



# That was a Mouthful: How to Talk About Public Investments

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# **Building Support for Public Investments**

**2020 is Just  
Around the Corner**

**There is Something  
Everyone Can Do**



# **How We Talk About It Matters**



# **Cultural Common Sense: Government, Budgets & Taxes**

# CHALLENGES ON INCREASING REVENUE



## FRAME CONSEQUENCES

- There's no money
- Cut state budgets
- Avoid deficits
- State employees have to cut back too
- Revenue increase not an option

**We have to live within our means**



Subjects v Citizens?



# CULTURAL SHIFT

## SUBJECT

Govt = them, elites

Taxes are given to “them”

We can't afford

Our role = vote



## CITIZEN

Govt = all of us

Revenue pays for common good

We can accomplish

Our role = citizen control



# RECOMMENDATION ONE

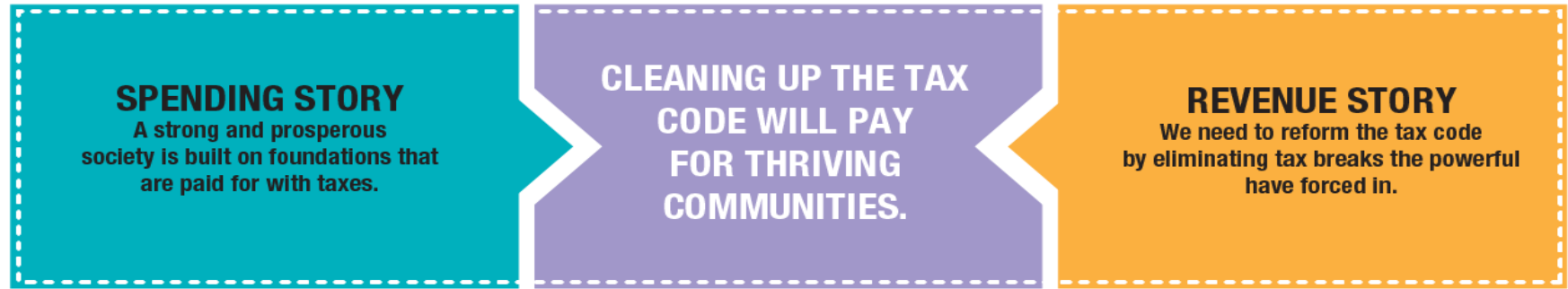
## REMIND WHAT GOVERNMENT IS AND DOES



**Public Investments Build Thriving Communities**

Communications typically focus on Revenue OR Spending. Need to link:

- We face a choice
- We'd have more for communities if...
- Tax cuts mean cuts to...



**Link revenue to spending**

# RECOMMENDATION

## PROVE ACTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE



- Tell stories of effective collective action
- Success doesn't have to be "big"
- Average people are leaders

**GOCO Benefits All CO Communities**

# Let's Practice

Now it's your turn

## Make visible accomplishments, shared goals

“We all know what it takes to create thriving communities – great schools, roads, health care...”

““We’ve made progress ... and could accomplish even more if...”

## Critique without undermining

*“When we invest in the foundations of our communities like schools, parks, health care...we thrive. And when we don’t, we struggle.”*

“If we clean up the tax code, we’ll have revenue for our communities. We have to choose: invest in what we need or let powerful interests manipulate the tax code.”

## Pick your Policy

## Model civic participation

*“Voters protected open spaces so we can ....*

“To really make a difference, we each need to take a step or two beyond just voting.”

## Prove action gets results

*DIA helped make Denver a destination...*

*Our rec center has given our kids new opportunities*

**MESSAGE REMINDER**