

Email Received from mlarso@msn.com on Sunday, 5/31/26:

To the Mayor, City Council Members, and Economic Development Officials:

I urge you to reject—or at minimum delay approval of—the proposed Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district for any high-impact development project, including the proposed Monarch Data Center, until the public receives complete information regarding infrastructure requirements, utility impacts, taxpayer exposure, and long-term fiscal consequences.

Rockford faces an estimated \$9.5 million budget deficit, making this a particularly important time to scrutinize any proposal that diverts future property tax growth. By design, a TIF captures increased tax revenue that would otherwise support the city's general fund, schools, libraries, parks, public safety, road maintenance, and other essential services.

At a time when city leaders are discussing budget shortfalls and financial challenges, residents deserve a clear explanation of why future tax growth should be redirected into a TIF district rather than used to help strengthen public finances.

The issue is not whether development is good or bad. Economic growth is important. The issue is whether incentives should be approved before critical information is disclosed and fully understood by both elected officials and taxpayers.

The public has heard promises of jobs, investment, and economic benefits. What remains unclear are the costs, risks, and long-term obligations that may accompany these projects.

For the Monarch Data Center and any similar large-scale development, key questions remain:

- What are the full infrastructure requirements at buildout?
- What are the electrical demands during initial phases compared with future phases?
- Can ComEd provide the necessary capacity without significant upgrades?
- What infrastructure improvements will be required?
- Who will ultimately pay for those improvements?
- Will utility customers or taxpayers bear any portion of those costs?
- What are the projected tax revenues with and without the TIF?

These are fundamental facts, not minor details.

The public deserves to know whether proposed developments represent only the first stage of much larger infrastructure commitments that could require additional substations, transmission upgrades, road improvements, water infrastructure, or other public investments.

If ComEd has completed studies regarding capacity, projected demand, infrastructure needs, costs, or timelines, those findings should be publicly released. If such studies are not complete, that alone is reason enough to postpone approval.

Transparency is not anti-development. Transparency is what makes development accountable.

Before approving this TIF, the City Council should require public disclosure of:

- Full infrastructure and utility impact studies.
- ComEd capacity and infrastructure assessments.
- Responsibility for all upgrade costs.
- Expected tax revenues with and without the TIF.
- A detailed analysis of how the TIF affects Rockford's current fiscal challenges and future revenue needs.

Approving a TIF without this information asks residents to accept financial risks and opportunity costs they cannot fully evaluate.

If these projects are truly beneficial for Rockford, transparency should strengthen public support, not weaken it.

Until detailed information regarding infrastructure requirements, utility capacity, cost responsibility, taxpayer impacts, and long-term fiscal consequences is publicly disclosed, approving this TIF would be premature and inconsistent with responsible stewardship of public resources.

Rockford taxpayers deserve answers before incentives are granted—not afterward.

I respectfully request that this letter be entered into the official public record as part of the proceedings related to this proposed TIF.

Respectfully,

Mark Larson

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