

Auburn Community Conversation #2

Location: Park Street Elementary School

Date: September 24, 2013

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

Given the difficult decisions that our community must face, and the reality that property tax increases must be minimized, what are our priorities for Auburn's future?

PRIORITIES INTRODUCED BY RESIDENTS

Listed in order of priority as discussed by residents.

- Importance of shared information, improved understanding, and communications
schools->residents & residents->schools
residents ->state reps
residents->residents
- Education
- Community pride
- Strong neighborhoods
- Economic development

DISCUSSION NOTES

Information shared and discussed

Sources of revenues to local municipal and school budgets

Increasing pressure on local property taxes due to reductions from state and federal levels

State cost shifting to local levels

Responsibilities and costs of a service center city

Implications of state decisions and impact on increasing local taxes even if local services are cut

What can local residents do to communicate with state representatives?

Points of view included:

Taxes

- It is important to fund what we need in our community.
- It is important to spend tax money intelligently.
- What is a service center city?
- Why are taxes so high?
- What can residents do to advocate for the state to pay the funding % that are required by current law? To cities? To schools?

Communications

- How can we help each other and assume that people are working with good intentions?
- How can schools most effectively communicate with residents?
- Will open houses at the schools help?
- Could there be more events at schools?
- Improve city website?
- Improve school website?

Education

- Could Auburn Schools become the best in the state?
- How could the local attitude toward schools be improved?
- Education is a top priority.
- What equipment is needed in schools?
- It is important to maintain facilities.
- Students should always be the top priority.

Stronger sense of Community

- How can we increase the sense of community in Auburn?
- Create more positive attitudes and community spirit?
- How can people be encouraged to feel a stronger sense of ownership?

Strong neighborhoods

- Neighborhoods must offer a quality living environment.
- Safety is important: fire and police services important.
- Quality housing is important.

Economic development

- Expand business development in key areas.

Other

- Roads
- Help people stuck in poverty.
- Handicap access is needed in parks.