

# **AGENDA**

## **CITY COUNCIL**

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016  
12:00 NOON  
EMMA HARVAT HALL  
CITY HALL

1. Call to Order
2. Consider approval of minutes from the October 12, 2016 Economic Development Committee meeting
3. Consider request for funding for CoSign project with ICDD
4. Discuss TIF Focus group outcomes and next steps for TIF Policy review
5. Staff report
6. Committee time
7. Other business
8. Adjournment

**MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 12, 2016  
EMMA HARVAT HALL, CITY HALL, 12:00 P.M.**

*Preliminary*

**Members Present:** Rockne Cole, Susan Mims, Jim Throgmorton  
**Staff Present:** Wendy Ford, Geoff Fruin, Tracy Hightshoe  
**Others Present:** Jill Wilkins (Entrefest), Joe Tiefenthaler (Film Scene); Andrew Sherburne (Film Scene); Doug Ongie (Film Scene); Bill Thomasson (Film Scene), Jennifer Holan (Riverside Theater)

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:**

**Cole moved to recommend the request to the full City Council for financial assistance to Film Scene as discussed.**

**Throgmorton seconded the motion.**

**The motion carried 3-0**

**Cole moved to recommend the request to the full City Council for financial assistance to Riverside Theater as discussed.**

**Throgmorton seconded the motion.**

**The motion carried 3-0.**

**Cole moved to recommend the request to the full City Council for sponsorship of the 2017 Entrefest as discussed.**

**Throgmorton seconded the motion.**

**The motion carried 3-0.**

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mims at 12:00 P.M.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes of the July 12, 2016, meeting were reviewed.

**Throgmorton moved to approve the minutes as presented.**

**Cole seconded the motion.**

**The motion carried 3-0.**

**CONSIDER REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM FILM SCENE:**

Ford noted that the meeting is being recorded two ways – digital audio and videotape. She welcomed the representatives from Film Scene and summarized their request for financial assistance. Ford noted that the City has provided financial assistance in the past for fiscal years 2015 through 2017, with a declining amount from \$35,000 to \$25,000 to \$15,000. The hope was Film Scene would become profitable and be able to sustain their business at break-even or better. Ford stated that Film Scene has grown faster than expected and that they have accomplished all of the goals they had set for themselves, including recently adding a new, smaller theater within their current building. The current request is for \$25,000 for fiscal year 2018, with a request to intend to budget the same amount in for FY 2019 and 2020. Ford gave

a brief history of Film Scene, and noted that supporting it aligns with the Council's strategic goal of maintaining the City's urban core and strengthening the neighborhood downtown. It also helps in promoting a strong and resilient economy for the city. She then introduced the representatives from Film Scene.

Joe Tiefenthaler, Executive Director of Film Scene, addressed the Members. He thanked them for the financial support thus far and gave them a brief history of Film Scene and a description of how they have grown these past years. He shared how Film Scene has partnered with other area businesses and non-profits over the years to host events and provide outreach in the community. Council Member Mims stated that she is extremely happy with the growth and success that Film Scene has had. She added that this has been good for the downtown area in terms of bringing people downtown and also boosting other businesses in the area. Mims stated that she is happy to provide continued financial support at this time. Throgmorton praised Film Scene for their role in boosting downtown traffic and he agreed with Mims' comments. He then asked some questions of the Film Scene representatives in light of their financial request. He asked why they settled on a request for \$25,000 per year for the next three years. Tiefenthaler responded to this question, noting that with the recent growth of their facility and the expansion of staff, it has condensed a three-year plan into a two year plan.

Throgmorton then asked why Film Scene should be treated any differently than PATV, which is being phased out. Fruin noted that this committee's purview is solely economic development and that PATV funding decisions have not been contemplated as economic development in the past. Mims then spoke to the additional expenses that Film Scene has incurred with the opening of their second screen, noting that this was not part of the early plan when they first approached the City. Bill Thomasson also stated that with the phased increase in minimum wage have escalated Film Scene's expenses faster than projections. Throgmorton noted the 2016 cash flow projections and asked for some clarification of the information, noting a spike in rent expenses in June of 2016. Tiefenthaler explained this is when second screen was added and the point rent for the additional space first occurred. Fruin noted that much of what Film Scene does has direct alignment with the Council's strategic plan goals – especially, to build and foster a healthy economy in the downtown area. He added that Film Scene is more than a movie theater – it is a community center in that they are all about building community. Cole noted that he is happy to support this request and he spoke briefly to its importance in the community.

**Cole moved to recommend the request to the full City Council for financial assistance to Film Scene as discussed.**

**Throgmorton seconded the motion.**

**The motion carried 3-0**

#### **CONSIDER REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM RIVERSIDE THEATER:**

Ford introduced the financial request from Riverside Theater. Jennifer Holan, Executive Director for Riverside was also introduced. Ford noted that Riverside Theater is requesting \$15,000 in funding for the upcoming budget cycle of FY18. The request is also for intent to budget assistance in fiscal years 19 and 20. Ford noted that the reason behind the 'intent to budget' for upcoming years is that it helps such entities to plan ahead. Ford added that Riverside has seen a change in their leadership over the past two years, phasing away from the founding directors, Ron Clark and Jody Hovland to Sean Lewis and Jennifer Holan. Continuing, Ford noted that Riverside has also been a past recipient of City funding, with declining amounts over a three-year period. Ford stated that this request would go primarily to the summer-oriented programming, as this is typically where the financial year can be made or broken financially. Looking at the Council's strategic planning goals, Ford noted that this request could

fall under fostering healthy neighborhoods, encouraging a vibrant and walkable urban core, and promoting a strong, resilient local economy.

Holan then thanked the EDC for their time. She stated that they have indeed seen some changes with the founding directors stepping back last year and also replacing their artistic director. She also spoke to some of the changes at Riverside Theater as far as giving their interior space a fresher look. Holan also spoke to the construction issues that they dealt with in the City Park area. She noted that communicating with the public about changes is a big issue for them. Holan then spoke to how the financial assistance from the City would help. Mims stated that she believes Riverside is a premiere arts and entertainment organization in the community, and that she supports this request. Throgmorton agreed with Mims' comments, noting that Riverside definitely faces unique challenges in their business. Cole stated that he is supportive of the request as well and he spoke briefly to his remembrances of Riverside.

**Cole moved to recommend the request to the full City Council for financial assistance to Riverside Theater as discussed.**

**Throgmorton seconded the motion.**

**The motion carried 3-0.**

#### **CONSIDER REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIP OF ENTRETFEST 2017:**

Ford introduced the sponsorship request for Entrefest 2017 and Jill Wilkins, Executive Director. She noted that Entrefest has requested financial assistance of a \$10,000 sponsorship for the May 2017 event to be held in downtown Iowa City. She added that there was no Entrefest in 2016, and explained that the timing of the transfer from Seed Here to NewBoCo for event production was the primary reason. Ford noted that attendance doubled between the 2014 event and the 2015 event, and that there was a huge interest throughout the state and beyond. As noted in the materials provided to Members, the \$10,000 sponsorship affords a variety of different opportunities for the City, including a lot of recognition, a sponsorship booth, linked logos, conference registrations, and other ways the City can be recognized as a supporter of the entrepreneurial community within Iowa City.

Wilkins then addressed Members, speaking to how important the entrepreneurial community is and how these types of events help to foster these relationships. She stated that it is very important for such events to take place, as they let others in the state and beyond Iowa to see what is going on here and to foster more entrepreneurial collaborations. Wilkins noted that the event goes beyond just the Sheraton – that they also utilize Film Scene and the Englert for example. This is part of their work in fostering community support. Mims stated that she has attended past events and that she noticed how many young people were in attendance. She added that the energy and excitement felt throughout the event is key to its existence. Cole spoke to the emergence of the entrepreneurial community here in Iowa City and that he supports this request fully. Throgmorton agreed with previous comments.

**Cole moved to recommend the request to the full City Council for sponsorship of the 2017 Entrefest as discussed.**

**Throgmorton seconded the motion.**

**The motion carried 3-0.**

#### **STAFF REPORT:**

Ford then discussed the spreadsheet she shared with Members, a reminder of the two Economic Development funding streams and the activity in each, to date.

