

G.R. police plan up to the voters

► *A proposal to hire 95 new officers would raise the city income tax and lower property taxes.*

By Doug Guthrie
The Grand Rapids Press

12/14/94

Grand Rapids voters might not like tax increases but city commissioners are counting on the appeal of a tax cut and fears about crime to win approval of a \$5 million plan to hire 95 more police officers.

Voters will be asked to raise their city income tax 30 percent while lowering municipal property taxes 20 percent to meet the cost of adding enough officers to patrol every neighborhood in town.

Commissioners voted Tuesday to place the proposal on a March 28 ballot.

The financing package was crafted with the city's last failed bid for an income tax hike in mind.

Voters soundly rejected a rate increase in 1989, but a separate amendment that would have reduced property taxes was welcomed by a wide margin.

This time, the increase and decrease are joined. The city's income tax for residents would rise from 1 percent to 1.3 percent. The rate for non-residents working in Grand Rapids would go from 0.5 percent to 0.65 percent.

Meanwhile, property taxes would be reduced by 2 mills over two years. The city's annual net gain would be slightly more than \$5 million.

A separate vote will be taken on whether

residents want the commitment to law enforcement to be made permanent by amending the city charter to dedicate at least 32 percent of the general operating fund to the police department budget. The city now spends \$24 million, or 28 percent of its annual budget on law enforcement.

Mayor John Logie said the second ballot question is essential to allay fears that some future city commission could alter the commitment with different budget priorities.

Logie told commissioners he "believes there is a great deal of support" for this.

Grand Rapids Police Chief William Hegarty has promised all of the money would be used to hire patrol officers without the addition of supervisors or administrators. He has outlined a plan to add 71 officers to street patrol duty, 19 as detectives and five to work in the vice crimes unit.

"This is about need. It is about providing police services to the majority of people in Grand Rapids," said Hegarty, who has complained for years that the number of his officers per citizen is among the lowest in the state, while the calls for service have steadily risen.

Under the current system, patrol officers operate within three large districts that basically split the city into north, south and west sides.

"Parts of the city rarely see a patrol car while violent activities in certain areas dominate our attention," Hegarty said.

A specialized enforcement unit has concentrated even more police attention on high crime areas.

TAX

12/14/94

Voters will decide on adding to police force

CONTINUED FROM A1

Under his proposal, Hegarty would commit officers to patrolling 32 smaller districts, bringing a police presence to every neighborhood in the city, he said.

Hegarty told commissioners that his department has done all it can to save money while demand for police officers has risen steadily.

Money-saving moves in the past have replaced sworn police officers with civilians in technical and clerical jobs and a staff of more than 65 senior citizen volunteers have taken on even more tasks.

"There is nothing more we can civilianize or volunteerize," Hegarty said.

Hegarty said his department has applied for and received more state and federal grants than any other police force in the state. But the more than \$2 million in funds are restricted to programs involving the city's most crime-ridden neighborhoods.

And Hegarty hopes no one will confuse this proposal with all the hype that surrounded the federal government's 1993 Crime Bill which had promised to put more officers on the streets of U.S. cities.

Grand Rapids was granted enough to hire 17 new officers. But

stipulations mandate assignment of those officers to programs in neighborhoods with the highest crime.

"The Clinton Crime Bill does absolutely nothing for the majority of people in this city," said Hegarty. "It was targeted to help parts of this city where 11 percent of our citizens reside. This ballot question is requesting support for the entire city without restricting it to any neighborhood."

Logie pledged last year to work toward hiring 100 more police officers. He said he would examine the city's budget in hopes of finding ways to fund the hirings, even if it meant cuts in other city services. Logie said then that a dedicated millage increase would be considered "only as a last resort."

In October, commissioners directed city lawyers to craft ballot language for a 2.2-mill property tax increase that would have raised about \$6 million per year.

The strategy changed as commissioners and city staffers discussed the issue over the past month and received encouragement from an annual survey on city services mailed to 3,000 residents. The survey indicated residents are willing to invest more in police protection.

“Half of our neighborhoods are unpatrolled every day.”

WILLIAM HEGARTY
Grand Rapids police chief

Hegarty sees new officers all across city

► *The chief promises all neighborhoods will see full-time patrols if the March ballot proposal passes.*

By C.T. Revere
The Grand Rapids Press

1/25/95

Passage of a March ballot proposal to raise money for 95 new police officers would mean full-time patrols in all Grand Rapids neighborhoods plus additional detectives to target career criminals and drug peddlers, Grand Rapids Police Chief William Hegarty said.

"I am asking the people to help us police the kinds of problems that affect them every day," Hegarty said of the March 28 ballot proposal that would raise more than \$5 million. "Half of our neighborhoods are unpatrolled every day."

POLICE

1-25-95

Chief envisions full-time patrols in all areas

CONTINUED FROM A1

but the bill required those officers be assigned to patrol high-crime neighborhoods where just 11 percent of the city residents live, Hegarty said.

Grand Rapids Mayor John Logie said the insufficient number of officers has had the effect of "stretching the thin blue line even thinner."

The department has fewer officers than it did in 1980, Logie said. Meantime, the average number of arrests made annually by a Grand Rapids officer has risen from 24 in 1980 to 70 in 1994, according to police department figures.

The Rev. George Heartwell, a 3rd Ward city commissioner, said he hopes additional officers can curb drug activity that often leads to violent crime.

