Local Option Sales Tax: Creating cities where people choose to live and remain

MERIDIAN – What is local option sales tax? How does it work? Can it be successful in spurring economic growth?

The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) is proud to host the Honorable Mick Cornett, Mayor of Oklahoma City, to speak on Oklahoma City’s experiences using local option sales tax.

Oklahoma City has used local option sales tax, a tool that provides citizens the choice to tax themselves to fund projects to improve their communities since 1993. Projects have ranged from a new library, to convention and sports venues, to public transportation improvements, sidewalks, and trails. However, outside of a few small resort communities, this tool is not available in Idaho. Join COMPASS to learn about this potential funding tool as Mayor Cornett discusses how his city’s local option sales tax program works and shares successes and challenges in its implementation.

Mayor Cornett will provide two presentations. Both are free and open to the public.

- Thursday, February 4, 2016
  - Holland and Hart Conference Room, Zion’s Bank Building, 17th Floor, Boise
  - 5:30-6:00 p.m., reception
  - 6:00-8:00 p.m., presentation and discussion

- Friday, February 5, 2016
  - COMPASS; 700 NE 2nd Street, Meridian (first floor Board room)
  - 9:00-11:00 a.m., presentation and discussion

Space is limited. For both presentations, please RSVP to ctorkelson@compassidaho.org or 208/475-2232.

Mayor Mick Cornett is the first four-term mayor in Oklahoma City history. Newsweek magazine called him one of the “five most innovative Mayors in the United States.” Politico placed him on the publication’s Politico 50 list of “thinkers, doers and visionaries transforming American politics in 2015.” During his time in office, Oklahoma City has invested nearly $2 billion in schools and quality-of-life infrastructure through its MAPS (“Metropolitan Area Projects”) program, funded by a 1-cent local option sales tax.

This presentation is being offered by COMPASS as part of its annual education series. For more information, visit www.compass idaho.org/comm/publicevents_2016_ed_series.htm. COMPASS would like to express its thanks to Holland and Hart for the use of its conference room for the Thursday evening event.
Ed. note: Permit or indulge a bit of local pride here. As the number-one city in which to live and work in the entire nation, does Meridian need a Local Option Sales Tax? The answer surely is, yes. There’s not only always room for improvement but to retain or maintain such a lofty status, officials and civic groups must always be on the lookout and proactively seeking ways to make our habitat even more liveable. So we welcome Mayor Cornett and encourage him and anyone with him to “toot his horn,” so to speak, and share information that Meridian and other Treasure Valley cities might utilize to enhance and improve our community even further.