Next Ford gave Members an update on a conference that she and Brenda Nations attended at the end of September – the Urban Sustainability Directors Network. It was a workshop in which the goal was to bring together the sustainability staff and economic development staff in about 25 communities from throughout the country to talk about sustainable economic development. She shared with Members what the workshop included, of particular interest, the development of a definition of what ‘sustainable economic development’ is. The definition the group came up with is ‘the investment in business, social, built, and natural environments that creates increasing prosperity for all, now and in the future.’ Ford noted that she and Nations were asked to share how they are using the STAR metrics in Iowa City to track progress. Throgmorton stated that he is happy to hear that Ford and Nations attended this conference and he spoke briefly to the issue of sustainable economic development.

With regards to the ongoing TIF Policy Review focus groups, Ford noted that she has the sixth and seventh groups set. The first one is Monday, 5:30 P.M. to 7:00 P.M., with representatives from the neighborhood associations attending. The second group – the environmental group – will be held Wednesday, November 2, from 5:30 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. She added that Members need to decide who will be present at each of these meetings. Cole stated that he could attend the November 2<sup>nd</sup> group, and Throgmorton stated that he could attend the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. The last group will be with arts organization directors being represented, and this is planned for either October 26<sup>th</sup> or October 31<sup>st</sup>. Mims stated that she would be able to attend an October 31<sup>st</sup> meeting.

Ford then asked Members if they would like to have the EDC meetings live cable cast, instead of recorded for later viewing. Mims stated that she doubts there is a demand for such meetings to be live. The other Members agreed that they don’t believe the EDC meetings need to be live cast.

Hightshoe updated Members on the ‘So you want to start a business’ workshop feedback. There are plans to hold workshops again and that people would like to see these around tax time next year. She also talked about the topics and minor changes to the programming for next round of workshops. Hightshoe also spoke briefly to the micro-loan program and some of the businesses they are working with. Lastly Hightshoe noted that they still have CDBG funds available and that they could do higher amount loans through this program.

**COMMITTEE TIME:**

Cole spoke briefly to the funding recommendations made to the EDC, noting that he believes it would be helpful to outline what the standards are that are used for such requests, in order to help others in the community make such requests. It was noted that staff makes the connection to the Strategic Planning Priorities and Goals of Council. Throgmorton added that he appreciates seeing the direct connection of such requests with the strategic plan goals the Council has.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Throgmorton moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:07 P.M.  
Cole seconded the motion.  
Motion carried 3-0.**

**Council Economic Development Committee  
 ATTENDANCE RECORD  
 2014 - 2015**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TERM EXP.</b>	<b>02/04/16</b>	<b>04/12/16</b>	<b>05/10/16</b>	<b>06/14/16</b>	<b>07/12/16</b>	<b>10/12/16</b>					
<b>Rockne Cole</b>	<b>01/02/18</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X					
<b>Susan Mims</b>	<b>01/02/18</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X					
<b>Jim Throgmorton</b>	<b>01/02/18</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X					

Key:  
 X = Present  
 O = Absent  
 O/E = Absent/Excused



# CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

**Date:** Dec. 6, 2016  
**To:** Economic Development Committee  
**From:** Wendy Ford, Economic Development Coordinator  
**Re:** Request for funding CoSign initiative with Iowa City Downtown District

## Introduction

The Iowa City Downtown District (ICDD) has been selected to be a part of a special project designed to bring together businesses, artists, architects, engineers, fabricators and the City in a collaboration that enhances community pride and recognition. With an end goal to ramp up sign aesthetics downtown, enhance the experience of shopping downtown and the visibility of downtown shops, CoSign, is an initiative created by the American Sign Museum. There is a cost to participate and ICDD is requesting that the City assist financially with a portion of the expenses for the program.

## Background

The American Sign Museum developed the program for the community in which they are based and soon realized it could be replicated. This year, they encouraged applications from other communities to participate, and ICDD was selected.

<b>Program Costs</b>	estimated
Participation in CoSign program. Includes minimum of 2 site visits to Iowa City by sign experts with American Sign Museum. Required CoSign workshop in Cincinnati for 2 staff: 2/19-2/21.	\$10,000 plus \$1,000 travel to workshop
ICDD Administrative costs to manage the project, part time with two staff (one ICDD, one professional artist)	\$35,000
Marketing, materials, events, etc.:	\$15,000
Each artist whose sign design is selected as a winner will receive \$800 - \$1,000; if 15 signs are designed and created, total would be:	\$12,000 - \$15,000
Each sign and installation anticipated to be in the range of \$3,000 - \$8,000; if 15 signs are designed and created, total would be:	\$45,000 - \$120,000
Estimated expense range of program total	\$118,000 - \$196,000

## Discussion

ICDD is requesting \$20,000 over two fiscal years for program expenses. They'd like assistance with the Program Participation cost of \$10,000 this year, and in FY18, \$10,000 to be allocated proportionately to help cover the costs of design, fabrication and installation of the signs created in the program. (Math-wise, if there were 15 signs in the program, designed, fabricated and installed at the low end of \$3,000, each, the City's \$10,000 would cover \$666 or 22% of each sign and the owner would pay the rest. If all 15 signs were in the \$6,000 range, the City's

\$10,000 would still cover \$666, but cover just 11% of expense. Obviously, the math will change with the varying costs of signs and number of participants, but this gives an idea of the impact of the City's assistance with each sign.).

ICDD has also secured a sponsorship from MidWestOne Bank for \$10,000. Each business must also pay for their sign, less the City assistance portion of up to \$1,000 for each sign.

The ICDD expects that 10-20 business will want to participate and that it may be necessary to jury in select winning designs if there are more than around 15. Criteria would be based on creativity and collaboration with the artist, clustering of several businesses to maximize impact, harmony with building architecture, and more.

A precedent for assisting with downtown signage was set several years ago when the City assisted one business with a grant for \$1,600 for a new sign. This program would likely contribute a smaller amount per sign, but have a greater impact due to the quality and quantity of signs created through the program.

### **Recommendation**

Participation in the CoSign program with ICDD is aligned with three City Council Strategic Plan priorities – a) Promoting a strong and resilient local economy (by the collaboration among businesses, artists and fabricators), b) Encouraging a vibrant and walkable core (by improving the sign aesthetics, visual interest and inviting nature of better signs to improve foot traffic), and c) Enhancing Community Engagement (by the collaboration of business, art, engineers, and fabricators of signage designed to improve community pride).

Staff has a two part recommendation –

- 1) To approve funding the \$10,000 participation expense from this year's Economic Development Opportunity line (448070), where a balance of \$57,524 remains, and
- 2) To fund an additional \$10,000 from the same line in the FY18 budget to be allocated proportionately for the design, fabrication and installation costs of the signs created in the program with a maximum of \$1,000 per sign.

Nate Kaeding with the ICDD will attend the EDC meeting to share information about the program and answer any questions you may have.





***CoSign brings together local business owners with artists and professional sign fabricators to create distinctive and impactful signage which adds to the overall vibrancy of Downtown.***

**TO:** City of Iowa City. Attn: Wendy Ford and Economic Development Committee

**FROM:** Iowa City Downtown District

**RE:** Request for Funding | CoSign Initiative

**DATE:** October 24, 2016

The Iowa City Downtown District has been selected as one of the inaugural communities to participate in the American Sign Museum's CoSign initiative. The program is designed to incentivize downtown businesses to improve their on-premise signage through unique collaboration with local artists and fabricators. The new CoSign signs will be designed in a pedestrian-oriented manner, projecting out from the buildings, and will include creative three-dimensional elements. This initiative, in conjunction with the proposed amendments to the City's sign code, will play a major role in ushering in a new era of unique signage for the community's core commercial district.

ICDD is requesting the following funding from the City of Iowa City in fiscal years '17 and '18:

- **FY '17:** CoSign enrollment fee and participation in the American Sign Museum workshop in Cincinnati. Enrollment fee includes a minimum of two on-site visits to Iowa City by on-premise sign experts from the American Sign Museum. **Total: \$10,000.**
- **FY '18: \$10,000** contribution to assist in design, fabrication and installation costs providing for a direct savings and incentive to participating Downtown businesses. This contribution will be distributed equally to all participating businesses and individual impact will be dependent upon number of participating businesses.

Thank you for your consideration. Please direct questions to: Nate Kaeding | Retail Development Director | Iowa City Downtown District.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 23, 2016  
Media contact: Cate Becker  
cate@bldgrefuge.com

***Cincinnati CoSign Project to Roll-out Nationally in Six Cities across the United States***

Cincinnati, OH -- CoSign, a creative place-making project developed by the American Sign Museum in collaboration with the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile/U.S. Bank Foundation, will be replicated in six communities across the United States in 2017.

