

TIF

What is a tax-increment financing district? At what point, if ever, should the city's eastside TIF district be phased out and tax money from the district should be returned to the general fund, schools and the library?

Corey

Have one on east side. The tax money raised above a certain bar where it is located goes back into that area. Emerson Avenue is a good example. Fire station was done through TIF district. Is controlled mostly by redevelopment commission, although the council has to approve the areas. Schools are already getting money from that area, not as much as they would be, but a TIF district does not take money away from all other areas. Once that area is developed, that TIF area can probably be expired and is no need to have a TIF district there.

Daniel

A TIF district is an entity where taxes collected help pay for the infrastructure for that particular area of development. A TIF takes money away from libraries and schools in that area. TIF districts can be good but can be abused. Would like to keep the timeline to a minimum on a TIF district rather than to allow it to be evergreen.

Hord

Can't answer that not knowing exactly what all that entails. Have to do some research.

Johnson

Is not familiar with it.

McLaughlin

It is funds taken from certain geographical area to be used by city for infrastructure or improvements. Originally city said it wants to do certain amount of infrastructure. Based on how well or how quickly it grew there, once meet the goal should phase out district.

Pohlar

A TIF district pays for improvements made to that area. Money collected from that area goes to infrastructure improvements for that specific area. Need to determine when the TIF is established when it will be phased out. Said a lot of development needs to happen on east side, such as Graham Road work. City has some other opportunities for TIF districts as city goes through comprehensive plan revisions and has been targeting areas for improvements. Could look at downtown, eastside and south.

Tapp

A TIF district allows the city to take the taxes from a certain area and put it aside to pay for infrastructure and improvements. "Once we have accomplished everything that we need to accomplish with that TIF in place, then why does it need to continue to be in place?" Without knowing details of projects, is afraid to say when it should be phased out.

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The annual budget can be considered the single most important tool the city council has. What steps would you take individually to review the budget? What process should the council use to publicly review the budget? How would you alter the city's budget process?

Corey

The budget process is a long, drawn-out process. Council encourages participation and he would continue that. Biggest thing council should do is increase purchasing power. Each department is buying pens, paper and T-shirts from different distributors. If council made that citywide, purchasing power would be increased. Process is mostly controlled by state statute. Would like to see more public input and illustrate more to people the budget process. An informed constituency can make better decisions than an uninformed one.

Daniel

Would ask for the mayor to have the budget ready for review much earlier, such as two or three months earlier. Wants budget to go ahead and project out further. Would make sure the budget is made accessible to anyone who wants to review it on the Internet. Residents should be able to review the budget, see where money is spent and where money comes from.

Hord

Need to take a look at budget as whole, what areas are using what funds, what areas coming up short and why, what areas are saving money and how are they doing it. Make sure city is not spending money just to spend money. Budget is out there, and it should be out there. Shouldn't be anything to hide. Need to look at budget in open forum so people can see where their tax dollars are going. Would have to review how process is now, can't answer without knowing how is now.

Johnson

Would go back a few years and see what budget had been in past years. If city functions properly and smoothly on past budget, would see no reason to increase the budget unless it is absolutely necessary. City council calls a meeting to discuss the budget with the public and get public opinion. Would alter the city budget process by trying to hold down spending unnecessarily. Would not consider taxes to alter the budget unless it was a last resort.

McLaughlin

Would go through every bit of budget. Thinks things are skipped over a lot of times. Is no one's fault, they're just approved as given. As a council member, need to go and see everything that has been asked for and make sure is fiscally responsible. Need to know what you are voting on and not what someone tells you. Have hearings. For instance, have park board director submit budget, given a couple of weeks to review, and ask questions and have people in audience ask questions. Can't answer how would alter yet because he doesn't know. Is hard to say if haven't been on the council.

Pohlar

Thinks the budget is and should be a matter of public record. Constituents should know what we're looking at and how we distribute funds. "They've got to see what we're doing." That is the main function city council has. "Constituents have to see we are operating in their best interest."

Tapp

Since he is involved in the budgetary process as his career as a chief financial officer for a company, he puts a lot of credence in the management that is submitting that budget. The council has to have some comfort in the ability of that department head to manage their own department. Was not and is not a proponent of micromanagement. But if department goes beyond that budget, that's another issue. The council must approve and be comfortable with that total dollar amount. But things change. Gas prices go up, etc. The police cars had to sit in the parking lot for a while. That's being fiscally prudent.



