Written by Letter to Editor
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As the October 23 referendum approaches, we would like to add our names to the growing list of supporters for River Renaissance. This is a community investment that will yield extremely high returns in a number of ways. The AgTech Center will house business-development services to help jumpstart new companies. The River Music History Center will not only preserve the historic Redstone building but be a major cultural center dedicated to celebrating the rich musical heritage associated with the Mississippi River. The annual Bluesfest and Bix Fest will happen every day of the year. The Adler-stage expansion will allow us the opportunity to experience world-class entertainment that at the present time is bypassing us because of backstage shortcomings. The Figge Arts Center will be a one-of-a-kind facility where all members of the community can create, view, and experience the arts. This center, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institute, will deliver educational programs throughout the community and the state using the latest in Internet and ICN technologies.

There are still more reasons to support this project. Construction of River Renaissance facilities (all of which are flood-proof) will bring more jobs and new capital investment to our community. An improved quality of life will help attract new business to the area and encourage our young people to remain in the area instead of leaving for more promising and exciting places. A vital, growing community will lead to a larger tax base with resulting lower taxes for individuals. A community that lacks the vision and desire to move forward will certainly move backward and create more hardships for everyone.

The Vision Iowa funding is our gambling dollars coming back to us. It is money that cannot be designated for streets, sewers, and other basic services, but it is money that can and will go to other cities in Iowa if we say no. It's up to us. We must vote *yes* and move on to bigger and better things, or we will be a community whose future is behind us.

Larry and Mary Tierney,
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