CoSign brings together local business owners with artists and professional sign fabricators to create unique signage in designated business districts. The selected cities and the organizations facilitating the process in their communities include:

- Alachua, FL – Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Historic District
- Charlotte, NC - ArtPop Street Gallery, Plaza Midwood Business District
- Evanston, IL - Downtown Evanston, Commercial Business District
- West Des Moines, IA - Historic Valley Junction Foundation, Valley Junction Business District
- Iowa City, IA – Iowa City Downtown District, Metropolitan Improvement District
- Chicago, IL - Uptown United, Argyle Street Business District

Each community will begin preliminary planning immediately, leading up to a two-day workshop at the Cincinnati-based American Sign Museum, February 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>. The six to seven month CoSign process will begin in earnest next March and will culminate in the unveiling of 10-12 signs in each community during an existing public event in the fall.

Tod Swormstedt, Executive Director of the American Sign museum says, “CoSign designs, fabricates and installs a critical mass of new storefront signage for a given business district. It demonstrates the true value of cross pollination between the arts, small business and the sign industry.” He continues, “We are thrilled to work with each of the six communities and expand this project nationally.”

The project was originally a collaboration of the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile/U.S. Bank Foundation and the American Sign Museum, both of Cincinnati, and was piloted in Cincinnati’s Northside business district in 2012. CoSign was awarded an ArtPlace grant in 2013 which enabled the project to be encored in Northside in 2013 and then across the river to Covington, KY in 2014. The Covington project was additionally supported by an Our Town grant from the National Endowment of the Arts.

The ArtPlace grant involved the creation of a “toolkit,” so that CoSign could be replicated in other US communities. The critical ingredients for a successful implementation are three-fold:

- A critical mass of willing small businesses with a defined geographic area.
- A committed, organized group of residents willing to be supportive of their neighborhood business district.
- A community character that embraces creative placemaking.



CoSign recently named Cate Becker of BLDG Refuge as the Project Director for the national implementation of CoSign. Becker was the former Cultural Arts Director for the City of Covington and oversaw the third iteration of CoSign in Covington, KY. In her role, she connected artists and designers to the project, liaised with government officials and organized the 10th anniversary of Art Off Pike, the urban arts festival where the project signs were unveiled.

The American Sign Museum is a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit corporation founded in 1999 by Tod Swormstedt, former editor of **Signs of the Times** magazine. Its Mission is, "To celebrate the rich history of American signage through preservation and education." The museum is the premier resource for preserving historic signs and promoting the contributions the sign industry makes to commerce, culture and the American landscape.

The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation is an independent family foundation dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for residents in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. The Foundation concentrates its efforts and resources in areas about which Carol and Ralph were most passionate: Arts and Culture, Community Development, Education, and Human Services. All of The Foundation's work is intended to have the greatest impact possible, in collaboration with the region's stakeholders, to help lead the way to a strong and vibrant community.

For more information, contact Project Director Cate Becker at 513.255.2899 or [cate@bldgrefuge.com](mailto:cate@bldgrefuge.com).

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# CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** December 1, 2016  
**To:** Economic Development Committee  
**From:** Wendy Ford, Economic Development Coordinator  
**Re:** TIF Focus Group Report

## **Introduction**

In early 2016, City Council updated its Strategic Planning Priorities and initiatives to include reviewing and consider amending the City's Tax Increment Finance (TIF) policy. Leading the effort, the Economic Development Committee directed staff to get input from a number of focus groups. This report summarizes input gained from those meetings in the last half of 2016.

## **Focus Groups**

The EDC and staff worked together to form small focus groups of 5-7 people. It was important to get feedback from a wide variety of community members and the following 8 groups were formed:

- Developers who have applied for may have received TIF in the past
- Developers, architects and engineers who may or may not have participated in a TIF project
- Members of staff and Boards of local taxing jurisdictions (County and Schools)
- Community booster organizations: CVB, ICDD, Chamber of Commerce, ICAD
- Non-profits: Social service and worker oriented
- Non-profits: Arts and Cultural oriented
- Neighborhood Association representatives
- Experts in or people with strong interest in Sustainability

Each focus group meeting lasted about 90 minutes and was broken into 3 segments. During the first segment, staff presented a slide show explaining how TIF works, some recent TIF projects and an illustration of how Iowa City compares with other Johnson County towns' use of TIF. The next segment was a discussion of the slides and focus group members giving feedback about what they learned or feelings they already had about TIF. The last segment was intended to be a discussion about changes that could or should be made to TIF, those changes being relevant to each focus group's perspective.

## **Themes from pre-Focus Group survey**

Each focus group member was also invited to complete a survey before attending the focus group meeting and the following are some themes that emerged.

People felt they could use more information about TIF. There was some indication they felt they knew more than they actually did.

There was a typical bell curve of people's overall feelings about TIF, skewing slightly favorable.

In question 5, we asked participants to rank their preference of ways in which TIF has been or could be used in Iowa City. The two most favorable uses were 1) to invest in parks and

improvements to riverfront areas, streets, trails, etc. and 2) to incentivize higher density development.

When we separated the rankings of these uses by focus groups, the preference results were strikingly and perhaps predictably different.

### **Themes from Focus Group meetings**

After every introductory PowerPoint presentation, people seemed to have learned something valuable. In almost every group, it was suggested that we do more to educate the community about TIF and get this information out to the public, especially at a time when there is not a political decision to be made about its use. Education about the use of TIF is critical to the public's understanding of its use.

Several focus group members had a misunderstanding that TIF money is sitting in a fund somewhere. In the introductory PowerPoint, those who misunderstood initially, realized that in order for TIF money to be available to a developer, new property value must first be created, assessed, and 100% of the property taxes due paid by the owner. Only then, and as portion of those new taxes generated, is TIF money generated.

Developers were critical of the design approval process and lack of clarity for what is required by developers to merit TIF.

Sustainability folks and Developers had general consensus that LEED silver certification could be required of any TIF project.

Development and social equity should be framed together and not necessarily as independent of each other. There are many unmet needs in the community.

A couple of groups said we should use TIF more.

Place-making, important to making a welcoming community, includes the provision of Arts, Cultural and Social services, but those organizations do not have access to TIF.

### **Next Steps**

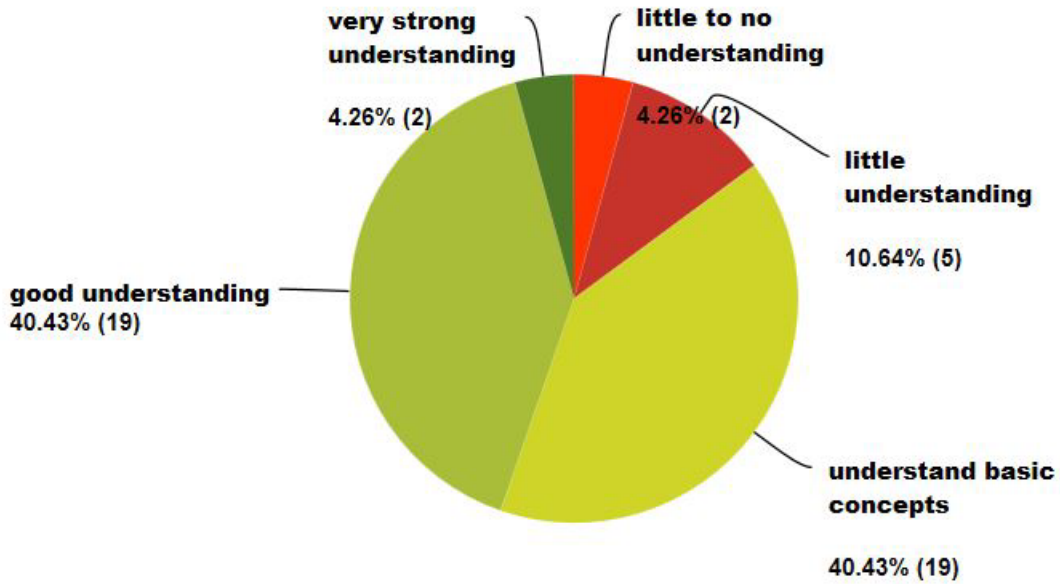
The EDC should now decide the next steps this policy review should take.

Staff recommends the EDC review and discuss information in this report at your Dec. 13 meeting. After the review, the EDC can decide to seek additional information, such as sample policies from other communities, or if it has enough information, direct staff to proceed with drafting certain policy revisions for review at the next EDC meeting.