"While it may not prevent these things from happening, it certainly will reduce the incidence of drug

sales and activity that lead to these incidents," Heartwell said.

But with more officers making more arrests, there will be an added burden on the court system that also must be addressed, he said.

"We're not looking at adding more district judges and the Circuit Courts are already bottled up."

Voter approval of the proposal would increase the income tax for city residents from 1 percent to 1.3 percent and non-residents working in the city would see their income tax increase from 0.5 percent to 0.65 percent.

To offset the burden, the proposal would reduce property taxes by 2 mills over two years.

The proposal also will ask residents to amend the city's charter to dedicate at least 32 percent of the operating budget to the police department. The city now dedicates \$28 million to the police department, or 28 percent of the budget.

proposal passes.

1/25/95

By C.T. Revere
The Grand Rapids Press

Passage of a March ballot proposal to raise money for 95 new police officers would mean full-time patrols in all Grand Rapids neighborhoods plus additional detectives to target career criminals and drug peddlers, Grand Rapids Police Chief William Hegarty said.

"I am asking the people to help us police the kinds of problems that affect them every day," Hegarty said of the March 28 ballot proposal that would raise more than \$5 million. "Half of our neighborhoods are unpatrolled every day."

The proposal to raise the city income tax by 30 percent - while cutting property taxes by 20 percent - would allow the department to put 71 more patrol officers on the streets to supplement the 17 officers placed in problem neighborhoods through the federal crime bill, Hegarty said.

The additional patrol officers would help the department deal with the many routine problems - such as burglary, purse snatchings, disorderly youth, speeding vehicles - that plague all the city's neighborhoods, Hegarty said.

"The problems that hurt neighborhoods the most are never read about or seen as part of a news broadcast," he said.

Passage of the millage also would create jobs for 24 additional investigators, including 19 detectives who would help expand the habitual offender program that targets career criminals and deals with youth gangs, Hegarty said.

The other five investigators would be added to the department's vice unit to deal with drug-related problems, said Hegarty, who with other millage campaign leaders was to provide the details at a news conference today on how the additional officers would be used if the millage passed.

Grand Rapids' 277 sworn officers represent 1.5 officers for every 1,000 residents in the city. That figure puts the city's police staffing below the national average of 2.2 officers and well below the Michigan average of 2.8.

Adding 95 officers to the force would mean two officers for every 1,000 residents, a number sufficient to staff all the city's 32 patrol sectors on all three eight-hour shifts, Hegarty said.

President Clinton's Crime Bill provided funding to hire 17 officers in October 1994,

CREATIVE CRIMEFIGHTING

Cities scramble to see what works and what doesn't

By Mark Fritz
The Associated Press

2/5/95

ST. LOUIS — Here in St. Louis, police are knocking on selected doors and making a polite but pointed pitch to startled parents: We think your kid has a gun. Fill out this form and we'll come in and get it.

Nobody gets arrested, nobody goes to jail. Just waive your right to a search warrant and let the cops poke around the closet and peek under a mattress. Keep your kid, fork over his firearm.

"I don't care if he's got a bazooka in there," said St. Louis police Sgt. Simon Risk. "We just want the gun."

The consent-to-search form used in high-crime areas of St. Louis is popular but unproven, and it's being copied by other cities regardless.

It is just one tool in one town in a country where the climate of fear has turned virtually every community into a glorified crime lab, a felony think tank.

Like never before, U.S. cities are furiously tapping each other for ideas and competing against each other for grants in a great race to develop new models for crimefighting, magic bullets to deter the terror of the '90s: violent youth, armed and loaded.

Many of these new programs involve aggressive police techniques that not long ago would have been dismissed as pure harassment, racial and otherwise.

Aggressive techniques

In Kansas City and Indianapolis, police use virtual drive-by enforcement, sending special teams into high-crime areas with a free-ranging mandate to stop cars, search bodies, find guns.

In Denver, authorities are visiting licensed gun dealers they think — but can't prove — are selling guns to gangsters, and urging them to get out of the business. Many have.

In St. Louis, a black teen out on a

Local officials experiment with creative plans

The Grand Rapids Press

Grand Rapids has experimented with several creative — and controversial — crime-fighting programs in recent years, some more effective than others.

Hoping for a more long-term solution, city commissioners are now lobbying for an income tax increase that would raise some \$5 million to put 95 new officers on the street. Residents will vote on that measure March 28.

In stressing the need for the new officers, however, Mayor John Logie warned against the "magic bullet" theory that "a single antidote or activity... is going to solve the problem."

The city's efforts have included:
■ A so-called "padlock ordinance" that allows the city to board up homes that have been the site of repeated criminal activity. A

ror of the '90s: violence.

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In St. Louis, a black teen out on a snowy night, changing his cadence when a police car approaches, is fair game to be hit with the pinpoint beam of a searchlight, stopped, and patted down.

Police appear to operate with impunity here because the high-crime neighborhoods they target have demanded it during long meetings with residents too scared to go outside when the street lights come on.

"As Malcolm X said, by any means necessary," said Charles Mischeaux, president of the St. Louis NAACP. "If they're going to be looking for guns, it doesn't make any sense to go into the upper-class neighborhoods. It's black on black."

One of the hot models for fighting gun crimes began in 1991 in Kansas City, where University of Maryland criminologist Lawrence Sherman designed a system in which special police patrols were dispatched to find guns in an 80-block area where the homicide rate was 20 times the national average.

