liabilities among other considerations to create a strong momentum for longer term recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this staff report.

Prepared by: David Welch, Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer / City Treasurer
Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager/Chief Sustainability Officer
Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. The Local Leader's Toolkit: A Strong Towns Response to the Pandemic
2. Presentation