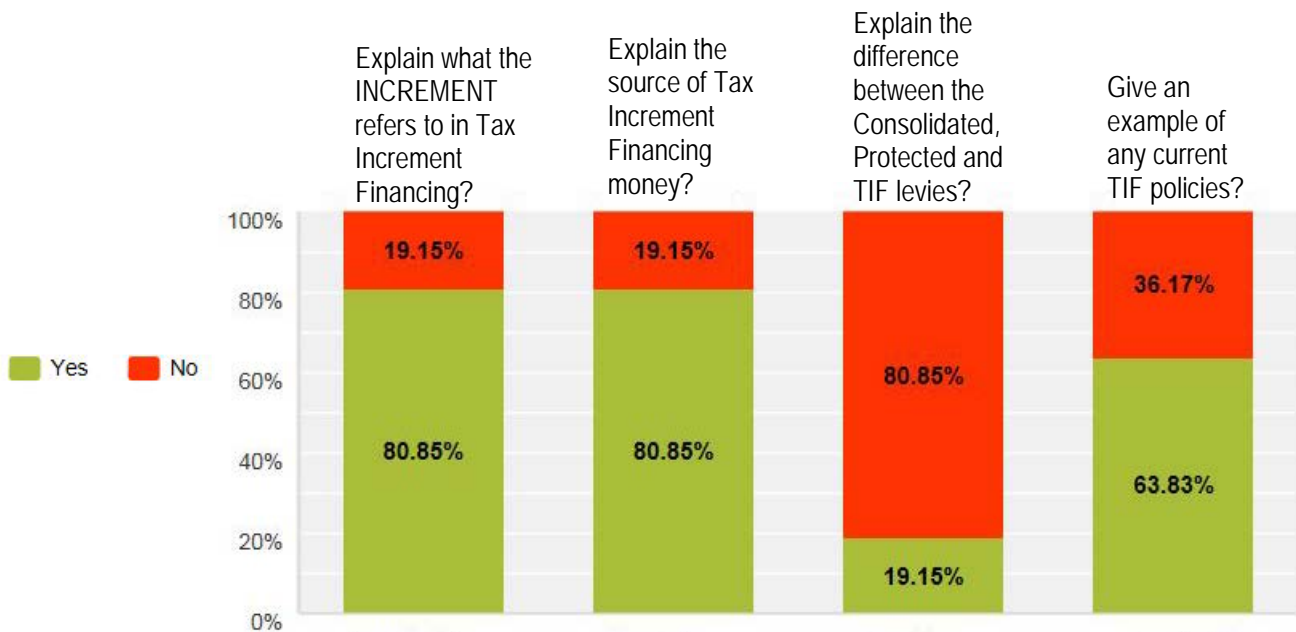
Staff would be happy to provide additional information or begin to draft policy revisions as directed by the Committee.

**Section 1 - Summary of TIF Focus Group Survey taken BEFORE the meetings**

1. Please rate your understanding of Tax Increment Financing (47 responses)



2. How deep in your understanding of TIF? (47 responses)  
For the questions below, and without looking it up, could you...



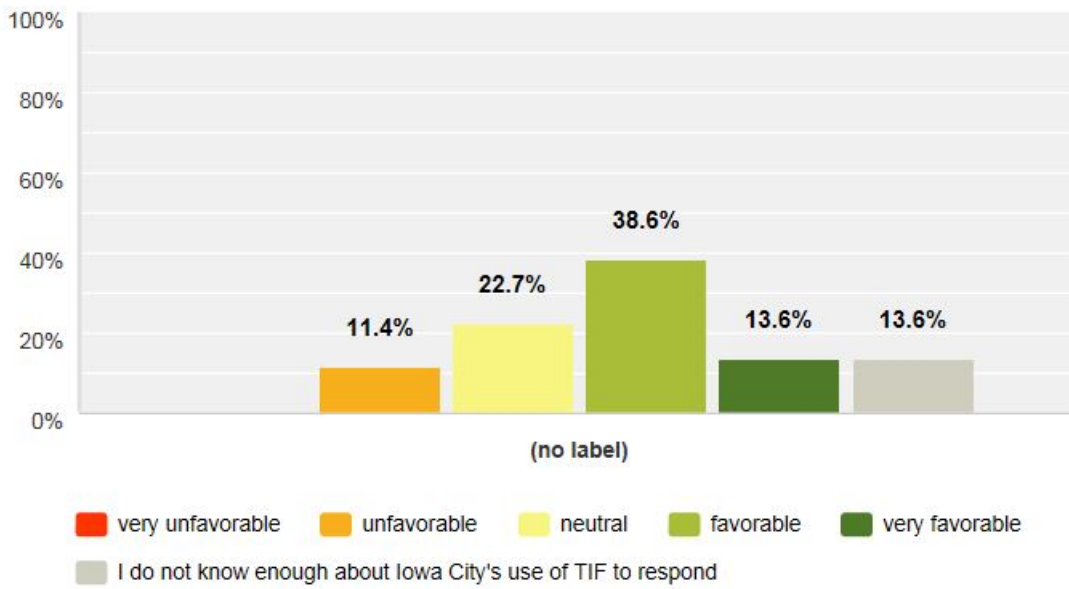
The purpose of this 2<sup>nd</sup> question was to compare some specific actual knowledge of TIF with how well people thought they understood it in general – in the 1<sup>st</sup> question.

3. If you feel you could benefit from more information about TIF, what would be helpful? (30 responses)

1. Yes.
2. Info about other/alternative types of financing and info about how other cities/regions use TIF (how, why, where, when).
3. An example of TIF in Iowa City
4. What are the criteria used when determining the "but for" status whether the project would work with or without TIF? May TIF projects be "paid off" early?
5. Could this ever benefit arts organizations? Non-profits?
6. a one sheet of the details
7. I think I generally understand the source of TIF money, but it would be good to have a more exact understanding -- especially with regard to how much money is available for TIF use, and what (if any) other types of expenses (or temporary allocations of funds) compete with TIF for investment consideration.
8. To understand and be able to explain to others the fact that TIF projects, when done well, are an investment in the city's tax base.
9. My ignorance is near total, so anything would be helpful.
10. How the duration of the increment is determined. What specific criteria does City of Iowa City use for determining TIF eligibility?
11. The commitments Iowa City plans to make toward responsible TIF use and the different choices may in the past -- repayable obligations versus grants.
12. Both a general and detailed overview/summary
13. The answer to #3 (explain diff btw levies), re the different levies and TIF, would be useful to better understand. Also, why have Iowa City developers needed TIF to build structures downtown in a hot housing market with high rents? TIF makes the most sense to me when a developer is providing a public good, like affordable housing.
14. Is residential TIF appropriate for Iowa City.
15. On Levy information
16. Explain various uses, followed by local examples.
17. No particular information is needed on my part at this time, but all information that is shared is quite helpful, as it has in the past.
18. A general primer on how TIF is used in the area. What are the issues...
19. Gain a better understanding of the balance of growth in response to TIF vs tax revenue lost due to TIF for given area.
20. The justification as to why the City, besides a sparkling bond rating, lags behind other municipalities in using TIF as a means to incentivize and facilitate improvements and developments
21. For the general community, it would be to describe what makes an area urban blight. For downtown, I believe it is because it's non-conforming from a lot of standards that would be onerous without City support. Right? Also - the more requirements by City, the more City tax dollars go towards the project
22. A short 101 would be helpful.
23. What type of projects can it be used on
24. yes
25. Just an overall verbal description
26. Overview of what it is all about, how qualifies, etc.
27. The direct and indirect pay back from projects other than the ones I am involved in.
28. More info on what is feasible for TIF awards by project type and gap.
29. Clear and consistent understanding of what conditions would be put on the proposed development in order to successfully capture TIF. Much of the information that we got on our last project was so late in the process that we were unable to react to it.
30. What are the rules and requirements? It seems that every TIF awarded is different.

4. In general, describe your feelings about Iowa City's use of TIF?

(44 answered, 3 skipped)





5. Rank uses of TIF in order of preference

(45 responses, 2 skipped)

Tax increment financing is a financing tool made possible by an increase in taxable valuation that can be used to achieve a number of public purposes. It is used to revitalize a blighted or underutilized area of a city or to encourage economic development in targeted, previously undeveloped areas. It can be used to incentivize individual development projects to include features or elements of public benefit, such as affordable housing, Class A office space to attract new employers, higher energy efficiency, etc. It can also be used to finance public infrastructure, such as new parks, street improvements, and similar projects that would be a catalyst for private development, redevelopment and reinvestment in the surrounding area. Below is a list of ways in which TIF has been used in the past.