The cops had broad discretion to stop and search cars and people. Gun crimes plunged 49 percent and, most importantly, didn't rise in neighboring areas — meaning bad behavior was abating, not merely moving on.

Now, Sherman is building the same system for the entire city of Indianapolis.

Last month, Washington, D.C. said it would copy it. Los Angeles is among roughly 30 cities that are interested.

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In stressing the need for the new officers, however, Mayor John Logie warned against the "magic bullet" theory that "a single antidote or activity... is going to solve the problem."

The city's efforts have included:
■ A so-called "padlock ordinance" that allows the city to board up homes that have been the site of repeated criminal activity. A local judge upheld the ordinance last year after it was challenged by a rental property owners' association.

Logie said he considers that a sign of success. "I have received positive feedback that landlords are more caring and concerned about who is in their property and what they're doing," he said.

■ A gun buy-back program in January 1994 that attracted so many guns that donations couldn't immediately keep up with the demand. More than 1,000 guns were collected at three locations in the city during the 15-hour program. About \$47,000 was issued to sellers.

■ The Neighborhood Service Center concept, which aims to centralize police and social services in one location in the city's most troubled neighborhoods. Funded by police drug forfeiture money, three such centers are now operating.



CITY & REGION

THE GRAND RAPIDS PRESS



TOM RADEMACHER

I was all wet about mules

► *Come on in, the water's fine. But don't expect water aerobics — and those who exercise that way — to be a pushover.*

Anyone who engages in observation mixed with opinion stands to be haunted later by something he or she has said or done.

I feel that way about "high-kicking mules," my assessment in a column last year of women wending their way

Ex-mayor, mom of victims lead drive for cops

By Kelley Root
The Grand Rapids Press

Former Grand Rapids Mayor Gerald Helmholtz and a local woman who lost two sons to violent crime will co-chair a campaign to put 95 more police officers on the city's streets.

The campaign, "Safety '95," is aimed at winning voter approval of a March 28 ballot proposal that would raise city income taxes by 30 percent — and lower property taxes 20 percent — to hire the new officers.

The campaign was to kick off at a press conference this morning. It is being coordinated by former Silent Observer director David Doyle, who led the city's successful library millage campaign last year.

"It boils down to a basic issue of safety," Doyle said Wednesday. "Do you feel safe in your neighborhood? It's our belief people want to feel safer and want more police coverage."

Helmholtz, mayor from 1983 to 1991, said he agreed to chair the campaign "out of frustration."

"Even back when I was mayor, we did not have sufficient funds to fund the police

“There is no doubt in my mind that we need more police officers on the street. This is a good way to get there.”

ELLA RAMIREZ
mother of two slaying victims

department to bring it up to the levels they needed," he said. "As crime statistics go up, it makes that need even greater."

Ella Ramirez, whose two sons were murdered in separate incidents in 1993 and 1994, was expected to appear at this morning's press conference. On Wednesday, a jury began deliberating the fate of the younger son's accused killer. The jury is to resume deliberations today.

"There is no doubt in my mind that we need more police officers on the street," Ramirez said in a prepared statement. "This is a good way to get there."

David Jason Peoples-Ramirez, 18, was

shot and killed July 20, 1994, at Franklin Street and Neland Avenue SE. About a year earlier, on June 17, 1993, his brother — Calvin DeWayne Joseph, 26 — was found dead in the closet of an apartment at 8 Wealthy St. SE. No arrests have been made.

Police Chief William Hegarty said escalating violence has pushed the city's resources to the limit, and that his understaffed department can now regularly patrol only half of the city's neighborhoods.

If the ballot issue is approved, the department will assign 71 of the new officers to patrol units and 24 to investigatory units, Hegarty said. It will allow all neighbor-

hoods to be covered at all times, he added. "The number and severity of the neighborhood problem — things that affect people every day — is growing," Hegarty said. "The ability of the police department to respond or assign patrols to neighborhoods is diminishing."

Grand Rapids voters soundly rejected an income tax increase in 1989, but this time, city officials are hoping the promise of a property tax cut will make the hike more palatable.

The income tax for residents would rise from 1 percent to 1.3 percent. Non-residents working in Grand Rapids would see their rates go from 0.5 percent to 0.65 percent.

Meanwhile, property taxes would be reduced by 2 mills over two years. The city's annual net gain would be slightly more than \$5 million.

Voters will be asked separately whether they want to amend the city charter to dedicate at least 32 percent of the general operating fund to the police department budget. The city now spends \$24 million, or 28 percent, of its annual budget on law enforcement.

City officials say that second question is necessary to convince voters the money won't be spent on other priorities.

Crime drops as city asks for more police

► Major offenses are at the lowest level in more than a decade; officials hope that will not upset the police tax request.

By Ken Kolker
The Grand Rapids Press

2/13/95

At a time when Grand Rapids officials are campaigning for a tax hike to hire more police officers, new figures show the city's crime rate dropped last year to its lowest level in more than a decade.

Major crimes dropped by 4 percent in 1994, led by declines in murders, sexual assaults and larcenies, according to a year-end crime report obtained by The Press.

Mayor John Logie and Police Chief William Hegarty, while pleased with the declines, said Friday they hope the results won't keep voters from approving the police tax on March 28.

"I'm certainly pleased that the trend is in the right direction," Logie said. "But that's nothing to relieve my concern that we have to beef up this force or face serious problems. The same issues are still there, the same needs are still there, and the same justifications are still there."

