



May 1, 2020

Town of Jackson Mayor & Town Council  
Teton County Board of County Commissioners

**RE: Additional penny of sales tax – May 4 JIM discussion**

Dear Mayor Muldoon, Madame Chair Macker, Councilors & Commissioners,

First, we can't thank you enough for your service in this challenging time. I know the mental and emotional toll of leading an organization in this time, so I can only imagine the impact on your personal lives from your weighty decisions about public health and budgets. **Thank you.**

As you know, we have been very interested in discussing a potential 7<sup>th</sup> penny, and using those funds for conservation, housing that's affordable to local workers, and transportation solutions. Since we sent our last letter detailing the need and potential uses of funds for conservation, the world has radically changed. We want to share two reactions:

**We support calls from the business community to delay this conversation.** People are hurting and struggling, and now is a scary time to talk about taxes. While we don't want to give up on the November ballot right now, we're happy to postpone the discussion for a month, when hopefully everyone has a lot more information and certainty than we do now. Also, we know that much of our community is entirely focused on health and economics, so we support pausing big discussions like this (or zip lines on Snow King, helicopter tours, etc) until we return to what Public Health has called the "New Normal" green zone.

**If you do have this conversation on Monday, please consider a two-phase funding plan that includes both short-term and long-term needs.** Here is a "back of the napkin" idea to help the conversation along:

1. **Short-term recovery:** funds in the first two years go towards health care, emergency services, human services, and business recovery; with a small portion dedicated to laying the foundation for our long-term sustainability.
2. **Long-term sustainability / community preservation:** funds after the first two years go to the Comprehensive Plan priorities of conservation / ecosystem stewardship (please see our previous letter for details), affordable housing, and transportation. A portion could also go to human services or other continuing recovery needs.

We and our partners across sectors are at your service to help develop these ideas further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Skye Schell'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Skye' being more prominent than the last name 'Schell'.

Skye Schell  
Executive Director