Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts are a big deal in Chicago and a very big deal in your ward. TIF districts were originally created to give subsidies and public resources to private businesses to help them with construction projects and developments. They were intended to spur development in our poorest and most blighted communities.

what is a TIF?

In 2011 TIFs extracted $455 million in property taxes from the TIF districts across the city. The 280 suburban TIF districts diverted $275 million. In total, the 443 TIF districts in Cook County captured $729 million in property taxes in 2011.

how much have TIFs collected?

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how does a TIF work?

When a TIF district is created, all the property taxes generated by the district in that year (called the "base amount") are tallied. After that, all property tax increases above the base (the "increment") are channeled to the TIF district.

a percentage of your property taxes is taken from TIFs, yet this this is what your property tax bill looks like:

Pay only this amount:

2008 Second Installment Property Tax Bill

TIF calculator

Total amount of property taxes collected by the Englewood neighborhood TIF from 2001 through 2011.

never before reported!

at the end of 2011, there was $1.7 billion left in TIF bank accounts... yet the City claimed a budget deficit of $636 million at the start of 2012.

follow us @civiclabchicago and @tifreport
WHERE HAS THE MONEY GONE? (inception of TIF program through 2010)

- under $1 million
- $1 million-$4.9 million
- $5 million-9.9 million

58% public

42% non-profit

is this the best way to spend the property taxes collected by the TIF districts?

Our mission:
We are a group of volunteers who have an interest in finding out how Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts work in Chicago and Cook County. We want to tell the story of how they impact Chicago on a ward-by-ward basis. We understand that TIFs extract property taxes from the ward and also return them to the ward in the form of projects and grants. Some of the property taxes collected from the ward return to the ward as awards to private developers and businesses and some of those taxes return in the form of new public buildings, projects and structural improvements. How much is taken and how much is returned and for what purposes? Those are the questions we are seeking to answer.

brought to you by: civiclab.us

The CivicLab is a social enterprise that brings together activists and educators with technology experts and designers to build new tools that result in smarter civic education projects, more effective community improvement efforts and deeper initiatives that investigate and expose the workings of local government. We seek to investigate civic matters, educate citizens and activate public engagement. We can always use volunteers who are able to investigate, design, code, illustrate, explain, teach, train and produce events. Visit us online at civiclab.us, or email us at info@civiclab.us.

LEARN MORE!
CONTACT US!
SUPPORT OUR WORK!

• Invest in the CivicLab and the TIF Illumination Project
• Sign our petition to put TIFs on the property tax bill
• Volunteer
• Give us feedback and suggestions
• Investigate TIFs in your ward

tifreports.com/support-us

This graphic was designed by Carlyn So. The data research was done by William Drew based on original work by Cory Mollet with assistance from Abe Epton, Harry Osoff, Rachel Metea, Robert Ross and Benjamin Sugar. The text is by Tom Tresser. The CivicLab and TIF Illumination Project logos were designed by Virginia Duran. The CivicLab website was designed by Lisa Ghasiolf. The members of the CivicLab Advisory Council are Virginia Carlson, Shawn Healy, Natalie Potts, Rebecca Reynolds, and Rachel Weber. Printing of this poster is partially supported by a grant from The Crossroads Fund. For more information, go to crossroadsfund.org