Please rank these uses of TIF in your order of preference with 1 highest and 9 lowest.



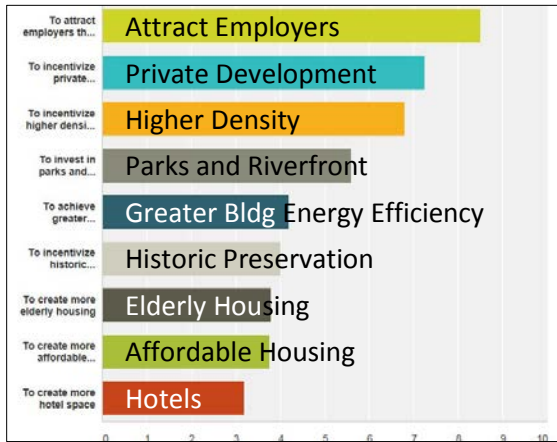
Notice above, that the darker tones of gray indicate higher preference and the length of the section of any color indicates the percent of folks who indicated that preference.

You can see that more people ranked **Creating Affordable Housing** as #1 in the rankings than any other goal.

You can also see that **Incentivizing higher density development** and **Investing in parks and improvements** almost tied for landing among most people’s top 5 goals.

These tables show the preferences of each focus group separately.

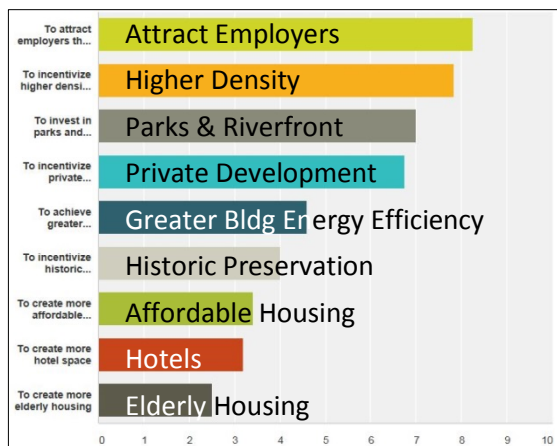
Past TIF applicants and/or recipients



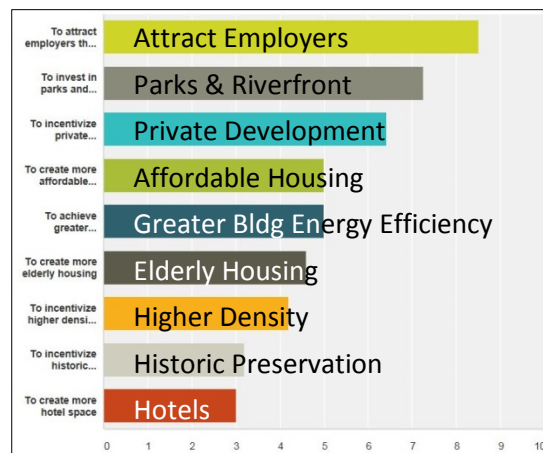
Developers, Architects, Engineers



Non-profits: Community booster orgs



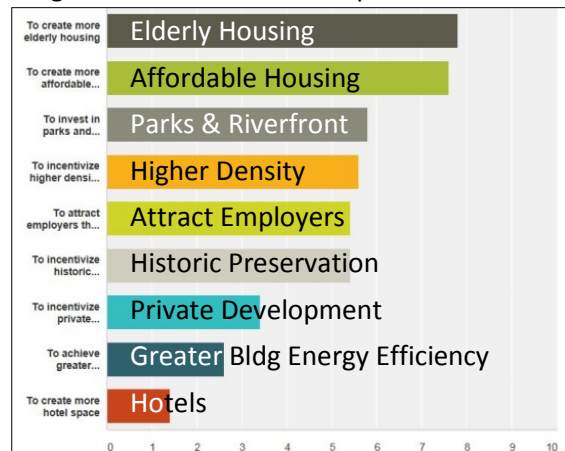
Taxing Entities



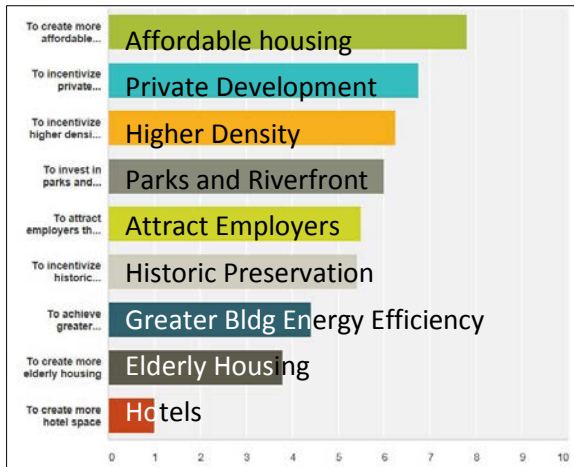
Non-profits: Social service & worker oriented



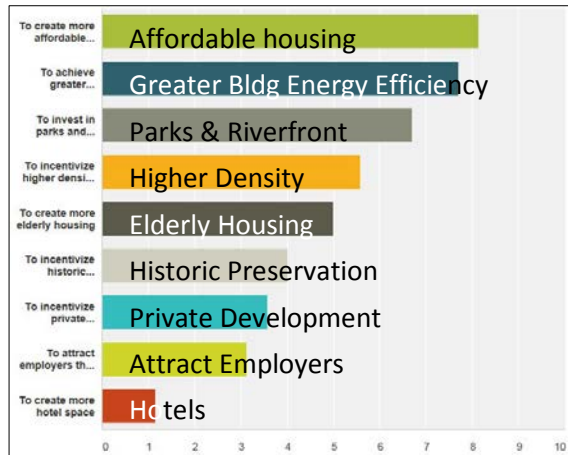
Neighborhood Association representatives



