

In Bloomington, Indiana on Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at 7:30pm, Council President Stephen Volan presided over a Special Session of the Common Council. Per Executive Orders issued by the Governor, this meeting was conducted electronically.

COMMON COUNCIL  
SPECIAL SESSION  
September 9, 2020

Councilmembers present via teleconference: Matt Flaherty, Isabel Piedmont-Smith, Dave Rollo, Kate Rosenbarger, Susan Sandberg, Sue Sgambelluri, Jim Sims, Ron Smith, Stephen Volan  
Councilmembers absent: none

ROLL CALL [7:32pm]

Council President Stephen Volan summarized the agenda.

AGENDA SUMMATION [7:32pm]

Flaherty moved and it was seconded to add Ordinance 20-16 to the agenda under legislation for first reading. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

AGENDA AMENDMENT [7:39pm]

Piedmont-Smith moved and it was seconded to approve the minutes of September 25, 2019, October 2, 2019, and September 2, 2020. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 1 (Smith).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES [7:41pm]

September 25, 2019 (Special Session)  
October 2, 2019 (Regular Session)  
September 2, 2020 (Regular Session)

LEGISLATION FOR FIRST  
READING AND RESOLUTIONS  
[7:42pm]

Piedmont-Smith moved and it was seconded to introduce and read by title and synopsis Resolution 20-13. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Chief Deputy Clerk Sofia McDowell read the legislation by title and synopsis.

Resolution 20-13 Resolution proposing an ordinance to modify the Monroe County Local Income Tax Rate, allocate the additional revenues to economic development and cast votes in favor of the ordinance.

Piedmont-Smith moved and it was seconded to adopt Resolution 20-13. There was council discussion regarding the appropriateness of the motion.

Mayor John Hamilton presented on the Local Income Tax plan. (See attachment)

Piedmont-Smith asked at what level of income a resident must earn before they must pay the Local Income Tax.

Council Questions:

Jeff Underwood, Controller, stated that it was the bottom end of the exemptions a resident gets in the state of Indiana. Underwood explained that one's adjusted gross income from their federal taxes, including deductions and exemptions, and would be around \$3500.

Piedmont-Smith clarified that anyone earning more than \$3500 would have to pay the Local Income Tax.

Underwood confirmed that was correct.

Rollo asked Underwood to expand on revenue pressures anticipated for 2021 and 2022.

Underwood responded that the state had already provided the property tax increase and that the pressures will begin in 2022, 2023, and 2024. Underwood explained that the revenue drop was in gasoline tax, food and beverage tax, and parks and recreation, and that it was expected that would go on for a few years.

Rollo asked if there would be a decline in assessed value.

Underwood stated that there would, and that that would affect revenue.

Rollo asked where Bloomington would fall, in the list of the 20 largest cities in Indiana, if the 0.25% were to be implemented.

Hamilton stated that Bloomington would be 18 out of 20.

Resolution 20-13 (cont'd)

Council Questions:

Rollo asked if the mayor anticipated implementing a capital improvement plan on an annual basis.

Hamilton responded that was correct and the appropriations would be done annually.

Sgambelluri asked if it is the mayor who adopts the capital improvement plan and not the council.

Hamilton explained that the executive was responsible for presenting a capital plan to the county auditor who was responsible for releasing the funds, but that nothing restricted the executive's plan. Hamilton clarified that no money was spent until the council approved the appropriation.

Sgambelluri asked Philippa Guthrie, Corporation Counsel, about guidelines or parameters.

Guthrie stated that the plan would not be adopted until the Local Income Tax was adopted.

Sgambelluri clarified that the council does not vote to adopt the capital improvement plan.

Guthrie confirmed that was correct and that it was a function of the executive.

Flaherty asked about property tax rate relief, and the .0518% portion used in Monroe County, and how that affected the effective local income tax rate.

Hamilton responded that about half of the counties in the state used the local income tax for property tax relief.

Underwood clarified that it was based on assessed value and that it varied.

Flaherty asked for further clarification on why we had that rate and what it was used for.

Underwood explained that it was used for property tax relief.

Flaherty asked Hamilton if there would be public input into funding priorities and decision making.

Hamilton stated that the council, and city boards and commissions, would be included and that the discussion would have to happen in the first part of the year, annually.

Smith asked if the federal government would reimburse cities for lost revenue, based on a constituent question to him.