The drop in serious crime continued a downward trend that began three years ago, after the city recorded one of its worst crime years.

Since 1991, when major crimes peaked at more than 17,600, the number has dropped by 12 percent, to fewer than 15,500 this year.

Major crimes include murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny, auto theft and arson.

After a record 34 murders in 1993, the number of homicides dropped by nearly a third, while sexual assaults declined more than 32 percent, the year-end report shows. Arsons showed the biggest increase from 1993 to 1994, but the number reported - 123 - was still below that recorded in 1992.

Hegarty attributed the declines in most categories to the "productivity" of his officers and his department's work with inner-city neighborhoods.

The department assigned a small staff of officers to a new program last summer, and Hegarty held a series of neighborhood meetings to identify needs and define methods of delivering services.

The Neighborhood Service Program instituted a new method of personal contact for specially assigned officers within the city's highest-crime neighborhoods.

Officers have worked directly with neighborhood crime prevention workers and with residents of target areas on the city's Southeast

FALLING CRIME RATE

New figures show a big drop last year in many serious crimes in the city of Grand Rapids.

GR Crime Stats	1993	1994	Percent Change
Murder	34	24	-30.0
Rape	352	271	-23.0
Robbery	832	875	5.2
Assault	1,797	1,813	0.9
Burglary	3,170	3,146	-0.8
Larceny	8,819	8,234	-6.6
Auto Theft	1,065	1,011	-5.1
Arson	78	123	57.7
Total Violent	3,015	2,962	-1.1
Total Property	13,132	12,514	-4.7
Total All	16,147	15,496	-4.0

SOURCE: Grand Rapids Police Department

and West Sides, handling complaints that range from crime control to social welfare.

Meanwhile, increased contact with residents of those areas has resulted in increased intelligence about illegal activities.

Officers made nearly 20,000 arrests last year and responded to nearly 312,000 calls for service - both records, he said.

"It shows very clearly the department is exhaustingly doing a very good job with a handful of people," Hegarty said.

The proposal to raise the city income tax 30 percent, while cutting property taxes 20 percent, would raise \$5 million and put another 71 officers on streets, Hegarty has said.

The department now has 313 sworn officers, including patrol officers, detectives, command officers and others.

All neighborhoods would see patrols around-the-clock, Hegarty has promised. Now, many outlying areas go without regular patrols.

The city also would add 24 detectives - 19 to target career criminals and youth gangs, and four to work on drug-related problems.

Hegarty said he believes the drop in major crime won't be an issue with voters since those aren't the kinds of crimes residents complain most about.

They worry more about such problems as loitering and disorderly teen-agers, destruction of property, loud parties and purse snatchings, he said.

Press reporter Doug Guthrie contributed to this report.



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

NOTICE OF THE LAST DAY OF REGISTRATION FOR THE SPECIAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION TO BE HELD TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 1995 IN THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that any qualified elector of the City of Grand Rapids, Kent County, Michigan, who is not already registered, may register to vote at the Grand Rapids City Clerk's Office, at any Secretary of State Office, or with a Kent County or City of Grand Rapids Deputy Registrar for the Special Municipal Election to be held on Tuesday, March 28, 1995.

THE LAST DAY FOR RECEIVING REGISTRATIONS FOR THE SPECIAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION WILL BE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1995

on which day the Grand Rapids City Clerk's Office will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the purpose of receiving registrations of electors qualified to vote.

At the Special Municipal Election on March 28, 1995, the following questions will be considered:

BALLOT QUESTION I:

UNIFORM CITY INCOME TAX INCREASE

Shall Ordinance No. 94-47, an amendment to the Uniform City Income Tax Ordinance, which increases the annual rate of tax on corporations and resident individuals from 1% to 1.3% and on non-resident individuals from .5% to .65% effective January 1, 1996, be approved?

YES ☐

NO ☐

BALLOT QUESTION II:

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS CHARTER AMENDMENT TO
REQUIRE THE CITY COMMISSION TO ANNUALLY DEDICATE
AN APPROPRIATION OF NOT LESS THAN 32% OF THE CITY
GENERAL OPERATING FUND TO PROVIDE POLICE SERVICES
WHILE BOTH A CITY INCOME TAX OF AT LEAST 1.3% IS IN
EFFECT FOR CORPORATIONS AND RESIDENT INDIVIDUALS
AND A CITY INCOME TAX OF AT LEAST .65% IS IN EFFECT
FOR NON-RESIDENT INDIVIDUALS.

The purpose of this amendment is to require the City Commission to annually dedicate an appropriation of not less than 32% of the City General Operating Fund for police services so long as the city income tax rate is at least 1.3% for corporations and resident individuals and at least .65% for non-resident individuals.

Shall this amendment be adopted?

YES ☐

NO ☐

ONLY REGISTRATIONS RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE FEBRUARY 27, 1995 WILL QUALIFY
PERSONS TO VOTE IN THE SPECIAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON MARCH
28, 1995.

QUALIFICATIONS TO REGISTER TO VOTE:

- Citizen of the United States
- At least 18 years of age on or before March 28, 1995
- Resident of the City of Grand Rapids

Registered voters who have moved within the City limits may update their registration record at the City Clerk's Office in person, or by mailing in a signed notice not later than Monday, February 27, 1995, giving past and present address. If you are in doubt as to the status of your voter registration, please check with the City Clerk's Office at 456-3010 (TDD 456-3001).

YOU MUST BE REGISTERED TO QUALIFY AS A VOTER!