Non-profits: mostly Arts & Cultural oriented



Experts/Interest in Sustainability

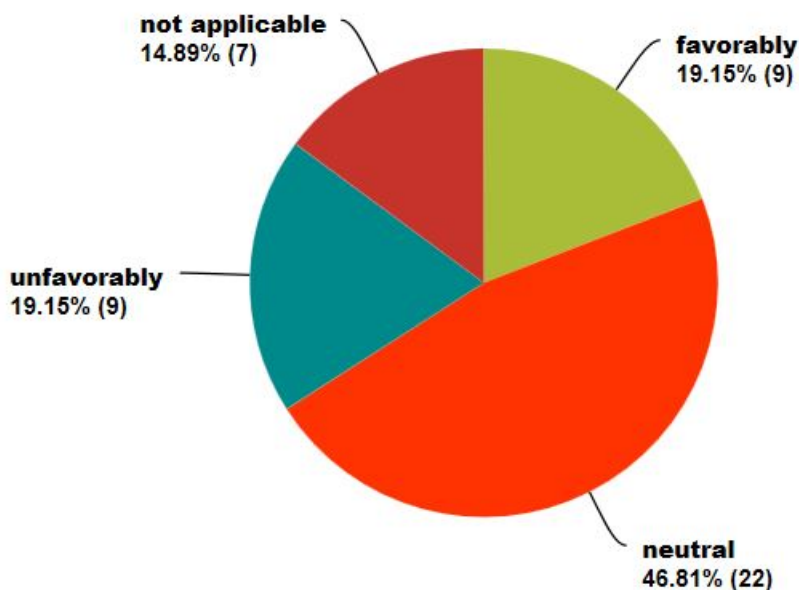


6. Do you have strong feelings about the types of projects TIF should be used for? If so, please explain.

1. To help blighted areas, not to improve areas that are already doing well
2. I think all TIF funding should be oriented strictly towards projects that have major/mainly public benefits. I don't think any tif money should be used to incentivize development that has mainly private benefits.
3. Environmentally friendly projects such as solar panels on gov't building and for low income housing.
4. Improve density, meet affordability standards, meet energy efficiency standards.
5. TIF should be used as a last resort and with the highest benefit to the general public.
6. Areas that are considered "blighted" have not seen economic development equal to the average of the rest of the city or county
7. I lived in tax-credit-funded housing in Kansas City when I was first out of college. The area was called the River Market and while the location was highly desirable (by the river), it had been used for decades for industrial purposes and needed reviving. The use of tax credits allowed people to buy the old manufacturing spaces and turn them into beautiful lofts, but the requirements of the deal were that it was then used for low-income housing. This income requirement made it possible for many artists and musicians to live in what would have otherwise been an unaffordable downtown space. While the private investors benefited monetarily, the city also benefited because the artistic uplift from those residents was so great, the area became known for music and funky spaces, which spawned new growth (cool cafes, galleries, restaurants with live music, etc). Iowa City has the potential to have a wonderful concentration of artists living downtown and having both a visible cultural affect and an eventual economic impact, but what keeps this from happening is the cost of rent and the lack of both affordable and desirable housing for young professional artists. My hope was that in some way, the River Front Crossing area could create some of this opportunity but also, know it must be a direct goal of development and marketed as such. Until we create spaces that are creative, interesting, and attractive to these types of people, we will continue to see creative and artistic 'flight' from Iowa City while at the same time facing the realities of an aging population of donors and shrinking funding for artistic organizations.
8. An Arts Center would be great!
9. TIF should be used to promote the public good, meaning, there need to be tangible, otherwise-unobtainable benefits behind any TIF project.
10. TIFs should be used to create jobs and office space. TIFs should not be used to create "affordable housing" that will be turned into student housing.
11. I am not in favor of subsidizing business with TIF.
12. Not necessarily. However, IRL, for example, is in my opinion, an example of bad TIF usage, as it is too

aggressive. TIF should "plant the seed". I agreed with using TIF for the Marriott, but not necessarily for the whole of IRL.
13. I am primarily concerned with the use of TIF to subsidize moderately high to high end housing. I don't think the return in tax revenue offsets the opportunity costs of these projects. We can get more for our money.
14. Affordable housing, higher density developments, Park areas as catalysts for dev., attracting employers.
15. Given the widespread need for affordable housing in Iowa City/Johnson County, and the challenges to developers in building affordable housing, it is important to use TIF for this purpose.
16. Affordable Housing
17. To incentivize private development.
18. No strong feelings.
19. From an administrative standpoint, I don't think my opinion is needed.
20. Should be used for tangible infrastructure and area improvement.
21. Projects that benefit all and reinvest in our community as well as provide jobs and affordable housing opportunities.
22. It was intended as a tool for economic development
23. It should be used more frequently
24. High density projects in the core of downtown are the most sustainable approach to smart growth. So in essence, sustainability. It's unfortunate that TIF is politicized to stop dense projects out of NIMBYism
25. Economic development
26. We should it to help create more affordable housing and create more residential development in underutilized areas
27. no
28. Preference should be given to basic sector industry that brings new money into the community.
29. Projects that develop more tax basis for the city.
30. I have strong feelings about the financial analysis and gap determination

7. To what extent has Iowa City's use of TIF affected your organization? (47 responses)



Explain your answer, if you like...

1.	I'm on the Parks and Rec Commission. The TIF support the city is giving to developers could have been used for Parks and Recreation (as well as many other needed programs).
2.	Iowa City has used TIF well to expand the tax base and boost the economy with more dynamic housing and commercial property options in the downtown core. This has enriched local culture by making Iowa City more appealing to a wider variety of people.
3.	TIF projects have expanded the tax base which gives the city more funding to use for projects such as ours.
4.	I'm unaware how and if TIF is being used for Riverfront Crossings. If it is, it is to great benefit of my neighborhood.
5.	It sees that the reductions in tax valuation that result from TIFs have affected schools and housing the most.
6.	See attached
7.	TIF is better once the TIF is ended and we see the results. TIF impacts budget negatively in the beginning, but I feel that ultimately the positive impact outweighs the negative.
8.	lost revenue to school district
9.	Iowa City has judiciously use TIF and the result is a s
10.	ICDD members are concerned about the lack of predictability with knowing what they can do with their properties. If they want to improve the properties and need public support, it isn't clear how to achieve it
11.	We have been able to develop projects that have added greatly to the downtown and which we (an one one) could have developed without TIF.
12.	We have benefited from TIF but I believe the TIF also benefited the community. I would say it has be somewhat favorable to our group.

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8. What would you change about the use of TIF in Iowa City?

1.	more environmentally favorable projects
2.	I don't know enough to comment.
3.	Restrict the use strictly to project that benefit the general public, ic that achieve social, cultural or environmental goals.
4.	I would not use it for builders who have the money to pay the taxes
5.	I don't know.
6.	Lesser amount of TIF to one project
7.	More education to the public about the policies.
8.	Use TIFs for their created purpose, area in need of affordable housing and economic development.
9.	Minimal allowance for TIF on the development of parking lots and standardized apartments with minimal residency.
10.	Not sure?
11.	I don't know that much about the checks and balances that are in place, but in general, I think I would reduce restrictions on when and how it can b e used and give the city more authority to use TIF at its own discretion. It seems to only be used as a last resort, and I don't think it should have to be that way. In my opinion, TIF should be used every time the city will profit from the investment, with an eye toward the long term cultural impact, and while placing a high value on improving the cultural diversity, affordability and environmental sustainability of Iowa City.
12.	To give people a better understanding of the benefits and to dispel the notion that it is simply a way to make the rich richer.
13.	TIFs should not be used to for student housing. TIFs should be transparent. The public should kow who they are being provided to, including the members of the LLC and any gap analysis should be available on the city's website. Iowa City should stop using NDC and should do its own gap analysis. There should be no

guaranteed developer's fee. TIFs should not be used for what ultimately may be airbnb businesses.
14. n/a
15. Very uninformed, so can't make any recommendations.
16. I need to learn more before I can speak well to that.
17. Greater emphasis on broad public benefit and not just focus on increased tax valuation as the end goal.
18. I would require a higher percentage LMI if commercial TIF is used where residential units are also part of the project.
19. I do not have enough knowledge to recommend changes in use.
20. Transportation and affordable housing.
21. Avoid the impression that TIF is benefitting a small number of developers. As the Council has already legislated, use TIF for public goods like affordable housing rather than high end housing.
22. I don't know enough about the current use in Iowa City.
23. Add a certified payroll system for workers.
24. Focus on small business development.
25. Unsure.
26. Use it for creating a business/housing/etc. that would not otherwise have been able to afford locating here. Disallow for rich developers.
27. I have no complaints
28. Don't know enough to comment.
29. Nothing. Careful, thoughtful and responsible use is critical.
30. Use to encourage more dense, urban housing downtown and to attract jobs
31. more frequency
32. Create stronger metrics in the TIF policy - likely have to give up some flexibility to do so. More predictable and less predictable, however, in the long run
33. The section of the policy which "developers will be expected..." needs work. The "expected results of the policy, as contained in paragraph 2, do not include affordable housing" or "wage theft" or "energy efficiency" or "high quality architectural design". Also need better information to public on what a TIF actually is/does -- and who benefits.
34. Be more aggressive with it.
35. not sure.
36. to promote job creation
37. More geared to residential development in outlying areas.
38. I would use it for more work force housing as the gap widens
39. I would not like Iowa City to use TIF the same way that Coralville uses TIF to encourage retailers to move within the greater community/region.
40. The City Council's opinion and use of it.
41. nothing
42. up front funding projects that would not take place without it.
43. I would not prohibit up front TIF across the board. I would prefer the specific projects be analyzed.
44. I would maintain recent usage of TIF and/or expand.
45. I'd like to see more consistency in the criteria that needs to be met. Example: if LEED is going to be used, which sections are most applicable to the project? All are not equally appropriate. Also saying that every project would have x,y or z or it wouldn't quality isn't productive. Evaluating each project specifically and independently, allowing the developer to make his or her case on why they think it should be considered would allow new and possibly better ideas to be proposed.
46. no change
47. The requirements of "public good" that need to go with it. Just take a project and if it needs some financial help, do it. Don't force the project to become less financially feasible by adding affordable housing or a bowling alley.

## Section 2 – TIF Focus Group Meeting Notes

### TIF Focus Group #1 – Developers who have gone through the TIF process

6/27/16

In attendance: Marc Moen, Kevin Digmann, Mike Hahn, Kevin Hanick, Charlie Graves, Ben Kinseth.

