

TIF board is like a spider weaving a web around the taxpayer

If you set still for any period of time you are at the mercy of the spider. Shake, kick and voice your option you might get free right now the spider is winning. Mayor Fred Armstrong showed his support for passing the tax increment financing “TIF” as a economic development tool for the city of Columbus with a majority of the city council to follow with a supporting yes vote for the city of Columbus.

Speaking as a taxpayer who lives outside the city limits that must pay the extra taxes to support “TIF” but cannot vote for the mayor or city council but must live under their rule.

The following is true. I am tired of being treated like a second-class citizen and bullied by the city. I cannot vote for or against city officials. But you must live under their rule “IE” 2-mile limit, “TIF” and many more rules. I for one am tired of the City’s dominant attitude. Let me vote for you or get out of my pocket with your “TIF” raid on tax dollars. “TIF” has taken 80% of the tax growth in the 15 best sections of tax dollar growth leaving the rest of the taxing units with the final 20% in slow moving areas.

“TIF” funding is simply a method to pay off debt and not allow the growth dollars to reduce taxes. All money from growth at the parking garage and all other “TIF” areas will go back to the economic development board, not to reduce tax’s. When the “TIF” law was passed to allow the city’s to pick yes or no on “TIF” somehow the legislators with the help of some lobbyists removed the taxpayers right to object. Pure over sight I am sure. As it stands now any taxing unit must stand a test of the taxpayers to object to any bond issue over 4 million dollars. Have you noticed that a lot of bond issues are for 3.9 million? Schools, cities and county must meet the right of taxpayer’s objection, but not the “TIF” districts. I bet if the parking garage were put to a petition drive you would have no parking garage.

Look at the following data on the parking garage, first of many projects to be funded by “TIF”:

Lost tax dollars going to “TIF”

Item	% of tax dollars breakdown	lost income for taxpayer
Schools	49%	\$8,918,000
City	33%	\$6,006,000
County	11%	\$2,002,000
Welfare	4%	\$729,000
Library	2%	\$364,000
Township	1%	\$182,000
Total	100%	\$18,200,000

This money must be made up by the taxpayers in additional taxes. Your tax rate will go up to pay the missing revenue. Any new money raised by the improvements will go back to the economic development commission to fund new projects, not reduce the taxes.

“TIF” removes the mayor and city councils responsibility and places it in the hands of appointed individuals. I wonder that at the rate we are moving will the economic development board have more money and more control then the city council and the mayor makes you wonder?

Please note that the county commissioners or county council has no members on the “TIF” board. Wonder why? Maybe the mayor and city council didn’t want to hear from the county taxpayers.

Bartholomew County School Corp. has 1 member out of 7 on the board, but John Quick made the statement to the republic that BCSC remains neutral on “TIF”, even with the fact that he will lose 49% of all the “TIF” board dollars and must raise his tax rate to make up the missing dollars. The mayor and four city council members are running for re-election in November. If you are one of the people who can vote in the city election the new slogan should be:

“ Remember in November”

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