Persons with special needs, as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, should contact Mary Theresa Jester, Acting City Clerk, 300 Monroe NW at 456-3010 (TDD-3001).

Mary Theresa Jester
City Clerk
City of Grand Rapids

- *Tigers spring training is different scene*
SPORTS **B1**
- *Infamous safecracker died in obscurity*
FLAIR **J1**
- *Grammy show has music for every taste*
ENTERTAINMENT **G1**



DIFFERENT STROKES
Educators debate need to match teaching to culture
PERSPECTIVE **E1**

The Grand Rapids Press

200 PAGES

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☆☆☆

MICHIGAN
LOTTERY
MICHIGAN LOTTO

3.20.33.34.43.46

3 tickets share Lotto jackpot

► *Each winning ticket is worth about \$15 million. For the losers, their \$1 only bought them a chance to fantasize about that easy money.*

Press Local and Wire reports

The odds were 14 million to one, but that didn't stop those dreaming of green from buying tickets all over the state. And out of 25 million plays, three lucky tickets beat the odds.

Those tickets, bearing the numbers three, 20, 33, 34, 43 and 46, will share Saturday's jackpot, worth at least \$43 million, lottery officials said.

A single winner collecting the jackpot would have collected \$2.1 million a year for the next 20 years — about \$1.4 million annually after taxes.

In \$1 bills, the money would weigh over

Taxing issues beset cop millage drive

► *A survey shows most residents already feel safe. And the in-your-pocket issue comes up for a vote when residents are filing their federal income tax returns.*

By Kelley Root
The Grand Rapids Press

Phyllis Spelman isn't exactly living in fear in her tidy two-story home on the fringes of southeast Grand Rapids.

She and her husband, Paul, have had police at their door only once during more than 15 years on Kentridge Drive SE — when an anxious son-in-law, unable to reach the couple by telephone, asked officers to check on them.

"I feel safe here," Spelman, 72, says of the neighborhood north of 44th Street, near Kentwood. "It's quiet, it's nice. The only thing we've ever had happen was someone pushed our mailbox over."

It's outlying residents like Spelman — not those in the crime-plagued inner city — that Grand Rapids officials acknowledge they will have to persuade as they lobby for a March 28 income-tax increase to hire 95



First in a series of occasional articles examining the proposed police tax that Grand Rapids voters will decide on March 28.

new police officers.

In short, if the tax is to pass, it will depend largely on how safe people feel, and if they're willing to open their pocketbooks to feel safer. And with a new survey showing most residents feel reasonably safe, that could be a problem.

The city-sponsored poll of 1,003 people — released this month to city commissioners — shows three out of four respondents consider Grand Rapids "acceptably safe" to "very safe," especially in outlying neighborhoods. Even in core-city areas, 70 percent said they do not feel unsafe.

At the same time, however, respondents



A MATTER OF SAFETY

A survey of 1,003 Grand Rapids residents shows 78 percent feel acceptably safe to very safe. West Siders and those in core city neighborhoods felt least safe; residents whose household income exceeds the citywide mean of \$33,000 felt most safe. Here's how residents responded:

No answer	8
Very unsafe	33
Unsafe	183
Acceptable	446
Safe	296
Very safe	37

listed crime as the city's biggest challenge and indicated they support more police on the street.

Two-thirds said they would pay higher property taxes for additional officers.

After beginning the survey in November, the city chose to pursue an income tax instead. But Police Chief William Hegarty

see COP TAX, A19

COP TAX

Its fate depends on those who feel secure

CONTINUED FROM A1

said the response indicates "an awful lot of people are aware of the staffing problem in the police department and want to help."

Plans and problems

Backers of the proposal say the income-tax hike, which would generate \$5 million annually, is needed to ensure all neighborhoods are patrolled consistently.

If passed, residents' income tax would increase from 1 percent to 1.3 percent; for non-residents, the hike would be from .50 percent to .65 percent. At the same time, Grand Rapids property taxes would roll back by 2 mills.

In its most recent quarterly newsletter, the city estimated the average Grand Rapids household — with an income of \$33,000 and a \$63,000 home — would see an income-tax increase of \$99 and a property-tax reduction of \$63, or a net hike of \$36 per year.

To sell residents on the tax, the city's "Safety '95" campaign — headed by former Silent Observer director David Doyle, a veteran of many city tax campaigns — will focus on several themes:

- That Grand Rapids police staffing is lower than the average of other large Michigan cities.

- That an income tax is the best way to pay for more police because it spreads the burden among more people, namely non-residents who work in the city.

- And that extra officers will allow outlying neighborhoods to get faster police response for less-serious crimes such as break-ins, vandalism and delinquent youth.

But there are obstacles. Recently released statistics show the city's crime rate last year was the lowest in more than a decade. The vote also will come at a time when many taxpayers will be feeling the sting of completing their federal and state income-tax returns.

What backers say they will not do is try to scare residents into voting for the hike.

"The last thing anyone wants to do is create fear to sell this issue," Hegarty said.

Still, he added, the need to divert officers to critical inner-city areas has left outer neighborhoods more vulnerable than they used to be.

"The problems of central-city neighborhoods during the last two or three years are rapidly shifting, spreading outward," Hegarty said. "It's the kind of stuff that destroys neighborhoods very quickly — loitering youth, disorderly youth, delinquent youth. Purse snatchings

of older residents. Burglaries of occupied homes during the night."

