



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bloomington Economic Development Corporation provides statement on City of Bloomington proposed Local Income Tax increase

Bloomington, IN - The Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) has publicly shared the following feedback on the City of Bloomington's proposed local income tax (LIT) increase. Following meetings with BEDC members, a publicly-shared member survey, and earlier work on an economic development memo, the BEDC heard the following trends:

Priority investments:

Trends among respondents included some support for the following aspects of the LIT proposal:

1. Support for public safety, especially police salaries for sworn and non-sworn officers. This is a particular concern in the downtown area, where a couple of our realtors have noted they are seeing interest shifting away from owning property in this area due to safety concerns. A few noted that safety is a key responsibility of the government.
2. Under the climate change preparedness category, there was a high degree of interest in establishing an East-West Express Transit Line, particularly if it can connect to the west side employment zone near Ivy Tech and other companies. This is of interest to better connect workers with opportunity.
3. Support for Workforce and Economic Development.
4. Under Essential City Services, there was some support for Maintenance/Replacement of Assets.

Other responses:

- Varied and were spread across proposed categories, including some respondents that asserted some or none of the proposed categories should receive support.
- A few individuals commented that while many of the items on the list are nice to have, there is a need to focus on core responsibilities of the government, especially given the current economic climate.

Three concerns stood out when we asked what additional specifics respondents hoped to see in the City's new revenue proposal:

1. A central plan with a business case behind each request, including a cost / benefit explanation for these items;
2. Focus on effectiveness, with key performance metrics and evaluation in place to ensure these plans remain effective over time, to ensure the City can successfully execute on its commitments and focus on what it can do well;
3. Cost of Living and inflation concerns led some to suggest targeted increases on key priorities or phasing in the taxes.

This proposed funding mechanism is an economic development LIT, so that focus is critical. For a full list of economic development priorities as seen by the BEDC, please refer to the [BEDC's March 14 memo](#) posted at bloomingtonedc.com under news and events.

Process and consultations on LIT:

The above feedback was compiled through the following process:

- **Economic development priorities memo:** On March 14, the BEDC publicly released the [BEDC Economic Development Memo](#), outlining how local governments can advance prosperity for citizens across Monroe County by focusing on key economic development priorities. The memo was developed through feedback from BEDC members and the community [via survey](#) and conversations from March 2-13, 2022.
- **Forum and survey:** After the City released its new revenue proposal, the BEDC hosted an April 18th meeting for members at which Mayor Hamilton and four Bloomington Common Councilmembers presented an overview of the proposal and process, answered questions on the proposal, and heard how employers and individuals are affected. The BEDC also sent a survey to all members to gather additional feedback.
- **Feedback** resulting from the above process was shared publicly at the April 20th Bloomington Common Council meeting, as outlined above.

Addressing economic development challenges

Economic development fosters conditions for prosperity for a community. In 2022, the BEDC is advancing the Economic Vitality Project (EVP) to convene partners across sectors to prioritize and address shared economic development challenges, such as those outlined in the recent [BEDC memo](#). This effort seeks to connect with all Monroe County residents. Stay tuned at bloomingtonedc.com or follow us on [LinkedIn](#) for updates and ways to participate.

About the BEDC: The Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to the retention, development, and attraction of quality jobs in Monroe County, Indiana. As a leading economic development organization in these communities, we are focused on increasing opportunities through advancement of economic development strategy, fostering entrepreneurial activity, and active business retention, expansion, and attraction efforts. For more about the BEDC, visit <https://www.bloomingtonedc.com/>.