

First, let me assert that I'm a fan of SMC. I think it's great they are here and I want them to stay. I like them the way I like all my friends and neighbors that live here...people who all pay their taxes because that's what it takes to live in a community.

When SMC first moved here we were generous to them. We offered them a tax break then, they took advantage of it and thrived. Good for them...good for Noblesville.

But now that they've been here for a few years and want to expand, it makes no sense to extend a further tax break considering **where** they want to expand. It's clear we aren't working within the spirit of the law that permits these abatements. It says right in the resolution that the land be undesirable because of things like lack of development, obsolescence or substandard building. We're talking about building on some Noblesville most valuable greenfields here.

I don't blame SMC for asking. We've conditioned businesses to ask for concessions from communities by using these tools inappropriately for years. But it's incumbent on you, as representatives of the taxpayers, to push back and say no. We love you SMC, we want you here, but we need you to pay your way like everyone else.

I was a sales manager for many years and my reps would constantly come to me with requests from customers to give a break on ad rates. My response was always the same: you aren't selling the value of what your offering. If you do a good job selling the value you can justify your price.

I think we need to do a better job of selling Noblesville's value. We pat ourselves on the back a lot here. and love to talk about what a great place this is. But these kinds of requests indicate to me that maybe we don't believe it. If we have to pay companies to expand here, maybe we aren't confident that we're as great as we say we are.

It's not like we don't need the money. Just a couple of years ago you had to raise taxes just to pay for basic infrastructure maintenance...repaving alleys, sprucing up the downtown. I suspect if we hadn't been giving away millions in tax abatements perhaps we wouldn't have had to raise taxes for basic maintenance.

From the documents I read it seems the tax savings to SMC over the 10 year period will be about \$7 million. If we took that money and used it for some real economic development in areas that really are economically disadvantaged, with some vision and initiative we could really get something started with that money.

Recently I was at a meeting in Fishers where IKEA bragged that they opened their store with no economic incentives from the city, so it is possible to land good businesses without incentives. One thing is certain: paying companies to stay and build in your community is truly a race to the bottom. It reduces Noblesville to a commodity...something to be sold to the highest bidder. We're much more than that and we need to do a better job of convincing SMC and other businesses of that. I say to SMC: please stay here, grow here, thrive here, but pay your own way like everyone else.