

# THE HOGSETT VISION FOR INDIANAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOODS

Joe Hogsett believes we must reform city government to eliminate wasteful spending and facilitate coordinated services and investments to improve neighborhoods. City government should always seek to help, not hinder, its citizens. That isn't possible when there are serious barriers between residents and key city services. Whether it be making an arduous trip in to the city-county building or not knowing who to talk to about neighborhood needs, city government must become more accessible.

**NEIGHBORHOOD ADVOCATE INITIATIVE** In a Hogsett Administration, the Mayor's Neighborhood Liaison position will be transitioned to a new focus on making city hall more accessible and responsive. The renamed neighborhood advocate position will be entrusted to individuals who will act as advocates to city government, not advocates from city government.

- Rather than act as communications staff for the city, Neighborhood Advocates will act as community builders and community organizers who promote civic engagement. Neighborhood Advocates will “get their boots dirty.”
- In a Hogsett Administration, the number of Neighborhood Advocates will increase and each will be given smaller territories to cover.
- Neighborhood Advocates will not simply attend a quota of meetings per month, they will be essential to every meeting on neighborhood improvement in their area.
- Most critically, Neighborhood Advocates will implement the Comprehensive Neighborhood Development Program, which will:
  - Manage and facilitate the Neighborhood Leadership Development Series and programming.
  - Convene stakeholders and facilitate Quality of Life planning.
  - Ensure investments and programming fit within neighborhood Quality of Life Plans, specific funding requirements, and city master plans.
  - Be empowered to work across departmental lines to smooth out the bureaucracy and slice through red tape.
  - Have a role in each project planned in their locales – regardless of city department – and will ensure all city departments incorporate and work in concert with each other on projects to maximize and leverage funding and investments across disciplines.
  - Act as ombudsman to manage relationships with neighborhood stakeholders and leaders to ensure full transparency and understanding.
  - Be specially trained to implement neighborhood QLPs – leveraging scarce city resources, as well as using neighborhood assets, non-profit resources, and corporate/institutional funds to keep QLPs moving forward even without direct city funding.

**NEIGHBORHOOD "CITY HALLS"** In a Hogsett Administration, access to city government will be available closer to home with full-service, holistic neighborhood centers that bring necessary neighborhood services to residents. Neighborhood Advocates, along with zoning inspectors, DPW township coordinators, DCE permits staff, and other inter-disciplinary staff positions will be physically located within the neighborhoods they are serving.

- To ensure that this initiative is done at no additional cost to taxpayers, these mini-city halls may be located within existing Centers for Working Families, under-utilized township office buildings, or other publicly owned or non-profit facilities.
- They will also serve as hubs for quasi-city services, such as homeowner repair programs that are funded by CDBG grant funds. The City of Minneapolis has a network of Homeowner Repair Resource Centers—a model that could be rolled into this decentralization of city services.
- Other potential services include: Work One; training/education; child care & pre-k; social services; medical providers; police; community gardening/healthy eating options

**REDEFINE THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR OF NEIGHBORHOODS** The city must realign its resources on coordinated and cooperative projects that serve as catalysts for organic, outside investment in neighborhoods; build quality of life and create amenities; provide new and greater economic development; lead to high-quality educational opportunities for every child; and improve public safety. The Deputy Mayor of Neighborhoods will be in charge of coordinating the deployment of neighborhood services and investment across city departments in this manner.

**"REDEVELOP INDY" (BROWNFIELDS AND REDEVELOPMENT)** In a Hogsett Administration, the city will create its own community development corporation to act as an intermediary (and eligible grant recipient) for the redevelopment of brownfield properties. This model exists elsewhere, as the Evansville Brownfields Corporation is a nonprofit housed within the walls of city government. In addition, the city must use Insight Development Corporation beyond its current, sole function as the housing development manager for the Indianapolis Housing Agency. Insight will function as the affordable housing development arm of the Department of Metropolitan Development.

**REINVEST IN LONG-RANGE PLANNING** The Department of Metropolitan Development's Comprehensive (Long-Range) Planning staff has been defunded and essentially hollowed-out or outsourced. If elected, the Hogsett Administration will broaden DCE and DMD's focus to align code administration and enforcement with long-range planning initiatives to ensure consistency with the long-range goals of neighborhoods (i.e. QLPs) and the city (master planning). This will correct the exclusion of long-range planning from code administration activities and will allow excess fees generated by the DCE to support staff within current and comprehensive planning.

**DISMANTLE DEPARTMENTAL "SILOS"** City government must be reoriented to promote communication and coordination between city planners and neighborhoods. Neighborhood investment and services will no longer be "siloes" – with departments duplicating efforts and missing opportunities for collaboration and efficiency. Rather, services and projects will be interdependent and cooperative to promote problem-solving and leveraged cross-investment.

**DATA-BASED DECISION-MAKING** In a Hogsett Administration, the city will move all city and county departments to a truly shared (and open) data system. City officials face a challenge when they have to navigate separate systems for 911, the Mayor's Action Center, County Treasurer, and myriad other sources to find meaningful data. And for residents, it's a nearly impossible task. We can and must do better, and recent developments in technology will allow it.