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KEEPING MOMENTUM WHEN YOU'VE DELAYED YOUR BOND ELECTION

For many fast-growing communities in Texas, there's not much that will slow down residential construction – not even a global health pandemic. Knowing that new home construction (still considered essential) will result in new students, districts must stay vigilant in their planning and forecasting.

Many districts postponed their May bond elections, and there's no doubt that those district leaders made the right decision for the greater good and health of their communities. But how can they keep the momentum going into the summer and all the way through to the November election date?

Just because schools have temporarily shut their doors doesn't mean the work can shut down. In fact, let's look at ways you can take advantage of this time to maintain your buildings, plan for the future and keep the momentum for your postponed bond elections.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE *Now*

1

GET UPDATES FROM YOUR DEMOGRAPHER

- Touch base with your demographer and find out how COVID-19 has impacted your local community, economy and employment rates.
- Study the impact of COVID-19 on your growth and consider how you'll adapt if your student growth has slowed.

2

STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR FINANCIAL ADVISOR

- Learn how COVID-19 has impacted the property values in your district as well as the bond market.
- If relevant, consider how changes in property value and collection rates could affect your bonding capacity.

3

ENGAGE YOUR COMMUNITY

- If you have a citizens committee that helped develop the recommendation for your bond, consider reconvening that group to check the pulse of the community.
- Consider conducting a survey to gauge support for your projects before holding your election.

4

MAINTAIN OPEN LINES OF COMMUNICATION

- Be sensitive to your community's immediate needs and focus, and be prepared to resume communications about your bond-planning process when appropriate.
- Communicate about your bond election through virtual forums, social media, and traditional channels.
- Find and tell the stories that will resonate with your voters: number of students served, efficiency of facilities, job growth in your area as a result of your bond projects and expanded programs and opportunities for students.

MORE ►

THINGS TO *Consider*

1

IMPACT OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

- Now that your election will likely fall on the November 3 ballot, consider how this election will impact your local election.
- Consider higher voter turnout and how you'll communicate your messages to more people. (Turnout in a presidential election is typically 50-60% of registered voters.)
- Consider the number of items on the November ballot and the competing messages and political landscape.
- Consider if/how COVID-19 will affect voter behavior. Will voters feel safe going to the polls? Will more voters request a mail-in ballot?

2

PROJECTS INCLUDED IN YOUR BOND PROPOSAL

- With your current campus capacity and new student growth, can you afford to wait until May or do you need new schools now?
- Are there any projects that now feel more like wants instead of needs?
- Are there projects that voters may feel are now extravagant or unnecessary?
- How will a delay affect project costs due to escalation and changes in the construction market?

3

TAX IMPACT OF YOUR BOND PROPOSAL

- If your bond election required an increase to the tax rate, how will your community react to that now that their personal economic situation may have changed?
- Be sensitive to change in the economic outlook of your local community and how your projects will be perceived.
- Whether your tax rate will change or not, ballot language is now required to say, "This is a property tax increase."

4

MATERIAL, LABOR AND JURISDICTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- There may be material shortages and impacts to laborers.
- There may be delays with regards to permits and inspections.

For districts that were planning for a May 2020 bond election and are now contemplating a November (presidential) election or waiting until May 2021, there are several factors to analyze.

These are uncertain times, for sure. But for many of you, your continued growth and maintenance needs are as certain as the days of the week. Your classrooms will welcome new students this fall, next year and the year after.

Even during this time of quarantine and shelter-in-place when everyone's focus is on flattening the curve, you need a plan to stay ahead it.

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