

From: [Krysten Lynn Ryba-Tures](#)
To: [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Opposition to TIF - RES 22-275
Date: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 12:43:01 PM

Council Members,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Farwell Yards TIF District Plan (RES 22-275).

Though I understand that there are infrastructure improvements needed for both sewer and road to make this site viable - there is too little emphasis on housing affordability (and too much parking) in this project. As of this submission, details on the actual level of affordability and bedroom sizes of the 63 units proposed were unavailable. In fact, Buhl investors has not once nailed down specifics and shared them publicly as they pursued a variety of public dollars to support this project over the past two years.

But, more broadly, this project in no way meets the "but for" test associated with TIF use. Consider,

- There are no fewer than three large development projects currently underway in this/West Side Flats area, adding 300+ housing units. Several others were recently completed. The market here doesn't need help, if anything we need stronger safeguards for equitable development.
- Ramsey County is moving forward with RiversEdge, a public-private venture directly across the river from this project using recovery act dollars. This project is also intended to be catalytic and draw more interest in this area - in addition to the city's river balcony project.
- The census tract of the proposed TIF fund is already a federally designated Opportunity Zone.

It's true there are "substandard" buildings on the site -- and they've been there for decades. The urgency for THIS developer and THIS opportunity is incredibly overblown, frankly. The development of West Side Flats - and this adjacent area to the west - must be approached with the utmost care and with redress efforts for families previously displaced as a result of the city's actions. This project is very far from that, and those of us who care about the economic and orderly AND EQUITABLE development of this area are happy to "pass" on Farwell Yards and this misguided use of city financial support to boot.

\$24M for 63 units of not even "deeply" affordable housing. It doesn't add up. All studio and 1-bedrooms (from previous site plans shared); this not housing for families that is sorely needed either. Further, there are likely areas of the city and maybe even other projects here in district 3 that will necessarily be deprioritized as a trade-off.

Please reconsider this proposal and vote "no" on wasting your scarce TIF dollars on this gentrification pipe dream.

--

Krysten Lynn Ryba-Tures

West Side Resident & former WSCO Equitable Development Team Member