
From: ROBERT MUSCHEWSKE <rmuschewske@comcast.net>

Sent: Saturday, December 6, 2025 12:36 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: In\$ight Opposition to TIF for project at Grand and Victoria

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Please note our opposition to TIF for the project at Grand and Victoria. This site is one of the most attractive development sites in Saint Paul. It should not need TIF. If you approve TIF for this site, you will be hard-pressed to refuse TIF for projects proposed by other developers.

Bob

Bob Muschewske

370 Summit Avenue

Saint Paul, MN 55102

rmuschewske@comcast.net

[612-578-3635](tel:612-578-3635)

TO: Members of the City Council/HRA
FROM: In\$ight Steering Committee
SUBJECT: Opposition to Use of TIF in the 841-857 Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan
DATE: November 25, 2025

– In\$ight Steering Committee Recommendation –

The Redevelopment Plan for 841-857 Grand Avenue should not include Tax Increment Financing (TIF) totaling \$2.95 million.

Rationale for our Recommendation

The Steering Committee bases its recommendation on extensive analysis of how Tax Increment Financing (TIF) has been used in Saint Paul and our understanding – based on publicly available information – of how it will be used to support the Redevelopment Plan at 841-857 Grand herein after referred to as 845 Grand Avenue. In addition, members of In\$ight have had two conversations with the developer, Ari Parritz.

(Note: In\$ight analysis of the City’s use of TIF is contained in In\$ight Reports dated October 29, 2024, and August 11, 2025.)

Arguments Favoring the 845 Grand Avenue Plan

- The Saint Planning Commission has affirmed with a narrow 6 to 5 vote that the 845 Grand Avenue Plan is consistent with the Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
- The developer, Ari Parritz, is a competent and reputable developer committed to the improvement of Saint Paul. He recently completed a similar project at the nearby corner of Grand Avenue and St. Albans.

That project did not require TIF and the developer states that it was because of the low interest rates during covid.

- The 845 Grand Avenue project will likely be a net addition to the neighborhood.
- The developer is firm in stating that he cannot undertake and complete a successful project without the use of TIF and that he and his investors will suffer financial losses if the project is not approved by the HRA in December.
- The \$2.95 million TIF request is relatively small when compared to recent TIF supported projects in the City.
- The developer states that he understands the negatives of TIF and has also stated he is not in favor of the continued use of TIF believing the City needs to find other ways to incentivize the much-needed development of the City's tax base. He states that he cannot, however, move forward on his current timeline for this project without TIF.

In\$ight's Reservations Concerning Saint Paul's Use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Among the concerns expressed in the In\$ight Reports are the following:

- TIF has been overused in the City of Saint Paul.
 - In 2024 Saint Paul had over 7.9% of taxable property captured in TIF projects.
 - The recent Landmark Towers project is an example of the overuse of TIF.
 - Saint Paul is the largest user of TIF in the State and second only, per capita, to the City of Chicago in the use of TIF in the country.
 - Minneapolis and other municipalities are reducing use of TIF.
- TIF is often advertised as a way to increase the tax base in the City but that increase does not happen for a period of up to 25 years after completion of a project.

- TIF is a public subsidy – a gift - paid to a developer as an incentive to engage in a project. It is not a loan. The City must accrue debt to grant the subsidy to the developer.
- TIF captures future taxes of real estate improvement to retire the debt incurred by the City. Future taxes do not go into the general fund.
 - Tax levies to service debt for TIF projects INCREASED 40.1% by approximately \$13M from 2015-2024.
 - Currently 8% of the property taxes of City taxpayers are devoted to covering the cost of existing TIF projects.
- City services required by the project – Fire, Police, Public Works , etc. – are not paid for by taxes paid by the project. They are paid for by taxpayers outside of the project.

Reasons Why In\$ight Opposes the Use of TIF for the 845 Grand Avenue Project

- The site is one of if not the most attractive development sites in the City of Saint Paul. We believe a developer should be able to create a profitable development plan at that site without the need for a public subsidy.
- The relatively small TIF request of \$2.95 million suggests that the developer should be able to find ways to finance a \$44.5 million project without resorting to TIF.
- Although the project has attractive features and will be a net benefit to the neighborhood, it does not have a clear and compelling public purpose justifying the use of TIF.
- Data demonstrating that the project has passed the “but for” test is not publicly available.
- Awarding a public subsidy to this project will set a precedent sending a signal to other developers that fulfilling the “but for” requirement will be relatively easy to demonstrate.
- TIF is often used in support of blight removal. The City has already been awarded \$350,000 from the Minnesota Department of Employment and

Economic Development (DEED) for abatement, demolition, and public infrastructure improvements at the site.