If a resident in your district approaches you about a problem, for example a drainage or zoning issue, what would you tell the resident to do, and what steps would you take as a council member? Would you write a proposed ordinance?

Corey

Would tell them the process, try to hold their hand through the process, tell them the proper steps they need to take and would not leave their side until the problem was resolved or had a solution. Usually smaller problems lead to a bigger problem. Absolutely would write an ordinance. Biggest thing is making sure to help out constituency. Being a city council member, these are your neighbors and friends. Want to help them and provide them with best can.

Daniel

Perhaps an ordinance wouldn't be necessary. Would talk to mayor. Would try to solve overall situation. Would do anything he could. That is the job of a public servant. In the past, most members on council and mayor have been very accommodating in that aspect.

Hord

Would bring it up, would talk about it with council. What might be a small concern to us is a large concern to someone who has approached him. Would need to investigate what to do, get in touch with proper agency, see how can get it fixed. People just want to be in communication. Would have to review and see if that writing ordinance would be the case.

Johnson

If it was drainage problem, would direct resident to a phone number for the street department and would also call the department himself to report the problem. Any other problem concerning the city would be handled the same way. An ordinance would have to be agreed upon by the entire council, not just one individual.

McLaughlin

Would like to tell them where to go and address it, who to contact there and then follow it up. Would not leave people hanging and would answer questions. The more council can do for people, the happier they are. Residents shouldn't have to jump through hoops and red tape to get something done. Would write an ordinance if it was needed.

Pohlar

Would investigate the complaint. Would meet with that person, view the complaint and review it. Would then get with engineering to see what steps have been taken. Would assume that by the time they get to city council member the constituent has talked to other people. It would not necessarily take an ordinance to correct it. On zoning, would look at what changes the law would allow to be made. On a zoning issue, have to look at the comprehensive plan, what zoning would allow, what is best for the city and what is best for the resident. Have to review it case-by-case. Would always respond and get answers.

Tapp

Would meet with the resident to get the details. In the past, has asked city engineer to come out and join in conversation and get another council member to look at situation. Proposing an ordinance is down the road. "Most people just want attention. That's what they elect you to do. If you ignore them, you're not doing your job." The city is not responsible for all drainage problems. Could be called on lots of issues, such as noise problems, loud cars, people working on vehicles or a business operating out of a home next door.



Is it city government's job to do more than just provide roads and police and fire protection? Is it government's job to improve the quality of life so that the city can attract new residents and businesses and become home to the top managers from those businesses? How does city government do this? What is your role?

Corey

Maintaining quality of life is an issue that is more than just bricks and mortar. People need to be proud of Greenwood. That is done through greenspace and festivals but also leaders, not only in Indiana, but nationally. Everyone can take pride in Greenwood coming up with something that is innovative. Most of Endress+Hauser executives don't live in Greenwood; they live on the north side. That is unfortunate. City needs to provide standards of living people are becoming accustomed to. Need to say what people are going to want 10, 15 years from now. Have to be on leading edge, have to be proactive not reactive.

Daniel

Any elected official is a representative of the city. Elected officials should represent what the people want, not what that individual person wants. Yes, it is the job of city government to not only provide police, fire protection and a quality infrastructure. "It is an elected official's duty to do all he can." Quality of life is the issue here. Wants people to move to Greenwood, not away from Greenwood. Wants residents to understand that a decision made in year 2000 can affect the quality of life for many coming years.

Hord

Need to think of sense of community and plan for type that strengthens family stability. When invite people to homes, wants them to drive into Greenwood and see wonderful place we live in. There are some eyesores that need to be taken care of.

Johnson

Yes, city would have to set some high standards, and he thinks the council would have to back the city 100 percent if the decisions the city has made are for the benefit of that particular purpose.

McLaughlin

Yes, should not only do services mentioned, but parks are a wonderful thing. Should help schools in any way. Government needs to be a good neighbor with schools. Need to work with builders, on not just affordable housing, but more upscale housing than city has. Have great amphitheater. Need to get that out to other people and sell this fine city to other business people.

Pohlar

Yes, it's city government's job to do that. Constituents look to city to continue to maintain and improve community. City is always looking for ways of increasing revenue without raising taxes. Higher-paying jobs and residents with higher incomes will increase housing and bring in more revenue without raising taxes. It's up to city to maintain and improve parks and recreation and build trails and pathways and places for people to go and hang out. City has to maintain roads and make it easy to get around the city. City government plays a big role in providing that.

