

# Exhibit B

Statement to the Newport Planning Board 8/21/2019 with attachment by:  
Ronald Lee Fleming FAICP (Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners)

RLM: Requests the Planning Board to *recommend to the City Council that the City Council consider enacting a "pause" in enacting any zoning changes or approval of major developments or major projects* for the following reasons:

- The new Newport Director of City Planning starts work the day after Labor Day.
- The new Planning Director, the planning department, the planning board and ultimately the votes of the Newport City Council, representing all of the citizens of Newport, are at an immediate and critical junction point requiring careful planning and decisions establishing regulations governing immediate and future Newport development.
- Why now?
  1. There are AT LEAST 21 near term major development projects under consideration.
  2. The estimated cost for LESS THAN HALF of these projects already totals \$331 MILLION
  3. Two of the 21 are the largest projects ever considered
  4. There are at least five project categories with highly complex, different decision-making requirements in:
    - Transportation:
    - Education
    - Facilities
    - Property Development
    - Other City Planning Issues
    - Climate Change

This spread sheet is a rough list/description of the projects with some estimated costs to the developer, city or other government funding. (There are copies for the board.)

Another reason for a "pause" is the great many unknowns affecting these projects and others Newport priorities.

One of the most important of the unknowns is what will be the financial impact on the City. Newport's ability to borrow money through issuing municipal bonds is capped at a percentage of the city's total property tax base. Estimates put the available cap space at perhaps \$200 million. School construction requests run as high as \$170 million. Costs associated with the realignment of the Newport bridge ramps appear likely to be at least \$45 million. Unknown are what infrastructure costs not associated with new development and what created by new development will be and how will they and other needed Newport investments be funded.

But the most important reason to "pause" is to insure that the city's plans and governing regulations protect Newport's quality of life and guide us forward for a future that ensures Newport has preserved its rich heritage for the near term and for our future generations.

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Newport Pending Issues with Potential Costs (Partial List)			
Issue	Potential Cost (*)	Sub-Totals by Category (*)	Who Pays?
Transportation:			
RIDOT - Pell Bridge Ramp Realignment	\$ 45,000,000.00		
Multi-use bike/hike path	\$ 2,000,000.00		
People mover (city garage/parking)	substantial		
Traffic flow into City (transportation working group)	substantial	<i>substantially greater than</i>	
Newport Gateway Center	\$ 10,000,000.00	\$ 57,000,000.00	
Education:			
Newport High School or Regional High School	\$ 140,000,000.00	<i>substantially greater than</i>	
Early Learning Center	unknown	\$ 140,000,000.00	
Facilities:			
City Yard Relocation	\$ 25,000,000.00		
Waste Management Transfer Station Relocation	unknown		
Innovation Hub (2.5 acres)	unknown	<i>greater than</i>	
Dog Park Relocation (new and improved)	unknown	\$ 25,000,000.00	
Property Available for Development:			
Navy Land, Purchase	\$ 6,000,000.00		
Navy Land, Development	substantial		
Admiral Newport LLC (Carpionato Group Casino Land)	\$ 100,000,000.00		
Waites Wharf (150 room hotel)	unknown		
Disposition of the Sherman Publishing Newport Daily News	unknown	<i>greater than</i>	
Spring Park	\$ 3,000,000.00	\$ 109,000,000.00	
Other pending planning issues:			
Height restrictions in waterfront zone	n/a		
Planning Board's need for technical assistance to develop a RFP for zoning compliance with Comprehensive Plan.	unknown		
Dealing with Effects of Climate Change (& flood zones)	unknown		
City Planning Department not yet fully operational	n/a	<i>substantially greater than</i>	
<b>Total for 8 items (excluding 11 items with substantially high unknown costs)</b>		\$ 331,000,000.00	
<b>* Reported cost estimates or projections of costs to city/developers/State/Federal Gov. or a combination.</b>			

## Newport lacks clear vision regarding future development

Newport suffers from lack of a clear vision regarding future development combined with incomplete regulation without defined standards to guide future development, according to the findings of a distinguished group of urban designers and local planners at a recent meeting in Newport.

Newport and three other historically and/or scenically significant small communities facing threats from development-oriented local zoning boards were the focus of the first meeting of the nascent Place Making Institute meeting at Bellevue House, the Newport home of Ronald Lee Fleming, FAICP (Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners). The four communities studied were selected from about 100 such communities identified by the Institute working with Jeff Soule, FAICP, and senior staff member of the American Planning Association in Washington, D.C. The Place Making Institute is currently funded by the Fleming Foundation

Stating that, "Continuity should be the primary value to be respected." The meeting noted:

- The incompatibility of the proposed Salve Regina dormitories.
- The loss of vernacular architecture, particularly on the historically working waterfront.
- The proliferation of hotels.
- The proliferation of second homes.

The meeting urged Newport to define a program in which Newport's planning and preservation team must provide their professional findings and opinion as a defined part of the process of the city considering any large scale development proposals.

The meeting thought it prudent that the city manager:

- Instruct his planning staff to develop an urban design plan for the land made available by the changes to Pell Bridge ramp entries into Newport.
- Immediately hire an architectural team to illustrate how large blocks of land could be developed into an "iterative" design of small parcels that produce a livable and sustainable new neighborhood.
- Have the city contact potential developers to work through these development concepts rather than waiting to review fully developed proposal, often from a single developer.
- Have city personnel supplemented by a panel of perhaps ten local urban, planning, and other professionals to provide talent and familiarity with urban design principals.

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