

March 20, 2017

Rick Fernandez, City Manager  
City of Tallahassee  
300 South Adams Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dear Mr. Fernandez,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce, I am pleased to inform you of a recent position our board has adopted related to Urban Infill and the use of local government surplus property:

“The Board of Directors of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce supports the local government’s conversion of surplus lands, within the urban service area, to the private sector to promote redevelopment, revitalization, urban infill and enhanced infrastructure opportunities. The objective: promoting the growth of local businesses and positively impacting our economy. This will also expand the property tax base as government land is exempt from tax. The Chamber requests that, in the future, the City of Tallahassee and Leon County notify and engage the Chamber for each proposal to dispose of surplus lands. The redevelopment of surplus lands in the urban service area should be accomplished with the goal of increasing residential densities and commercial intensities (and in appropriate cases a mix of those uses) to promote urban infill. At this time, there is a tremendous market demand (and a significant lack of supply) for residential density within the urban service area, particularly within the City’s urban core. We recommend that the local governments prioritize increasing residential density through the conversion and redevelopment of surplus lands to meet this demand (and lack of supply).”

When the Chamber of Commerce takes a position on an issue that is critical to the success of our community, we do not do so lightly. The Chamber Board of Directors bases position statements like the one above on our six guiding principles. We believe that the Chamber’s six guiding principles can serve as blueprint for a stronger business environment. We have enclosed a copy of those principles for your further review. Specifically, this position statement reflects the Chamber’s first two principles by prioritizing the local economy and focusing on business retention and expansion.

The Chamber, its leadership team, and staff are prepared to offer additional public testimony in support of this use of surplus property and urban infill. Should you or your staff feel that there is a need for the interests of the business community to be heard at a meeting, hearing, or other time please do let us know.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Reggie Bouthillier  
*Chair*

Heidi Otway  
*Chair-Elect*

Kathy Bell  
*Immediate Past Chair*

Canita Gunter Peterson  
*Treasurer*

Sue Dick  
*President/CEO*

Terrie Ard

Elaine Bryant

Andrew Gay

Rick Moore

Mark O'Bryant

Nan O'Kelley

Michael Roberts

Thanks again for your continued leadership and commitment to building a stronger business environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Reggie Bouthillier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Reggie Bouthillier  
Chair, Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce  
Board of Directors

cc: The Honorable Andrew Gillum, Mayor  
The Honorable Scott Maddox, City Commissioner  
The Honorable Nancy Miller, City Commissioner  
The Honorable Curtis Richardson, City Commissioner  
The Honorable Gil Ziffer, City Commissioner  
Reese Goad, Assistant City Manager  
Wayne Tedder, Assistant City Manager - Development Services and Economic  
Vitality  
Vince Long, County Administrator  
Ben Pingree, Director – Department of Place  
Chamber Board of Directors

Enclosure: Chamber's Six Guiding Principles

# THE CHAMBER'S SIX GUIDING PRINCIPLES



- 1.** We believe in policies that will positively impact business retention and expansion.
- 2.** We believe that government leadership must prioritize growing our local business and economy, as reflected in its culture, policies and budget.
- 3.** We believe in providing a strong infrastructure to support growing local business and our economy.
- 4.** We believe regulations should be streamlined and reduced to facilitate business growth.
- 5.** We believe tax and fee burdens should be minimized on business, and we will only support an increase in taxes or fees on local business that demonstrates measurable benefit to local business and the economy.
- 6.** We believe a strong talent development system should be created that supports our current workforce needs and establishes a talent pipeline to meet future workforce demands.