Tapp

Local government is a partner. Example is Old Towne revitalization. City can improve quality of life by staying on top of infrastructure, road improvements and storm sewers. A fact of life is that we all pay taxes. We all have to pay. "If you want to play, you're going to have to pay." I don't think we as citizens should sit back and let others be totally responsible for improving our quality of life. City has to define what improvements should be made, such as parks, an aquatic center, making parks safe and improving infrastructure.



Would you support extending the smoking ban to bars and clubs so that all workers are protected?

Corey

Believes smoking ban is fine the way it is now. State is going to be passing its own mandate we will have to follow.

Daniel

No. Does not smoke. Where does government stop deciding what a person's lifestyle choice is? Tobacco is legal, and if someone owns a business, it is their right to run that business as they wish as long as it is legal. Said businesses break the law by having gambling machines, but they aren't allowed to have smoking. For businesses, if there is a place that allows smoking and he wants to go out to eat, he doesn't have to go there and can go somewhere else. Is against intrusive government.

Hord

Yes, is a tough issue. Is quality of life and health issue. In those areas, which are areas a lot of people frequent, get concerned with quality of health there. Something where we can do our part.

Johnson

No, believes that government should stay out of private businesses. Thinks it's the property owners' responsibility to have a smoking area if they wish to do so. Does not believe in federal, local or state governments telling individual people what they have to do with their businesses.

McLaughlin

Yes. It's the right thing to do. It's a healthy decision and it's worked in other cities, like Bloomington. People have been hesitant, but at the end of the day, being healthier is the more responsible thing to do and it is not detrimental to businesses.

Pohlar

No, probably not. When a person invests his own money into a business, government should not be able to tell him how to run his business. If he wants to allow smoking, people have a choice whether they go to that business. Workers have a choice as to whether to work there. Is a nonsmoker, but it isn't government's place to tell a person who has vested his life into a business how to run his business.

Tapp

Everyone has a right to choose to go where they want to go. It is a very difficult question to answer. Everyone has a right to choose where to go as a patron, as a customer, and everyone has the right to go work somewhere. Does not know what the right answer is. Knows that if the ban gets revisited, there should be no stone left unturned. All the positives and all the negatives need to be weighed. Would not propose revising the ban. What has been done was done appropriately.



What is a conflict of interest for a city council member? How would you avoid conflicts of interest or the appearances of them?

Corey

A conflict of interest is if he was a developer and was going to develop some land on the east side of interstate and wanted it to be zoned inappropriately, that is a conflict of interest: Trying to use your powers to better yourself personally. Would avoid them with transparency, telling people exactly where he stands and why. If elected, is sure not everyone will agree with him 100 percent of time. Can question his politics and beliefs, but can never question the passion he has for this city.

Daniel

A conflict is if you work for the city administration in any capacity or work for any company that does business with the city, or any entity that partners with the city. Is one of two at-large candidates who has no connection with the city administration and would be free from any conflicts of interest. Can ensure that voters' representation will not be compromised. All other at-large candidates except one either work for the city, work for a company that was involved with proposal to build a new city building, are running their campaign with the mayor, work for the chamber of commerce or is the mayor's appointee on a city board.

Hord

Are several areas. Get into area of people voting on contracts for city, people being involved in council debate that have a high interest, whether former employee, family or friend. If person has vested interest in subject, people may perceive they have an agenda. Should excuse self from that particular subject if there is any way someone can question motives. Have to take hard look at each issue and see how that affects decision. If person has been part of something in past, or friends or family were part of this, they should make sure they are not put in that situation.

Johnson

Conflict of interest on city council would be trying to bring family members in for city employment. Would stay away from things that cause a conflict of interest and take a firm foundation on that.

McLaughlin

Where council member would benefit monetarily from being on the board, such as doing business with the city or getting jobs for in-laws. Would gain monetarily or family would because of election to council. Wouldn't do any business with city. Possibility his job with police department could come up. Salary could be a question. If was the case where council was voting on salary, he would abstain from voting.

Pohlar

A conflict would be any issue that would bring him financial gain. On plan commission, has been cognizant of that because he works in the construction industry. Gets involved in projects that go on in Greenwood. On occasion recuses self from issues on the plan commission level because of a potential conflict or perceived conflict of interest.

Tapp

City council members have to be aware of the agenda item and if he or she feels he is getting dangerously close to an item that might present a conflict of interest, it's extremely important to let that be known. Works in construction industry for The Skillman Corp. and filed a conflict statement each year.

