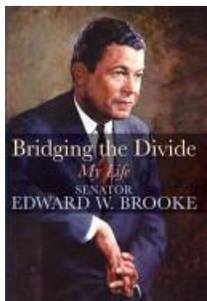


- **Civility**
- **A “limitation” on Property Tax Increases?**
- **How “livable” are Central Iowa communities?**
- **Are “AHUs” the answer?**
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- **The TACI In-Basket**
- **Next town Hall: Wednesday, April 27, 4:30PM**
Zoom link

Civility



“Intemperance and intolerance serve no one, and hatred guarantees failure.”

Edward Brooke

In 1966, Edward W. Brooke III, became the first African American elected to the United States Senate. A bit on Brooke, and his autobiography, “Bridging the Divide: My Life,” may be found on the [Goodreads website](#).

The article notes that Brookes reveals his *“desire to be measured not as a black man in a white society but as an individual in a multiracial society. Chided by some in the white community as being ‘too black to be white’ and in the black community as ‘too white to be black,’ Brooke sought only to represent the people of Massachusetts and the national interest.”*

Is there a “*limitation*” on property tax increases?



At last week’s [TACI Town Hall](#) reference was made to [SF 634](#), a bill signed by the Governor in 2019 that, according to the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) [Fiscal Note](#) *“imposes additional limits on the amount of property tax revenue cities and counties may include in their budget, beginning with FY 2021.”*

The Act applies only to cities and counties and **limits the amount of property tax collections to 2%, *unless it is approved by a two-thirds majority*** of the council or board of supervisors. In addition, should ANY increase in property tax collections be proposed, a **special public hearing** must be conducted, and notice must include the current total property taxes collected, the tax rate to generate the SAME property tax the next year, the amount proposed to be collected and tax rate, and justification for any increase. It is often noted that **taxpayer presence at these special hearings in “nil.”** It is also noted that **by the time the budget is considered, it is generally passed with a unanimous vote, hence increases in property tax collections are unlimited.**

Join Wednesday’s (4/27) TACI Town Hall at 4:30 PM to investigate the issue further:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85087075624?pwd=cEJDendDa1EvL05wcm1jaHo2eVhRZz09>
Meeting ID: 850 8707 5624 | Passcode: 379822 | Dial In: 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

How “livable” are Central Iowa Communities?



This week AARP published its *Livability Index* that scores every community in all 50 states and the Washington, D.C. AARP said it designed the scoring criteria not only to show what places provide a high quality of life for a diverse older population, but also for people of all ages.

Rodney Harrell, PhD, AARP Vice President of Family, Home and Community said in a [statement](#), “The majority of older adults want to stay in their current homes and communities as they age, which requires walkable neighborhoods, public transportation options, opportunities

to engage in community activities, and affordable and adaptable housing. The AARP Livability Index provides the clearest picture yet of how well a community meets needs across one’s lifespan, regardless of income, physical ability, or ethnicity.”

Sixty-one community characteristics in categories (housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement and opportunity) are used to develop the rankings. “For the first time, the 2022 AARP Livability Index includes accessory dwelling units (ADUs), highlighting states that have enacted laws to support and promote ADUs (also known as in-law suites or guest houses). As housing costs rise and home options remain limited, ADUs are a viable and affordable housing solution for people of all ages.”

Check out how “livable” your community is at the [AARP website](#).

Are “AHUs” the answer?



As noted above, affordable housing is getting a great deal of attention nationally, as well as in Central Iowa communities.

On April 5, the Polk County Board of Supervisors, working through the [Polk County Housing Trust Fund](#), approved a total of \$15 million to begin addressing the issue.

The issue was also on the [agenda](#) of Monday’s Des Moines City Council meeting when the Council received a [recommendation](#) from the City Plan and Zoning Commission on Accessory Housing Units (AHUs) and permitted zoning districts and regulations. AHU’s are also described as Auxiliary Dwelling Units (ADU).

The City of Des Moines is approaching the issue through “[accessory housing](#)” accessory housing units (AHUs), described as “guest houses, granny flats, in-law units, alley flats, coach houses, or casitas. AHUs can be built into an existing house or garage, built as an attachment building to your house, or built as a separate building behind your house.”

Neighborhood groups have expressed concern regarding **increased density** and allowable **types of construction**. The P&Z communication was “received and filed,” so the dialog will continue.

The Iowa Legislature has also proposed legislation (HF 2564) that would provide \$1.5 million (through Habitat for Humanity) for the rehabilitation of existing housing.

In the Legislative Hopper



A follow up on last week's reference to the Standings bill.

Appropriations are not generally addressed in the Code of Iowa. Those that are may be adjusted annually in the Standing bill. Last year three items (non-public school transportation, funding for Area Education Agencies, and state funding for the Instructional Support Program) were addressed. It also included a division that "corrects" bills that have been passed previously.

No action on the Standings bill will not occur until there is agreement on the General Fund budget for Fiscal Year 2023.

A few Appropriations issues proposed by the House, resting in the Senate

- "Place making" initiatives: The Community Attractions and Tourism program (CAT) funding doubled to \$10 million; state park projects tripled to \$6 million; funding for trails would be increased by \$1 million; water trails and low head dams would receive a \$500,000 increase; Sports Tourism Fund \$12 million.
- Justice Systems budget (state's prison system, up by \$7.1 million; Iowa State Patrol and other state law enforcement agencies up by \$3.1 million.)
- Renewable Fuels Infrastructure Fund (assistance to fuel stations to have the equipment to store and sell ethanol-blended gas and biodiesel,) up by \$4+ million.
- Education grants at Regents institutions: \$5,000/year grants for juniors and seniors getting degrees in high need jobs. Total: \$12 million

And agreement on Education issues appear to be a sticking point.

- Curriculum transparency bills
- "Student First Scholarship Program" that would authorize up to 10,000 scholarships per year.

The TACI In-Basket



Re: Civility:

Hang in there. An education-focused, a-political, conversation is refreshing.

Good luck! Our society has gone beyond the tipping point!

Re: All for the cost of a latte...:

I must be getting a Waukee City Services quadruple latte.

Burkhead is correct, there was no public input into the 2022/2023 Waukee City budget because it is never on the public agenda that they post on Friday afternoons for Monday's council meeting.

A citizen simply has to give up every Monday evening if he/she wants to follow city council actions. I don't know of anyone willing to do that on a continuing basis.

Re: PK-12 Education in Iowa:

... just found out that my neighbor's kids in Waukee Middle and High School for the most part do not earn letter grades. They get a "scope" grade, whatever the heck that is. As the father said, "an educational participation medal."

What is the source of the statistics that Sen Celsi posted to the chat? If, true, important data.

Educators are required to do more than just teach job skills. Teaching individuals to become good citizens is the most critical thing we do.

If you like these communications and what the Association is doing:

...[Join here](#)

... and a referral is the best compliment

***Please forward this notice to your friends, colleagues and neighbors who share your interest in
"Vibrant, just, and safe Central Iowa communities."***



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