

May 5, 2013

Dear Mayor and Council,

As I will be out of town visiting my daughter and her family during the public hearing, I write this to urge that you vote NO on the ordinance that modifies DDA governance and the TIF formula.

Let me begin by thanking you for my appointment to the DDA Board. I have been on the Board less than three years and during that time I have been fortunate to be part of a world-class organization. The staff is strategic, smart and competent. The volunteers who serve on the Board spend hundreds of hours supporting staff and governing a multimillion-dollar organization. Both staff and Board are mission-driven and committed to continuous improvement, to first class customer service and to partnering with other organizations for the good of downtown Ann Arbor.

The continuing strength of the Ann Arbor DDA and its downtown is crucial to the future of the City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County and the region. In my thirty-seven years as part of County Government, I witnessed the growth of this County and the positive role the county seat has played in this growth. The quality of life, economic growth, jobs, provision of basic municipal services and the support for safety-net services in the County and the City of Ann Arbor have been recognized nationally. If the City of Ann Arbor has led the way in the County, its' downtown is one of the strong foundations, the centerpiece of that leadership.

Not only does a strong and vibrant downtown Ann Arbor benefit the quality of life for an entire community, it directly benefits the other taxing authorities including the City of Ann Arbor, the County, the AATA, the Community College and the District Library. Those taxing authorities benefit from the incremental increased tax revenue growth in the downtown not captured by the DDA and the tax growth in general from a vibrant community. This tax growth is more than is lost by the TIF capture.

So now is not the time to tinker or tamper with something that is working well. We have a high performing organization. The fiscal stability of the DDA is crucial to its continuing strategy to make downtown Ann Arbor the centerpiece of a great community.

Thank you again for your appointment and listening to me. We look forward to a very productive partnership with the City of Ann Arbor.

Respectfully,

Robert E. Guenzel