Hamilton responded that the federal government was primarily providing funding for things like personal protective equipment. Hamilton explained that it was mainly up to the city to allocate the funding to assist people who were on i.e. fixed income.

Smith asked if the city could tighten its belt and cut some services or extras to help make up the shortfall, per a constituent question.

Hamilton responded that the city had tightened its belt, and that it couldn't do that further and still provide the services in demand in the city.

Smith asked if the city had negotiated with the county regarding the local income tax.

Hamilton stated that he had spoken with county council members, and that the local income tax would only be implemented if the majority of the entities voted in favor.

Resolution 20-13 (cont'd)

Rosenbarger asked if there was a way to offer a tax credit to households earning less than \$40K or to give money back in some way.

Hamilton stated that the administration did not have the legal authority to offer a tax rebate, and that the best way to address that was to dedicate the funding in ways that benefit the public.

Rosenbarger asked Hamilton to provide more detail on which projects get funded.

Hamilton stated that he intended to work with council members to determine what gets funded, and that he proposed to have a discreet new fund to appropriate monies from the tax that would be very transparent and provide reports.

Volan asked Hamilton to comment on the option of the council asking the administration to allocate the funding entirely to council to then distribute it similar to Jack Hopkins Social Service Funding.

Hamilton responded that he welcomed suggestions, and that the funding was integrated into the city budget. Hamilton explained that the council allocated the money and the administration administered it, and that it was the administration's responsibility to fashion a coherent and effective overall budget.

Volan responded that the council only had the ability to agree on the overall budget and was limited to cutting funding as opposed to moving money around.

Guthrie stated that she would have to look at Volan's suggestion because it might undercut the statutory authority that required the mayor to adopt the capital plan.

Rollo asked if there was an urgency to act right now.

Hamilton stated that there was urgency, and that he wished there was the local authority to decide a progressive city tax.

Piedmont-Smith asked if the local income tax increase passed in the fall, and the state legislature decided to give all the power to the county government, could the county government rescind the tax.

Hamilton stated that he did not know.

Piedmont-Smith asked for clarification on the 0.0518% portion of the local income tax, and if that meant that some property taxes were refunded to some residents.

Underwood stated that was correct and that it was capped at 1.25% so we were below the cap.

Piedmont-Smith asked who decided how much goes towards property tax relief.

Underwood responded that he believed it was the county fiscal body or the tax council.

Sgambelluri asked if there had been any conversations or thoughts about a sunset date.

Hamilton stated that there had been conversations about it but he wasn't sure if they could do that, but that he thought it would be good for council to review the tax to see its use and impact.

Sgambelluri inquired about the mayor's original plan for the local income tax increase, proposed on January 1, which included transit as a big element, and the revised plan which took out a large chunk pertaining to transit.

Hamilton responded that while he had intended it to be .25% for transit, and .25% for everything else, it was difficult to know how transit should now be enhanced. Hamilton stated that transit

received \$8 million federal money. Hamilton continued that there was a lot of support for an income tax supporting transit that would likely be adopted by everybody.

Sgambelluri further asked about why transit was more uncertain.

Hamilton clarified that the volume was way down and that it was unclear what the demand would be for transit. Hamilton stated that the focus was for the needs of the community right now, and named several examples.

Sims asked about the potential impact of the local income tax and the looming rate increase from utilities, and of township government in regards to fire protection, and what that would look like. Sims also asked for clarification on timing of the local income tax starting on October 1 instead of January 1.

Hamilton commented that the fee changes for fire districts would apply only to those townships outside of city limits. Hamilton also commented that he had asked the City of Bloomington Utilities Department to be more regular and transparent in the timing and reviewing of rates. Hamilton clarified that if the vote was effective after November 1, then the tax was not collected until late the following year, and that he feared that the state legislature could override that and change how a tax was imposed.

Randy Paul spoke about the impact on taxes on people living in poverty or with lower income, and hoped for a delay.

Public Comment:

Ilana Stonebraker questioned the mechanism in place for allocating funds from the local income tax.

Greg Alexander read a bullet point from the letter sent by the County Council and spoke to the need for a manifest use of the funds and the importance of transit, bicycles, and sidewalks.

Quinton Deppert spoke about the importance of equitable energy conservation, transit, safety, infrastructure, and assisting lower-income households.

Alex Goodlad spoke to the importance of using the funding for transit and the future, and that the community needed to have more input.