Outlying areas hold the key

One resident who says she understands that trend is Sherry Savara.

The Southeast Side woman lives in the same neighborhood as Phyllis Spelman. But her views show that residents' perceptions of safety vary even when they live within blocks of each other.

After 18 years on Kendall Street SE, Savara and her family are looking for a new home because "through the years, the neighborhood has changed very much," she said.

Savara doesn't know if she'll support the income-tax hike, because she's not sure how much it will cost. But she doesn't need to be convinced the city needs more police.

"I've had my share of trouble since I've been here," Savara said. "My house was broken into twice in the past year and a half. The police don't come as quickly as you want them to, but I know they're busy."

On the opposite side of town, Patricia Grusnis of Sibley Street NW said she favors the proposal because she remembers beat-pounding cops as a comforting presence during her childhood.

"When I was a kid, there was nothing strange about seeing patrolmen," said Grusnis, 63, a widow who lives on Social Security payments. "They were all over the place."

But Karen Chittenden of nearby Bristol Avenue NW said she and her husband, both working professionals, are inclined to reject the tax hike. They've lived in their far West Side home for five years and have three children, the youngest born this month.

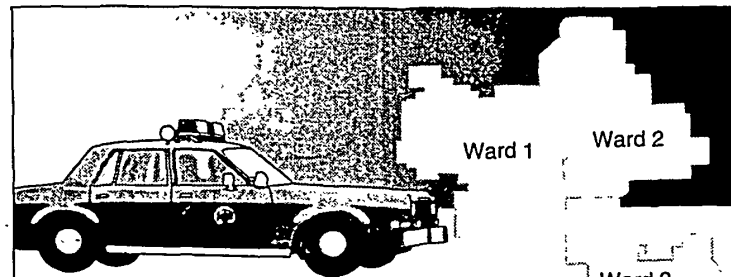
"The reason I don't support an income tax is it penalizes people who work," said Chittenden, 32.

Besides, she said, her neighborhood is generally safe. Recent burglaries caused some neighbors to form a neighborhood watch, but such crime is the exception, she said.

Campaign strategy

Doyle said personal contact with residents will be key to passing the proposal.

"There seems to be support for the issue that we need more police on the street," he said. "That's critical in terms of trying to get people to move on to the next step, which is how do we get the police on the streets."



HOW SAFE DO YOU FEEL?

Percentage of how residents responded to the question in different areas of Grand Rapids.

	Very unsafe	Unsafe	Acceptable	Safe	Very safe
1st Ward	3.7%	21.4%	41.3%	29.3%	3.7%
2nd Ward	2.2%	15.8%	44.9%	31.3%	4.6%
3rd Ward	4%	17.3%	47.4%	28%	2.7%

CORE CITY VS OUTLYING AREAS

Older, lower-income neighborhoods versus more affluent areas on the far Northeast, Southeast and West sides.

	Very unsafe	Unsafe	Acceptable	Safe	Very safe
Core city	5.6%	24%	47.1%	19.8	2.7%
Outlying areas	3.3%	18.2%	44.5%	29.5%	3.7%

Note: Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding of numbers.

PRESS GRAPHIC/ED RIOJAS

He said the city must convince residents that an income-tax hike is the fairest way to spread the tax burden — while fending off cries of "taxation without representation" from non-residents who work in the city, such as Cedar Springs' Herbert Smith.

Smith, manager of Rick's Transmission Service, 830 Lafayette St. SE, says he's in the city only a small part of his week.

"They're not going to be patrolling the roads in front of my house," Smith said. "I don't believe we have representation at all. I don't have a voice in the matter."

Meanwhile, the police chief is hammering home statistics that he says show police staffing is inadequate.

According to Hegarty, Michigan's eight largest cities average 2.8 officers per 1,000 residents, while Grand Rapids' average is 1.5 officers. The statewide average, however, is skewed somewhat by Detroit and its immense number of officers.

And while major crimes overall dropped 12 percent in 1994 from a 1991 high, the city's recent newsletter emphasized that certain violent crimes and drug, weapon and juvenile offenses are up over a decade earlier.

Doyle says no one is trying to scare anybody into voting for more cops, but added he won't apologize for "laying the facts out."

"I don't know anybody in this

campaign who's selling fear and preaching hype," he said. "We're simply saying the police department has been understaffed for years and can no longer do the job they need to do."

The city also needs to convince residents the tax increase will be used for police only. Officials plan to do that through a second question on the ballot that would dedicate 32 percent of the city's general-fund budget to the police department.

So far, there has been no organized opposition.

Mary Milanowski, a longtime anti-tax crusader now on the Grand Rapids school board, said she's undecided about the tax hike, but worries about locking in the police department percentage.

"It presents a problem down the road if we hit a recessionary time," she said. "Other city services are going to suffer."

Milanowski said it's difficult to tell how voters, particularly those on the tax-averse West Side, will go. But it will be interesting to see whether the timing — right before April's tax deadline — will affect the outcome, she said.

"People who get their taxes done prior to (the March 28 vote) will see how much is going to government, and that may make a decision with some people," she said.

Press reporter Ed Golder contributed to this report.

Warning signs before American Eagle crash were ignored by FAA

By Stephen Engelberg and Adam Bryant
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — American Eagle Flight 4184 had been holding for 32 minutes in a chilly drizzle last October when air traffic controllers in Chicago cleared the pilots to make a routine descent from 10,000 to 8,000 feet.

