

Edwards, Michelle

From: Emma Crossen <emma.crossen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 12:37 PM
To: outside email clerk
Subject: *Ext!* Public Comment for Sept 10 City Council meeting

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Dear Council,

This comment is regarding the TIF consolidation vote on tonight's agenda. It's my understanding that this consolidation is intended to boost the city's bond rating for financing a new THPD at 222 S. 7th St., an \$11 million project that will drastically shape the future of policing in this community.

Yet, as far as I know, there has been no public input into the project. Instead, it seems the construction plans have been left to the mayor, the THPD, one architecture firm, and one construction company -- Garmong -- which also owns the property and will profit off the sale and construction.

Completely missing is input from the people who will be impacted by this policing. Mayor Bennett said the project meets all the city and police department's needs. What we don't know is whether it will meet the needs of our people. County officials made the horrific decision to meet our needs by paying this same construction company, Garmong, to build a bigger jail. Will a new police station merely help police fill those jail beds? There are so many possibilities for how this building can serve our public safety and wellbeing, including for example by also housing a diversion center, medical and mental health assessment, and alternative crisis intervention teams. What if our plans for this station involved input from the community, including social workers, judges, public defenders, criminology researchers, and more?

As far as I know, your vote tonight is the first time a decision pertaining to the new police station has come before a body of elected representatives. Please don't let this moment pass with only a yay or nay vote. In addition to your vote – especially if you vote yes -- please also use your voice to inquire about how we can get more public input into this important \$11 million project.

Sincerely,

Emma Crossen
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Terre Haute, IN 47803