Daniel Bingham spoke in favor of the initial proposed plan for the local income tax, and that the pandemic was part of climate collapse. Bingham elaborated on the importance of both helping people who were hurting while also cutting carbon emissions and restructuring society drastically, and that the mayor's revised plan did not address carbon emissions.

Chief Deputy Clerk McDowell read the comment, submitted by Dave Askins of the B Square Beacon, on Ordinance 20-16.

Joseph Wynia spoke in favor of the local income tax and echoed Daniel Bingham's comments.

Natalia Galvan commented on the importance of climate change and that the local income tax was initially proposed as a climate tax. Galvan stated that we were in a climate emergency, which couldn't wait, and echoed Daniel Bingham's comments. Galvan urged council to support the proposal if it was climate focused.

Chief Deputy Clerk McDowell read a written statement by Emily Ernsberger, Herald Times, regarding the distribution of the revenue to the city from the county.

Resolution 20-13 (cont'd)

Rollo asked if transportation was not an option for an economic development local income tax.

Additional Council Questions:

Guthrie responded that it was allowable.

Sandberg asked how the \$4 million would be allocated amongst the units.

Underwood stated that it would be distributed on the same basis as the public safety local income tax, and that the county would get slightly less than the city.

Volan clarified that the total amount raised by the tax was over \$8 million and that roughly \$4 million would go to the city and county, each.

Underwood responded that that was correct, and that the total raised was \$8.7 million dollars.

Piedmont-Smith asked why the proposal was an economic development local income tax increase, rather than a certified shares increase.

Hamilton commented that it was to meet the needs that were identified and that fit the economic development proposal.

Piedmont-Smith asked if there was a difference in approach if the income tax council wanted to increase the amount distributed through certified shares.

Hamilton stated that he did not think it was a different path.

Guthrie confirmed that it was the same process.

Piedmont-Smith asked for further clarification on why the economic development local income tax increase was selected.

Guthrie clarified that it was because the biggest need was the creation of jobs, the economy, and climate change which was intricately involved with the economy. Guthrie continued that another consideration was that it could be placed in a separate fund for transparency.

Smith stated that several constituents have told him that there hadn't been enough time to consider the local income tax increase and asked if council members wanted to comment on how they feel about that.

Volan explained that the schedule was such because the process for properly enacting the tax, and for giving the other units a full 30-days to review, made the hard date for adoption September 17 in order to implement the increase on January 1. Volan continued that he chose the schedule for fairness to the other units.

Stephen Lucas, Council Attorney, clarified that the city council, as a member of the tax council, would propose an ordinance to the Monroe County Tax Council by way of Resolution 20-13 and that the County Auditor had up to ten days to distribute it to the other tax council members. Lucas further clarified that after the other tax council members received the ordinance, they had up to 30 days to consider and act on it. Lucas explained possible outcomes at that point in the process.

Hamilton commented that administration had worked hard to follow the timing demands in the process as per state statute.

Piedmont-Smith asked which ordinance was referenced in the language in Resolution 20-13, specifically item #5, listing an ordinance adopted in 2019.

Guthrie responded that she believed it would have been the local income tax passed last year and guessed it was the public safety local income tax. Guthrie clarified that the proposal was an economic development rate increase and that all other rates would remain the same.

Resolution 20-13 (cont'd)

Rollo stated that the mayor laid out a very good argument and that he appreciated the context. Rollo mentioned that even with the rate increase, we would still be lower than surrounding counties. Rollo commented that a significant portion of the funding would go toward vulnerable members of the community, job development, and accessible transportation, and was focused to a significant degree on climate action. Rollo stated that he would not be as supportive if the plan did not also address social services.

Council Comments:

Sgambelluri stated that it was not compelling to her that 50% of the revenue would come from people making \$100,000 or more. Sgambelluri commented that that was not a consolation if someone had lost their job in recent months and had had to move their savings, and were faced with losing secure housing. Sgambelluri continued that her concern was for the impact on individual households. Sgambelluri stated that the plan also heavily relied on working with community partners and that she would like to hear from those organizations.