Although the pilots did not know it, a dangerous ridge of ice had built up on the wings, and in a fraction of a second, to their complete and ultimately final terror, the pilots lost control of the ATR-72 turbo prop.

The plane's controls moved on their own, tilting the right wing almost perpendicular to the ground. The pilots wrestled with the aircraft, but the wing tilted violently again, the plane flipped on its back and, without hope of recovery, the plane plunged toward earth.

All 68 people aboard were killed when the plane slammed into a soybean field near Roselawn, Ind., a crash so violent that few recognizable pieces of the plane were left intact.

It was a crash that did not have to happen.

A New York Times investigation has found that the Federal Aviation Administration had for years brushed aside repeated warnings from pilots, and experts, and from the behavior of the plane itself, that something was awry. The failure to heed those warnings raises troubling questions that go beyond the Roselawn crash, questions about the procedures and safeguards of the agency itself.

The agency does not routinely monitor crashes abroad of foreign-made planes operating in this country — as happened with the ATR. It also relies heavily on manufacturers' evaluations of their own airplanes — as with the ATR — rather than conducting independent tests. As a result, its own experts increasingly lack the hands-on knowledge to ask the right questions.

The FAA's bureaucratic culture keeps it from being aggressive, as does its reluctance to impose costly safety modifications on airlines.

There have been assertions for years that issues like wind shear — and de-icing — become priorities only after a fatal crash brings them to public attention. The experts call it "tombstone technology."

The ATR-72 and the smaller ATR-42 were involved in a string of inci-

“But until the blood gets deep enough, there is a tendency to either ignore a problem or live with it.”

WILLIAM WALDOCK
leading safety expert

dents in Europe and the United States, including a 1987 crash in the Alps that killed 37 people. In at least 20 incidents, the planes faltered in icy conditions. Yet the FAA failed to conduct a far-reaching, independent review of the plane's design until after 68 people were killed in the United States in October.

"It's a story of a series of linked incidents, and at least one accident, that all point basically in the same direction — that there is a problem in certain conditions with the aircraft," said William Waldo, a professor of aeronautical science at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Arizona and a leading safety expert.

"But until the blood gets deep enough, there is a tendency to either ignore a problem or live with it."

For their part, FAA officials vigorously defend the agency's actions in certifying the plane, and continuing to allow it to fly.

The pattern, they insist, became clear only after the Roselawn crash. It is only in hindsight, they say, that the ATR crash seems as if it could have been prevented. ATR officials say much the same.

When the FAA certified the ATR to operate in this country, it meant that the plane met the agency's standards for flying in icy conditions.

The continuing problems with ice, however, inevitably prompted concerns — not only about the design of the plane but also about the stringency of the standards themselves.

But by the late 1980s, experts inside and outside the FAA were pressing the agency to do raise those standards. But for the FAA, new standards would require new rules, new tests and costly demands on the airlines.

Few in the agency's top ranks favored such an undertaking.



BY THE NUMBERS

Grand Rapids ranks fifth in police per 1,000 residents among the eight Michigan cities with populations over 100,000. And if immensely policed Detroit is subtracted, Grand Rapids is average for the state.

City	Officers	Officers per 1,000 residents
Detroit	3,900	3.85
Flint	316	2.27
Lansing	251	1.98
Warren	237	1.66
Grand Rapids	313	1.64
Ann Arbor	173	1.58
Livonia	151	1.49
Sterling Hts	163	1.38
Eight-city average		2.8
Average excluding Detroit		1.7

Rankings based on officers currently budgeted and 1992 U.S. Census figures, the latest available.

PRESS GRAPHIC/ED RIOJAS

Old data, Detroit figures overstate case for more cops

By Ken Kolker
The Grand Rapids Press

3-5-95

In the campaign for a tax hike to hire 95 more officers, the theme has been repeated often: The Grand Rapids Police Department is far below the state average when it comes to staffing.

The proof, officials say, is in the numbers. But the statistics being used to persuade voters aren't so clear-cut, a Press survey of police staffing in the state's largest cities found.

And just how many officers a city should have is far more complex, experts say.

"There is no magic number," said Dennis Payne, a retired Michigan State Police colonel who teaches at Michigan State University's School of Criminal Justice.

"If I were a taxpayer, I would say, 'What does this mean? Why should we do it?'"

One reason that officials are repeating in the city's newsletter, press conferences and visits to neighborhoods is as follows:

Grand Rapids has just 1.5 officers per 1,000 residents — well below the 2.8 average of Michigan's eight largest cities.

But this is what the figures don't say:

■ Grand Rapids actually ranks about in the middle of the eight largest cities, not at the bottom.

■ Staffing figures used by the city to make comparisons are more than two years old and don't include officers being hired through recent state and federal grants.

■ And if Detroit is taken out of the mix — and if current figures are used — Grand Rapids is about average, with 1.6 officers per 1,000 compared to a seven-city average of 1.7 officers.

The Press' survey found Grand Rapids ranks fifth in per-capita police staffing out of Michigan's eight largest cities, a fraction behind fourth-place Warren. Detroit ranks first by a large margin.

Calvin College mathematics professor James Bradley, who teaches statistics, said Detroit — with its 1 million people and 3,900 officers — "distorts" the average and should not be part of the equation.

"Detroit has more population than all the rest of those cities put together," he said. "You're throwing a great big apple into a basket of little oranges."

Including Detroit, Bradley said, is like comparing Grand Rapids to cities the size of Kentwood or Bay City, each with about 40,000 people.

