

**Public Comment for TIF Policy Review Ad Hoc Committee  
12/20/2013**

I looked for some inclusion of community benefits or community benefits-related language in the 12-19 draft, but could not find more than the list. It says a great deal that the 2009 policy goals of have been changed to the number one goal of growing the property tax base. In the 2009 goals, "economic development" meant "job creation in high need areas", job creation through new business development, job creation through attraction, retention, expansion of existing businesses; mixed use or industrial projects linked to workforce housing (even high need today is affordable housing). With "growing the property tax base" as the first-listed goal, I expect this conveys a hierarchy of priorities and I must note that this is not the stated purpose of TIF by statute or in terms of community expectations. And you have codified this hierarchy in section 3.4, harkening back to my earlier comment that what was proposed by Economic Development Committee would be identified as a right-wing agenda if it was to be unleashed on the state or national level. I expect the non-partisan nature of city politics largely mediates against people seeing that.

A first-stated goal of "growing the property tax base" neglects the purpose of TIF and suggests that any and all growth is good. This fits with a statement made by the Director of Planning, Economic and Community Development in one of the earlier meetings of this committee, but it does not fit with the expectations of city residents or uphold the public trust in elected officials whose job is to provide a brake for city residents against the unmitigated effects of growth. While respecting the work you have put into this process, it is highly problematic that this work has proceeded at such a fast pace and at times that hinder the public in attending, and watching.

"Growing the property tax base" has potential consequences that are detrimental to tax-paying homeowners, and this is all the more reason why community benefits must be involved in a way that is more than a window treatment. Affordable housing replacement is key and must be addressed. I hope you will give the issue of community benefits due diligence, by studying the issue and creating and if necessary creating a separate, related document.

I don't understand why we would not the benefit of exploring what other – and seemingly more progressive places have done.

From the 2006 COWS report by Matthew Mayrl – here is specific information on community benefits and a good way to address the issue Matt Kozlowski raised on 12/17 about the involvement of neighborhoods.

Specific Community Benefits strategies:

- Use TIF Funds for Job Training – page 18
- Fund loan programs to small businesses and home owners (e.g. Milwaukee, Lindsay Heights) – page 18
- Fund energy-saving home retrofits and renewable energy systems - page 19
- Use TIF Funds to Build Residents' Wealth through Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)

Require Public Input and Reporting on Community Impact

“Public hearings of a municipality’s planning council and legislative body prior to TID approval allow for some public input on proposed TIF projects; however, these meetings tend to occur after many of the projects’ details are decided.<sup>20</sup> Municipalities should ensure that opportunities exist for public input earlier in the planning process and that appropriate data is collected on the community impact of proposed development.

In order to gauge the public’s priorities, municipalities can require that developers hold additional public hearings before time, effort and money are invested in drafting a project plan. It is more difficult and expensive to incorporate community priorities when plans are rolled out in a near-complete fashion, than if these issues were tackled from the beginning. Requiring that meetings be held early in the process helps ensure that community needs will be met and prevents approval problems later in the process.

In addition, municipalities should require community impact reports for each proposed development to ensure that the public has the appropriate information with which to weigh in on TIF debates. Community impact reports consider the effect of the proposed development on local businesses and on potential gentrification, and assess whether the new jobs created would be accessible to those local residents most affected by the development.” (Mayrl 2006)

Sue Pastor, 2502 Green Ridge Drive