Flaherty stated that timing was important and that after this year, it was possible that they would lose any input on local income tax proposals. Flaherty explained that despite several county colleagues caring about issues like climate change, tackling sustainability, and equitable investments in our community, they were seemingly an anti-tax body and that was true prior to COVID-19. Flaherty stated that it was unfortunate that it was a flat tax which affected people in a regressive way, and that it would be great if the state changed that. Flaherty also stated that he would support giving separate taxing authority to cities and counties. Flaherty questioned the current local income tax rate, and asked why the public safety local income tax was okay, and why not cut that tax rate in half and put money back in people's pockets. Flaherty stated that it came down to whether one believed in the power of government to collect taxes to collectively serve the greater good of people, and also that no tax raised could directly benefit every individual that was taxed. Flaherty expressed that he shared Daniel Bingham's views and that we were in the midst of a climate emergency that affected people of color, low income communities, and other marginalized groups by the current system. Flaherty stated that a just and equitable, sustainable economic development solution was needed, which is what the tax was meant to do. Flaherty concluded that transparency, reporting of outcomes, the effectiveness of policies, and decision making needed to have meaningful public involvement and elected officials.

Piedmont-Smith stated that she wanted to point out that it was emphasized that Bloomington had a low tax rate, and would continue to if the tax increase were adopted, but that we also had the highest cost of living and housing costs in the state. Piedmont-Smith explained that she would like to have had more time, but that she understood the concerns about waiting and losing the ability to act at all.

Resolution 20-13 (cont'd)

Smith stated that he had done a poll on NextDoor and three or four people were against the tax increase. Smith also questioned if the proposal was in response to the current health and economic crisis, and that there were certain initiatives that were not necessary when considering the crises. Smith stated that he was concerned that there was \$1.2 million each year for improving bicycle lanes, and considering the tax to be a response to a health and economic crisis, he felt he might not be able to support the proposal. Smith concluded that he was listening to his constituent's comments and looking at the proposal and gathering more information.

Rosenbarger stated that she was leaning in support of the tax, but that her major concern was transparency and accountability. Rosenbarger explained that she understood it was difficult to take money from the community during a pandemic but that the tax was very small and that the good outweighed that part. Rosenbarger concluded that she wanted to make sure to have a good mechanism in place to check it every year and to ensure it was put towards economic justice, racial justice, sustainability, and environmental justice.

Sandberg stated that if they were to vote, she would abstain, and that she did not make decisions lightly and listened before speaking. Sandberg commented that the partnerships were important and that her reservation was the lack of the ability to work with the county colleagues. Sandberg stated that we all knew what the Indiana General Assembly was capable of and how they sometimes targeted Bloomington. Sandberg questioned how to overcome the obstacles and barriers, as a city entity, to be able to fund what the community wanted to fund. Sandberg explained that she believed in government and was not anti-tax, but that she was concerned about the timing of the proposal, and the revised plan. Sandberg stated that it was too large of a project and that her constituents were asking what the money would be used for. Sandberg was also concerned that it would impact people outside of council members' jurisdictions, and preferred to take more time and get more buy in from county counterparts and other community members.

Volan commented that it had been questioned if this was an appropriate use for economic development funds. Volan explained that sustainability had been defined as a form of economic development, and that distributing the money via certified shares required even less specificity in how the money would be used. Volan stated that they've heard of the absurd constraints that our friends in Indianapolis have placed on cities, because they do not value cities. Volan explained and provided examples of the restrictions from the state house specific to Bloomington. Volan clarified that an income tax would have no impact on a household that had lost its income. Volan continued that while the county had written council members requesting that they collaborate with them, they had also made it clear that they did not support the tax. Volan stated that the only thing that the city and county agreed upon was to jointly approach the legislature to ask that they not force the county to raise a tax they did not want, or to only allow regressive taxes. Volan stated that in order to fund local government as it should be funded, he would be a fool to not consider this tax. Volan commended the mayor for being boldly proactive during these trying times and for doing a good job of advancing the argument for a tax like the one proposed, including the point of the low rate for this locality in the state, country, and world. Volan stated that the mayor had advanced a plan with

specifics and that his questions pertain to those specifics. Volan questioned if trail projects merited special spending, or curbside composting, or helping a few people own housing. Volan concluded that he is leaning towards being in favor of the tax, but questioned some parts of the plan, and believed that the council should have more say in how the money was spent. Volan continued that if more time was needed for his colleagues to get on board with the proposal, then it was not out of the question to extend beyond September 16.

Resolution 20-13 (cont'd)

Flaherty moved and it was seconded to postpone the vote on Resolution 20-13 until September 16. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Vote to postpone the vote on Resolution 20-13 until September 16, 2020 [10:21pm]

Piedmont-Smith moved and it was seconded to introduce and read Ordinance 20-16 by title and synopsis only. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. McDowell read the legislation by title and synopsis.