- Awarding a public subsidy (TIF) removes the opportunity for the City to increase tax base revenue from one of its most attractive development sites for a period of up to 25 or more years.

– Conclusions –

- **Do not award a public subsidy – TIF – to this project.**
- **Although likely a net gain to the neighborhood, the project does not enhance City goals to increase the tax base in the short to medium term and it puts a further burden on taxpayers at a time when they are already coping with rapidly rising property taxes.**
- **Awarding TIF to this project – a project for which it is hard to justify the need for TIF – will make it difficult to refuse to award TIF to future TIF proposals in the City.**

From: [Jenna Sadjadi](#)
To: [Bill Lightner](#)
Cc: [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#)
Subject: RE: Victoria Crossing
Date: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 1:02:27 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hi Bill – Thank you for contacting the Ward 2 office with your comment on the proposed TIF district at Grand and Victoria. This item is planned to come before the Council for a public hearing on December 17th. Your email will be added to the public record and shared with the Council.

Jenna Sadjadi (she/they)

Executive Assistant to Council President Noecker

Saint Paul City Council - Ward 2

15 W Kellogg Blvd, Room 310B

Saint Paul, MN 55102

651-266-8620 | www.stpaul.gov/ward2



SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

From: Bill Lightner <william.lightner@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 3:04 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Victoria Crossing

Some people who received this message don't often get email from william.lightner@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Dear Council President Noecker,

I write to express my concern about the proposed redevelopment of the northeast corner of Grand and Victoria and the use of TIF as a funding source. This is one of the more high valued and well recognized corners in the city, so the redevelopment of this corner, if needed in the first place, could take place without TIF being used. As a result, the proposal does not pass the “but for” test required to implement TIF. TIF is an important tool for the redevelopment but must be reserved for areas that truly need it.

I am also concerned about tearing down a historic building that gives the Victoria Crossing area its charm, which is a central of its appeal. Tearing down the very element that is central to its success is not something the City should support in any fashion. This area first led the avenue’s renaissance into one the Twin Cities’ prime commercial corridors so any redevelopment must be done with great care and to preserve its historic character.

With double digit property tax increases that threaten the livability of the city for many of its residents, promoting this vital commercial area is critical to building the tax base. Taking tax resources away with the use of TIF will only make this worse.

Sincerely,
Bill Lightner
118 Wheeler St. S

From: [Davis Bailey](#)
To: [#CI-StPaul_Ward1-7](#)
Subject: Our City Is TIF"ed Up
Date: Saturday, December 6, 2025 9:18:04 PM
Attachments: [Screenshot_20251206-210604.png](#)

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Dear Council Members,

Our City cannot take on anymore limitations on our tax base as we are the State Capital, which includes many non-paying tax infrastructure. This Grand Ave project can be done by private persons, however they probably will not make as much money as they want. The current financial markets are the cause and the situation will pass in about 3 years.

Please DO NOT give TIF for the 845 Grand Ave project.

Sincerely,
Ed Davis
1169 Lane Pl, 55106
612 412-4421

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From: [Rebecca Noecker](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#)
Subject: FW: VOTE NO ON TIF 845 Grand Avenue
Date: Monday, December 8, 2025 7:53:31 AM

Best,
Rebecca

Rebecca Noecker | Saint Paul City Councilmember, Ward 2

15 West Kellogg Blvd – Suite 310B | Saint Paul, MN 55102
651.266.8622 | rebecca.noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Stay connected to Ward 2! Sign up for quarterly e-newsletters, like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram!

-----Original Message-----

From: Roddie Turner <roddieturner@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 6, 2025 7:46 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: VOTE NO ON TIF 845 Grand Avenue

[You don't often get email from roddieturner@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Dear City Council Members,

The private developers of the project at 845 Grand have requested TIF funding of over \$3 million. This is not a blighted area, this project does not in any sense fulfill the definition of need for TIF funding. As my property taxes have become unmanageable, like so many St. Paul residents, we cannot afford to grant our money to wealthy developers who are and have been, allowed to feed at the city trough, with the approval of city government. We cannot afford these policies any longer!! Please vote no.

Rodden Turner
452 Laurel Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55102
Sent from my iPad