



June 16, 2020

To: Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee: Lee Barnes Jr., Andrea Bough, Dan Fowler, Brandon Ellington, Theresa Loar
CC: Mayor Quinton Lucas, Governor Laura Kelly

On behalf of the Board of Trustees Community Mental Health Fund, I write to express my disappointment with and opposition to ordinance 200447. The number and depth of problems with this matter are unusual. I will summarize a few of the issues here, and I hope you will take these concerns into consideration:

- This matter was under discussion at City Hall since 3rd Quarter 2019. The taxing jurisdictions were informed of the project by its attorney only weeks ago. It is a consistent pattern that public services are made to scramble in order to understand and try to protect themselves from the financial impact of Kansas City's corporate subsidies. There is a strong appearance that this is an intentional strategy to stifle opposition.
- This incentive has operated since 2002. The benefit should have been fully realized. Instead, the firm's request highlights the inability of tax abatement to retain companies and serve as a real economic development tool.
- Again, Kansas City benefits significantly more than the property-tax-dependent jurisdictions. We serve 10,000 uninsured Kansas City each year. The project is less helpful in our work to assist citizens with mental illness than if the building was vacant.
- The public is tired of the race to the bottom. My constituents will recognize this as a continuation of the border war. The incentive from the state of Kansas is far greater than what can be offered from our City and State. That this company has chosen to extract concessions from the City and other taxing jurisdictions is an indicator that they have no intention of moving, only that they are *pitting governments against each other* for gain: another steep discount on taxes, amounting to an excessive, 30-year tax abatement scheme.
- The parking in this proposed project is problematic in a variety of respects, including nonmarket pricing and lack of alignment with City Auditor's objectives.
- The figures being given to you are equivocal. None of the parties promoting this process have used third-party information (not required) and the non-city taxing jurisdictions have been left on their own to attempt to calculate financial impact. Proponents of this deal are likely to disagree with taxing jurisdictions' figures. It is no wonder. Like so many incentives, this matter has been rushed, and cost information that underlies the rationale has not been verified.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opposition to Ord. 200447. I recommend your *No* vote and ask that my statement be read into the record at your Committee's meeting.

Sincerely,
Bruce A. Eddy PhD, Executive Director