Ordinance 20-16 To establish the Sustainable Development Non-Reverting Fund and to amend Title 2 of the Bloomington Municipal Code entitled "Administration and Personnel" (Adding Chapter 2.35 Entitled "Sustainable Development Fund Advisory Commission")

Lucas provided information regarding the Jack Hopkins Social Services Fund application. There were no additional council meetings to discuss.

COUNCIL SCHEDULE [10:23pm]


Piedmont-Smith moved and it was seconded to adjourn. The motion was approved by voice vote.


ADJOURNMENT [10:25pm]

APPROVED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana upon this 18 day of August, 2021.

APPROVE:

ATTEST:

  
Jim Sims, PRESIDENT  
Bloomington Common Council

  
Nicole Bolden, CLERK  
City of Bloomington



## **Mayor John Hamilton: Remarks to City Council on ED-LIT Proposal**

Why are we here? What is the problem we are trying to address? We are here because city revenues do not match our needs. Nor our challenges. Nor our values. Like we did in 2016, when we acknowledged that revenues for public safety did not match our community's needs and expectations (for well trained, equipped, and funded public safety systems), and this Council passed a 0.25% PS-LIT. Today, our community is reeling from a pandemic and the resultant economic recession. We need to help our families get jobs. We need to protect each other with a strong social safety net, and to ensure that economic recovery forward is inclusive and just, for everyone. We also need to address racial injustice that persists in our community. And we need to do our part responding to the climate emergency. These are very big challenges, and it's important to mention that our basic government services are also under stress. We expect to face significant revenue pressures in the coming 2-4 years, as a result of the recession and of increased demands for service.

The positive news is that as we address these challenges, we will be creating the kind of community that matches our values and will offer a higher quality of life to all, and particularly to those in our community who struggle to meet their family needs and fulfill their opportunities.

More positive news is we already have taken or are taking appropriate steps. With important investments over the past several years. And with Recover Forward part 1, for 2020, w \$2 million being deployed as we speak, toward these goals. And with Recover Forward part 2, embedded in the 2021 budget that we've outlined, and will work together on in the coming weeks. Tonight is about part 3, how we assure ongoing commitment to and investment in this progress. To help Bloomington recover and thrive.

I'm here tonight to urge the City Council to support an Economic Development Local Income Tax or ED-LIT increase of 0.25%. To generate about \$4MM/yr to address these challenges and help our families move ahead. Will discuss the kinds of investments below.

Briefly on the How: we propose to create a new separate and discrete city fund, into which ED-LIT revenues will flow, and from which they will be appropriated annually. Under state law, a Capital Plan is to be provided by the executive to guide expenditures, and I commit to you that we will work together to develop that plan annually, with full and regular transparency, and accountability to, and input from, our community. In a few minutes, I will be presenting AN outline of a POTENTIAL plan. But it's critical to note this is just a preliminary outline. It shows some of what is needed, and what can be accomplished with this ED-LIT. (It also shows many things that cannot be achieved without it.) But ahead of us is a lot of dialogue and collective planning to refine an actual plan, after the ED-LIT is enacted.

Let's consider the When of the ED-LIT. As you know, to generate additional local revenues, there are few choices beyond a LIT. Property taxes are determined by state formula, with a prescribed growth in the levy each year that we cannot exceed. Most other revenue sources are similarly formulaic, such as the gas tax or state or federal appropriations. The state legislature has allowed basically only the Local Income Tax as how local governments can achieve needed revenues. They have also established the LIT Council and very specific voting procedures to adopt a LIT.

If the ED-LIT is in place before November 1, it becomes effective January 1 next year. We know the legislation has indicated concern about even the current LIT approach. The past session, earlier this year, (after I announced plans to pursue), they changed voting, to limit the ability of cities with the majority of votes in their counties to enact a LIT. And this provision lapses May 2021, clearly indicating plans to adjust again in the coming session. Some legislative proposals this past spring would have removed a city's ability to vote altogether. That is, it is not clear the LIT Council and we will have the authority effectively to enact this revenue after 10/31 (legislative change in spring could remove any tax not in place already.)

So Who needs to act: to pass before 10/31, need City Council to act by 9/16, to allow other jurisdictions of LIT Council their statutory chance to weigh in, vote, discuss, hear from the public, etc. So full LIT Council, as established by state law, can review and act on the proposal. (as we did in 2016).