Staff: Wendy Ford, EDC member, Susan Mims

#### General impressions:

- Too many unprofitable functions (community benefits) are forced into projects in return for TIF.
- Approval process is onerous.
- Comparing TIF use with other Jo Co towns, perhaps IC does not use this TIF enough?
- NDC's process for evaluation is good, conservative.
- NDC evaluation slows the process down.
- "The odds of getting things done in IC are much tougher now."
- City staff has a lot of leverage and seems adversarial to project development. Don't like redesigning a project for staff before it even goes to City Council.
- City staff (including CM) have too much say in what gets to go to Council.
- Negotiation is started after estimates are done, which is difficult since negotiated elements often adds costs. If we knew up front what was required, we could get the estimates more accurate.
- Investors need minimum returns of 10-15% or there will be no investors.
- Rebates do not account for the time value of money.
- Time value of money is not a consideration in the long term impact of rebates. Staff is stingy.
- Do not understand the gap analysis.
- Hard to estimate construction costs, wait out the approval process and then have construction costs be higher by the time the project starts.
- A 'rebates only' policy can't support development of anything larger than Vogel House or Whiteway sized buildings. It is a mistake to take away the upfront option for TIF.
- Drawings that are used to present concepts and ideas to staff will change as concepts move to construction. As prices go from estimates to real, between being approved for TIF and construction starting, design wraps up, final prices come in and adjustments need to be made to stay within budget. (Recalled issue with Hilton Garden Inn window size changing between concept and building drawings).
- Staff is skeptical about little tweaks to design.
- Developers do not have time to wait and wait for staff. (described an issue with a RFC FBC review).

#### Feedback about the TIF application process:

- There is a very strong sense of ownership by staff on design of project.
- There should be an introduction to the basics of how to apply, what it takes, etc., once per quarter. Tom Jackson does a good job of explaining.
- NDC's spread sheets and formulas are too complicated. Developer commented that his own were on \$50K off and much simpler.
- IF you do away with up front TIF, that will take many of us out of any big project. We couldn't do big developments downtown s/o upfront. There will be no big projects for 4 years.
- The City needs to decide what it wants downtown for height, referring to the Van Patten site proposal –8 – 10 – 12 – 14 stories?
- Need to know what the playing field is.

- Rather than force expensive new buildings to have affordable housing, allow older buildings to be renovated for some affordable housing and finance that, keeping provision of affordable housing costs lower. Do this with some of the older apartment stock.
- LEED *equivalent* doesn't mean anything. Certification does.. Each project should be judged on its own merits.
- Relax parking requirements for buildings downtown.
- If using LEED, require certification to silver.
- Simplify TIF policies so developers know what exactly is expected of them.
- Gap should be allowed to be adjusted as late changes are made, sometimes changing the resulting gap be a few hundred thousand dollars. If changes due to City desires and time taken to review, then City should consider helping to pay for difference.
- We are going to lose new development and new investments in this political environment.

### **TIF Focus Group #2 – Developers, architects, engineers**

**6/27/16**

In attendance: Steve Gordon, Brad Houser, Duane Musser, Jesse Allen, Dennis Jordan, Kevin Monson, Steve Rohrbach.

Staff: Wendy Ford, EDC member, Jim Throgmorton

#### General impressions:

- Iowa City's use of TIF pales in comparison to others which is not necessarily a good thing.
- TIF has gotten a black eye as is perceived as "giving away all the taxes."
- The City should develop communications to help with understanding how TIF is generated.
- It would be helpful to show how TIF money is generated and where it goes.
- Get better at showing the upsides of TIF.
- New taxes flow to City from new big project that would not happen without TIF.
- The City has huge leverage opportunity to use TIF to ensure higher value projects that generate much higher tax revenues for the City of Iowa City. The City should not squander this opportunity and should use it – like good business sense – for long term goals. This is not money going out, but money that seeds new tax generation at much higher levels.
- TIF projects are long term investments. The City would not get and the developers could not do these larger projects without TIF.
- Someone should educate the editorial writers at the PC about TIF.
- Do a better job of showing where the money goes and how the money is used.
- Costs of building residential units is going up faster than ( ? )
- Financial gap keeps getting bigger due to regulations, materials, labor, quality, environmental regs and inflation.

#### Feedback on measuring sustainability in TIF projects

- LEED is a good measure because people know what it is.
- LEED is good because it gets at quality of life issues in the built environment with attention to air, light, work space, etc. Sustainability should measure these other things.
- Measuring solely on energy consumption only touches a portion of sustainability -- (for example,) our demand for electricity is tapering off and we will be decommissioning electricity generation plants.
- Quality buildings should be certified.
- To get a LEED silver designation is no extra cost in quality except for the certification.

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- Solar photo voltaics should not be a requirement, because the area needed to ensure efficiency is so great. Solar simply does not work on small footprint, taller buildings effectively.

**TIF Focus Group #3 – Community Promotional Orgs: Chamber, CVB, ICAD, ICDD**

**7/22/16**

In attendance: Nate Kaeding, Mark Nolte, Nancy Bird, Josh Sabin, Tom Goedken, Rebecca Neades.

Staff: Wendy Ford, Geoff Fruin, EDC member, Rockne Cole

General impressions:

- Rhetorical question - What is lost by how Iowa City is not using TIF?
- Should we aim for more having a higher percentage utilization of TIF.
- Is there an optimum % use of TIF to ensure maximum economic development benefit?
- What goals do you want to meet with new policies?
- How bad do you want development? Insinuating more TIF would entice more development.
- Conversation between some group members and Rockne. Are we going to expand or constrict?
- Flexibility as opposed to predictability – is good (Rockne).
- Discussion around perception that Developers are just raking in TIF money. More education needed on how decisions to help fund a development project happen.
- Suggestion that we simplify message to: By doing this, we get that...and don't use fancy charts.

Feedback on what is worth rewarding with TIF

- Economic Development is what should be done with TIF to grow the tax base. That provides the funding to do the other (social, environmental) things Council would like. Loading too many things onto the development getting the TIF makes it onerous. Let the development happen and use part of the TIF to accomplish the other goals.
- Cedar Rapids is eating our lunch right now. We need to build urban density and live work opportunities.
- Housing for workforce is key.
- Developers need more certainty in the expectations they are to meet in a City-assisted development.
- With regards to the percent of small amount of our total valuation used to capture TIF \$, would it make sense to strategically shoot for a higher percentage?
- The City needs to de-politicize TIF.
- Affordable housing is hard-wired in now – that was one political hot potato that now is not hot.

**TIF Focus Group #4 – Taxing Entities (ICCS and Johnson County)**

**9/19/16 evening**

In attendance: Steve Murley, Brian Kirschling, Josh Busard, Mark Kistler, Rod Sullivan, Lisa Green-Douglass. Craig Hansel (ICCS CFO sent comments in).

Staff: Wendy Ford, EDC member, Rockne Cole

General impressions: what should TIF be used for

- Amenities or Business? It's intertwined. If you have a great city, you'll attract companies that want to locate here.
- Redevelop blighted area, better experience, better housing and jobs, cycle of prosperity.
- Historic preservation, if it can get it done.
- Quality of life.
- What the community desires, but what the market is not producing on its own, i.e., elderly housing.

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- Does building tax base alone justify TIF? I don't think so.
- Question: What would NOT get done if the city did not step in and help?
- Should be project specific.
- That there is no sunset on blighted areas is not good. Should be a sunset on all Economic Development- as well as Blight-designated areas.
- Rich developers should not receive TIF.
- Question about how TIF affects schools. Craig Hansel's memo summarizes that TIF has little negative impact on the ICCSD budget spending authority. The school aid formula allows the tax rate to float up in order to compensate for the loss of TIF valuation. District patrons are paying a higher overall district tax rate as a result of TIF. Any entity considering the future use of TIF or expanding an existing TIF area should give this fact due consideration.
- Further information on the state's back fill was illustrated and discussed.

What would you change?

- Longer notice for consultation with county and school district reps.
- Property tax appeals should not be allowed in TIF districts.
- Minimum assessments should be required on TIF projects.

**TIF Focus Group #5 – Non-profit orgs –social service and worker oriented**

**9/21/16**

In attendance: Maryanne Dennis, Crissy Canganelli, Sally Scott, Tracy Achenbach, Royceann Porter, Royce Peterson, Jesse Case (Charlie Eastham observing)

Staff: Wendy Ford, EDC member, Susan Mims

General discussion:

- Why not use TIF to do 100% affordable housing projects? (Described having to create NEW value to generate TIF. Person did not realize this is where TIF comes from.)
- Discussion about whether entire subdivision could be done with TIF – (Yes, but a lot of 'ifs'. The spirit of the TIF legislation was more about urban blight.)
- We should pay attention to unconventional allies, such as the CVB. They did not realize that affordable housing was such an issue until CWJ came and talked to them.
- Higher density affordable housing near transportation is very important.
- It is important to grow UP instead of OUT to stem sprawl.
- We need to be more creative with transportation issues. Can TIF help pay for some of those?
- Service sector jobs are not all accessible by public transportation
- We need a YIMBY committee – (Yes, in my back yard). We need to dispel affordable housing myth
  - This will need Education, videos, PSAs.
- With regards to affordable housing requirement in Riverfront Crossings, where will any kids living in AH in that area go to school? Where would they attend school?
- TIF should be used to support daycare close to workers in low income jobs.
- How best can we tell this story?

