

Name: Ann Hill

Page 1: Business Climate / Regulations Issues

Q1 Rate the regulatory climate for business in the City of Pensacola. Is it Good/Fair/Bad? Explain your answer.

As a retired journalist, I would look to the Pensacola business community to answer this question. I would encourage the Chamber to conduct a poll that would give an accurate assessment of how business owners feel about the city's regulations -- and share it with City Council. This would be very helpful in smoothing out any processes that create obstacles to starting, growing and maintaining businesses in our community.

Q2 Please provide any examples of how regulations have affected the life of city residents in a positive or negative way.

Parking downtown is the No. 1 complaint by residents. The current system is not working, and if it can't be adequately addressed, I believe the city should remove that responsibility from the Downtown Improvement Board.

Q3 Name the top 3 specific city ordinances/regulations you would like to see eliminated. Explain why they should be eliminated.

As a resident who has restored a historic Victorian home downtown, my experience with city ordinances and regulations has been very positive. Because I don't own or manage a business in Pensacola, I would look to the local chambers of commerce for suggestions on which ordinances and regulations should be eliminated or modified from their membership's perspective. I would also want to review the process the city uses to recruit new businesses, to expand current businesses and to assist those businesses that may be struggling.

Q4 What can the city do to facilitate a more livable downtown environment that also attracts and caters to the interests of visitors?

To have a more livable downtown environment, we need more options for walking, biking, skateboarding, dog parks and public transit. We can improve safety through road diets on busy streets like Cervantes and Bayfront Parkway that add more sidewalks, brighter streetlights and clearly marked crosswalks and bike lanes. Crime can be reduced by reinstating police bicycle and foot patrols. We need to open Bruce Beach up to the public for swimming, kayaking and other recreation. To allow full use of our waterfront, we also need a public marina to encourage residents and visitors to dock and dine.

Page 2: Operations / Infrastructure Issues

Q5 Do you see any overlap or duplication of services between the county and the city? If so, what services, and how could these services be consolidated?

For me, the most overlap of services is between the city's sanitation department and the county's recycling process. ECUA is now under city contract to process our recycling, but the city continues to run the pickup service. Why not negotiate with ECUA to take over the city's trash service and at the same time eliminate the millions of dollars the city owes ECUA? This would free up a debt that amounts to more than a million dollars annually that could be used to supplement the city budget. It would also eliminate curbside pickup charges for items that don't fit in our trashcans. City residents currently have to pay a minimum of \$15 for curb items and \$35 if the pickup is unscheduled. ECUA picks up these curb items for free. Another overlap necessarily occurs because our various streets are owned by the city, county, state and federal government. Although we cannot eliminate this, we can collaborate more effectively on street and sidewalk safety and hopefully prevent the removal of old-growth trees.

Q6 There have been a number of joint government meetings over the past few years. What is your opinion of these meetings? What types of cooperative meetings would you like to see moving forward?

Joint meetings of the city and county are vital and should be more frequent, at least quarterly. Further discussion could include mutual storm water and drainage issues, a city-county one-stop shop for businesses, and implementing proposals crafted by the Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization (TPO).

Q7 Do you believe the city allocates sufficient resources for infrastructure projects? How would you prioritize these projects and fund them?

The city could always use more funds. I would especially support the West Cervantes Street Corridor Management Plan and the East Cervantes Street Corridor Management Plan From North 9th Avenue to East Gonzalez Street. The corridor plans can be paid for in part through the Fla.-Ala. TPO annual budget from the Florida Department of Transportation and from city and CRA funds. We also should be looking at our RESTORE proposals to assure we are meeting required criteria.

Q8 What do you consider to be the number one infrastructure concern for the City of Pensacola going forward, and how do you propose to address that concern?

With the new Pensacola Bay bridge comes the need for a smooth transition along Pensacola's waterfront that allows good traffic flow and safe and easy public access. Can we successfully implement a road diet, or will traffic jams become commonplace? More public hearings and collaboration with the county and state are imperative because there are no easy answers.

Q9 What would you change about the relationship between the Mayor's Office and City Council (i.e. should the Mayor attend all city council meetings, etc.)?

The balance between the mayor's office and the city council needs to be made more equitable. We need a strong legislative council to balance a strong executive mayor. The mayor should attend all council meetings and hearings and participate in the discussions. The mayor should not be able to veto budget requests that involve the hiring of voter-mandated council staff. And it's vital that City Council members have free access to public records and an open door to the mayor's office.

Q10 What would your Five Year Plan for the City of Pensacola look like?

If elected, I will work diligently with the City Council, the mayor and the public to develop a unified five-year plan, basically a vision for Pensacola's future, that will keep us on track as we work together to improve the quality of life for all of our citizens.

Page 3: Economic Development Issues

Q11 What role should city government take in attracting new businesses to the area?

Attracting new business is a primary role of the mayor, with a supportive role by the council, chamber and the various regional and state economic councils.

Q12 Which industries should the City of Pensacola should concentrate its business development/growth efforts? Be specific.

The Pensacola area has some major tech players, including the Institute for Human and Machine Cognition and AppRiver, and we are training a skilled labor force to accommodate this industry's needs. We are fortunate to be the Cradle of Naval Aviation, home to the Blue Angels and soon to have a major Coast Guard presence. Northwest Florida is a hub of aerospace and aviation activity, including VT MAE. We have the port and rail services to attract clean and light niche manufacturing such as GE Wind Energy. We must find a way to retrofit our North Palafox corridor as part of our economic future.

Q13 What should the city do with excess properties that it owns? Which properties should take priority? Do you believe certain city parks could be considered excess property?

I would encourage using any excess lots the city owns as a kick-start to providing truly affordable housing (under \$150,000). That should be our priority. Our city parks are not for sale. Rather, neighborhoods should be consulted on what amenities they would like to add to them, perhaps even asking neighborhood associations or nonprofits to oversee these green spaces. Look at how well the North Hill groups takes care of Alabama Square – and how First City Art Center has transformed the property it has rented from the city.

Q14 Tourism is an integral part of Pensacola's economy. What are the top 3 ways that the city can add value for the Pensacola business community with respect to increasing tourism and nurturing a positive tourist experience while here in Pensacola?

Preserving the character of our city's unique historic structures and neighborhoods is paramount to encouraging visitors to spend more time in Pensacola. Connecting us to the beach through trolleys, ferries and public boat slips will encourage visitors to spend more time in Pensacola. The city is attracting many youth sports leagues, and expanding family-oriented dining and entertainment will add value to the experience of out-of-town guests.

Q15 What is your vision for Pensacola's waterfront properties (i.e. Port of Pensacola, Community Maritime Park, Bruce Beach, Bayview Park)?

I am excited to review the upcoming results of our port consultant's recent engagement with the public here. I attended two of the workshops and see that we have three basic development options, close the port, create a hybrid mix of business and public amenities, or continue on as a functioning port. I favor preserving the port as a deepwater port as much as possible. Regarding the Community Maritime Park, the city has built the breakwater necessary for a public marina, and has the design and permits required for the marina. Bruce Beach offers an accessible sandy beach that could enhance the public's waterfront recreational options. Bayview Park is much more than a neighborhood park and, even with a reduced budget, will add significant value to the community.

Q16 What is your vision for the various commerce parks or potential sites throughout our community?

The lack of interest in our city's Tech Park makes me question the value of adding other commerce parks to our agenda. Perhaps we should instead focus instead on areas of our city, such as Eastgate Plaza that was damaged by a tornado and North Palafox industrial area, that have pockets of blight that could benefit from our attention.