Two important asides: We are following the LIT rules established by the state legislature. It's important to note that for many years, municipalities have sought permission from the legislature to enact their own

LITs. Repeat that. But the legislature has always denied that local authority and required countywide taxes. We absolutely will seek again this coming year that city authority -- and look forward to pursuing that with our county colleagues. And let me say tonight clearly if the state legislature finally does give municipalities that authority, and if other local jurisdictions decide they don't want/need the revenue after this ED-LIT is passed, I would and will advocate to rescind this ED-LIT and pass a city-only LIT. But let me be equally clear tonight, that I do not believe we can let the city's future depend on the benevolence of the state legislature. By enacting the ED-LIT we are protecting our future, while also preserving indeed perhaps supporting the opportunity to work with the legislature to encourage additional flexibility. All of that weighs in the timing of this LIT.

A second aside is about the nature of the LIT. It is a flat tax on household income reported to the state. We are not allowed to impose a progressive income tax. (I'll share data about that in a moment, but again, the hand we are dealt with is the option of a fixed LIT). I will look forward to appealing to the legislature to encourage more just and appropriate progressive local tax options as well.

Back to the main question and to conclude this intro with the principles involved. Budgets are our values. Beyond the basic services, we must assure, of course, public safety, infrastructure, regulation, our budgets embody what we value for our community and our people. We in Bloomington invest in the quality of life, and we believe in opportunity for all. In these very challenging times, we must be countercyclical, we must assure that our community invests in economic justice, so some people aren't left behind -- now, or as we recover. We must invest in racial justice, so we continue our progress to overcome the legacies and present realities of racial discrimination deep in our country's and community's history. We must embrace the challenge of the climate emergency, understanding this is a collective responsibility, requiring collective action, and that means us. We do all this, knowing that as we invest in these values, we are investing in each other, we are investing in a better future. In all this, our investments must steer toward those most in need, to assure the value of new revenues is an investment in the future of all.

Now I'd like to share some visuals and details. First as to tax capacity. Increasing revenues always should be done only when needed to achieve important goals. And we should be sensitive to overall tax rates. It's very important to note that we in this very progressive community have very low tax rates relative to our peers. Four charts to share briefly. US. Indiana. Bloomington. Monroe County.

As many of us would strongly believe a progressive tax is better than a flat tax, I wanted to share what information we can gather about who pays the LIT tax, and how the burden is shared through our community. One more chart as best we can predict. From Reedy Financial Group. (Reminder: Imperative to invest resources to help those least able to pay, most in need of support.)

Balance between sharing potential plan, with details, versus recognizing community input, council input, for any ultimate plan. But to propose some key investments to put our values into our budgets, I'll outline a potential Capital Plan. Again, this notes what we can do with revenue. And what we generally cannot do without the revenue. Begin with the overview slide. 5-year plan.

...Lower Energy Use / Cost for Build Environment...Improve Mobility Options...Improve Local Food / Other Quality of Life...Job Supports...Housing Support...City Govt Infrastructure.

Closing: these investments are crucial, and they are focused on lifting our whole community up and meeting our challenges. Putting our values into action. When people are struggling, our whole community is struggling, why seek these revenues? Because the government is here to make lives better, to invest these funds to improve lives. To build a better future especially for those at risk. To lower energy bills and save families cash every month. To improve non-auto mobility options to eliminate the need for a car. To bolster our social safety net with more Jack Hopkins funds that will serve tens of thousands. To help protect hundreds of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. To help individuals struggling to get into the workplace, or back into the workplace, or to get a better-paying job. To support child care for low-income working families. To help local farmers and local artists make a living. To help bridge the digital divide. To help first-time homeowners actually purchase that home. To plant hundreds of trees, especially in underplanted areas of the city. This is government investing in our future.

These are investments worth doing. If we DO NOT pass the ED-LIT, we will not be able to do these things and things like them. We will face serious restrictions on our ability to meet basic services and help in the recovery.

Some friends and colleagues in county government have indicated their opposition to this proposal. I respect their views of their own needs, and of course they will have flexibility of how to use the revenues that would come to them -- whether to allocate to other jurisdictions, or strengthen reserves for tough times ahead, or otherwise redistribute them. And we look forward to working together to convince the legislature to give us all more flexibility. But for us, in Bloomington, this is the choice to put our progressive values into action, to be countercyclical, and to help recovery to include all of us, and move us closer to economic, racial and climate justice. I strongly encourage your support for this ED-LIT proposal and welcome your questions and comments.