Susan said she and some of her colleagues see two ways of looking at TIF:

- 1) Growing the tax base – through gap analysis, ensuring development of projects that grow the base that can help fund some of the social equity things we want.
- 2) Enhancing Social justice – by leveraging the tax-base-building projects, in part, to help with social justice .

### Going forward

- Affordable housing, transportation and daycare are important issues for all workers; critical for lower income workers.
- Development and social equity should be framed together and not necessarily as independent of each other. There are “cross-over” elements to each.
- The TIF presentation and slide show should be offered to the public. Ask people to request this presentation.
- The representatives from the Labor group presented Model Bid Specifications for TIF recipients for us to include in all development agreements. Contains 4 points. 1) Compliance with Tax Obligations (fed, state, local). 2) Use of Leased Employees and Independent Contractors – all contractors and subs must classify workers as employees. 3) Compliance with Registration/Licensing requirements – comply with Iowa’s Construction Contractor registration requirements as a condition of submitting a bid. 4) Disclosure of subcontractors and dollar value of subcontractor work upon bidding. (document on file for details.)

### **TIF Focus Group #6 – Neighborhood Association representatives**

**10/17/16**

In attendance: Derek John (Lucas Farms), Eric Jones (Creekside), Nancy Carlson (College Green), Paul Swygard (Miller Orchard), Tim Weitzel (Longfellow), Mary Murphy (Normandy Dr.). (not sure, but I don’t think Jerry Hanson (Wetherby) or Jim Walter (College Green) made it to the meeting.) Judy Pfohl was invited but not able to attend.

Staff: Wendy Ford, EDC member Jim Throgmorton

### General feedback after slide presentation.

- There are needs in the community that are not being met, such as grocery stores within walking distance in some areas. What does TIF do to help meet these needs?
- Life is hard as a single working mother with teenagers. TIF policies should address some of these unmet needs.
- Feels there should be more transparency in the financial gap analysis. Not just the NDC report, but the spreadsheets that provide the basis for the recommendation. Does not feel NDC should be doing the gap analysis as they may have some hidden agenda. Why doesn’t staff just do the analysis?
- Iowa City should do more active marketing of itself as a place to live and work.
- Likes the way Iowa City was in the 60s and feels downtown has become too gentrified.
- Seems downtown is now only a place for millennials as opposed to a place for the whole community.
- We should find ways to keep the young people here.
- We need to have a vision and to market ourselves
- The comprehensive plan should be the vision.
- We need funds for smaller economic development projects.
- Iowa City is changing too much. To be a small town is to be more versatile.

### What public benefits do you think the City should leverage with TIF?

- We need to be friendlier to businesses.
- We are not going a good job marketing ourselves.
- We need to increase density.

- We need to benefit all people including low income and elderly
- We need to protect residential neighborhoods.
- We need to ensure better balance among/between all income, racial and ethnic groups.
- Different housing types should be integrated together.
- Promote successes such as neighborhoods changing for the better.
- Affordable housing is now required and built in: not negotiable.
- Required green space needs to be seen by the public.

### **TIF Focus Group #7 – Non-profit orgs – mostly arts and cultural oriented**

**10/26/16**

In attendance: Andre Perry (Englert), Andrew Sherburne (Film Scene), Shane Schemmel (Summer of the Arts), Alicia Trimble (Friends of Historic Preservation), Bob Richardson (Arts Iowa City), John Kenyon (City of Literature), Matthew Steele (Little Village magazine). Andrea Wilson (Writers House) was not able to attend.

Staff: Wendy Ford, EDC member Jim Throgmorton  
Karen Garritson, NDC, also in attendance.

#### General impressions

- Surprised by stark differences in use of TIF between Johnson County towns – IC so low.
- Now I better understand the relationship about how TIF funds are generated. No development = no TIF dollars. New development brings opportunities to use TIF.
- Original use of TIF derived from Federal funding program designed to alleviate blight.
- Questions blighted designation for downtown now. We are missing opportunities where housing and economic development could and should be taking place.

#### Discussion about what the city should subsidize

- The Strategic Plan should dictate what you want to subsidize.
- Have a menu of features/benefits that have to be checked off including some “must meet” features.
- Overlooked populations (kids and parents – downtown not family friendly).
- Asked what drives people out of downtown now – answer drunks and “party people.”
- An arts center downtown with gallery, classes, alternative to non-University of Iowa arts related space would help.
- There are multiple faces of downtown including but not limited to party people. There the library, film scene, playground, free concerts, etc. What we need is to coexist better...perhaps better marketing, too?
- Historic preservation is important for place making.
- Support cultural things.
- Use TIF to help strike a balance for all of these things.
- There are varying perceptions of downtown.
- Awareness is key; be more welcoming.
- “This is off the TIF issue, but great social and cultural services help CREATE the welcoming community we want to have. There are lots of non-profits out here trying to do this and bring people together.”
- Focus on community engagement and getting the community together.

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- Perhaps TIFs could be used for grants.

- **TIF Focus Group #8 Sustainability**

**11/2/16 evening**

In attendance: Martha Norbeck (C-wise consulting), Tom Carsner (IC Sierra Club Political Chair), Becky Ross and Ann Christenson (100 grannies), Steve Long (ULI rep), Liz Christiansen (UI Sustainability), Peter Rolnick (IC Climate Advocates), Liz Maas (Instructor, Kirkwood), Jim Trepka (IC Sierra Club Chair).

Staff: Wendy Ford and Simon Andrew, EDC member Rockne Cole

General Impressions

- “I knew nothing” and learned a lot from the slides.
- The percentage of TIF funding that goes towards a project is too high – i.e. Chauncey is 25% - it should not be allowed to go higher than 10%.
- Costs are higher on larger developments.
- There should be a bonus for adding density – stems sprawl.
- TIF should reward developers for doing the right thing.
- Can there be a fee on carbon? Maybe no TIF if a project is not carbon neutral.
- Minimum standard could be that a project has to exceed Energy Code by 20% just to get you in the door for consideration for TIF.
- Projects in flood zones should not be considered for TIF.
- Buildings should at least, be carbon neutral.
- Comment made that the City doesn’t follow energy sustainability – why should developers. Comment in return that Eastside Recycling, Firestation 4 new buildings are LEED.
- Energy performance, as opposed to energy efficiency should be valued higher. Use of renewable energy should be considered higher value than just high efficiency windows.
- Tall buildings’ cut back on sun. Black Hawk minipark could not be have a sun tree because of this.
- Loss of sun by new buildings blocking sun should be considered.
- (From one woman invited who could not attend): Overall, I think we should only provide TIFs for project that have significant positive impacts for the public good. That could be, for instance, through the provision of affordable/public housing units, environmental improvements projects (eg a creek restoration, renewable energy production, streetscape improvements), or structures that go above and beyond building codes and regulations.
- (Sent later by a person who had attended): I had an additional thought that I would like to share: One of the challenges of sustainable development is the conflict between long-term and short-term thinking, and the related fact that developers don't currently have a strong incentive to make apartments sustainable since doing so reduces future costs for the renter but not for the developer. Perhaps part of the “guide” to how we do TIF should implicitly include trying to minimize these obstacles to sustainable development (which are built into our current economic system) in the broadest way possible.

Discussed Chicago’s draft Menu of Sustainability items

- Interesting way to present options

Discussed USDN/IEDC definition of Sustainable Economic Development

***The investment in business, social, built and natural environments  
that creates increasing prosperity for all,  
now and in the future.***

- Would like better if the word business came after “social, built and natural.” Puts too great an emphasis on business.
- People, planet, profit = the correct order to think about things.
- “resiliency” would be a good word to use describing our ability to handle change
- Like the word “systems.”
- Interesting that “Economics” has such a bad connotation, when the root of both Economy and Ecology is “Eco”, meaning “Home.”