Massachusetts criminology professor

CONTINUED FROM A1

Richard Moran, who testified before Congress last year about police staffing in a debate over President Clinton's crime bill, also questioned the Detroit comparison.

"It's the size, it's the high crime rate," he said. "And the percentage of poverty (in Detroit) is much greater than that of your city."

Police Chief William Hegarty defended the department's figures.

"Mathematicians and statisticians . . . can sit in the purity of their environment and talk about numbers and statistics and analyze without any responsibility of helping people in this city live more safely and without fear," Hegarty said.

"You do not pick and choose municipalities," Hegarty added. "That is conveniently omitting a city to justify a viewpoint . . ."

Mayor John Logie, who initiated the campaign for more officers, also defended using Detroit.

"If you start tinkering with data, you can make it say anything you want to say," he said.

An officer in each neighborhood

Underlying the whole debate is a simple question with a difficult answer: How many cops does Grand Rapids need?

City officials studying the issue settled on 95 more — a 30-percent increase that would bring staffing to 408 sworn officers. That would equal about 2 officers per 1,000 people, placing Grand Rapids third behind Detroit and Flint.

To pay for the boost, officials want voters to support a March 28 request to raise the city income tax from 1 percent to 1.3 percent for residents. For non-residents, the tax would climb from .50 percent to .65 percent. Grand Rapids property taxes would roll back by 2 mills.

Hegarty and other supporters say the tax hike would raise \$5 million a year and ensure citywide, around-the-clock patrols. Now, with many officers concentrating on inner-city neighborhoods, some outlying parts of the city often go

without patrols, he has said.

"The entire goal of this campaign is very simple: Our intent is to put a police officer in every neighborhood of this city all the time," Hegarty said.

But experts say determining how many officers a city needs isn't a matter of comparing cops to population.

"You have to look at demographics," said Payne, the assistant professor at MSU. "What kinds of neighborhoods do you have? Do you have high crime? Do you have low crime? The variables are very complex, and it's unique to individual departments. . ."

If Grand Rapids wants to pass the tax hike, it should compare other numbers, such as crime rates, service calls and response times, Payne said.

City officials have not investigated that data in relation to other cities, but The Press researched one such comparison.

Grand Rapids ranked second in the state in major crimes per officer in 1993 with 50, the survey found. Flint was first, with 57. The state average for the eight cities was 34.

In short, that means while Grand Rapids is about average in staffing compared to most cities, its officers tend to be dealing with more crimes.

'Constantly changing' numbers

This year, Grand Rapids has a budget to employ 313 officers — 36 of those from state and federal grants. The staff, however, is down to 290 as the department waits for a dozen recruits to complete training and to fill other vacancies.

However, staffing averages being used in the city's tax campaign are based on 1992 levels, when the department had authorization to employ 292 officers, including 15 paid for by grants.

Hegarty said the city used 1992 figures because those were the latest readily available when officials started researching staffing levels early last year.

The police department obtained

its numbers from the 1992 FBI Uniformed Crime Report, published in December 1993 — about the same time the mayor announced he wanted to beef up the force.

"The numbers are constantly changing," Hegarty said. "But I can safely say we are still one of the lowest-staffed departments in the state."

Logie also defended using the 1992 figures, though he wondered why the police department hadn't responded to his request for more up-to-date statistics. The Press obtained 1995 staffing figures by calling each of the eight police departments late last month.

"We didn't deeply investigate these numbers," Logie said. "We don't have the manpower to call up every city."

Former Silent Observer director David Doyle, who heads the tax-hike campaign, said he didn't know the city's figures were from 1992.

While others, including Hegarty, have said the city is "one of the lowest staffed" police departments in Michigan, Doyle thought the city was "the lowest," he said.

Regardless, he questioned the need to compare staffing numbers at all, though he acknowledged the city has relied on such comparisons.

"What I keep focusing on is what is the goal here, and the goal is 95 police officers, and to put one in every (neighborhood)," he said.

Hegarty also noted the 36 grant officers — costing more than \$1 million annually in state and federal dollars — are temporary posts of up to three years and must be assigned to high-crime, central-city neighborhoods, where only 11 percent of the population lives.

They do "absolutely nothing for the majority of the people of the city of Grand Rapids," Hegarty said.

"I have never, never asked the people for financial support. I've always tried to do the most with existing resources. But the officers and I are at the point of being exhausted."

NO MEANS NO!

On March 28, citizens of Grand Rapids will be expected to consider a ballot proposal that adds 95 additional police officers to the City's police department.

Justification for the increase is based on a national average of 2.2 police officers for every one thousand residents; and for Michigan's eight largest cities, the average is 2.8 police officers per one thousand residents. Presently, Grand Rapids has 1.5 police officers per one thousand residents, and would need 135 more officers to reach the national average and 246 more to reach the State of Michigan average.

Do We Need More Police In Our Communities?

There may be a need to increase patrols in the CORE CITY, but will the increase of 95 police officers really curtail the crime rate in our communities OR ONLY, increase YOUR taxes!

City officials further attempt to justify the additional 95 police officers by stating that "due to the significant increase in violent crimes, police officers have been concentrated in a few neighborhoods, and frequently, police officers must leave their assigned neighborhoods to respond to more violent crimes or prevent the loss of life. The result of concentrating police officers has caused an elimination of regular police patrols in many communities".

Are You Aware That Only One-Half Of The Communities In Grand Rapids Are Consistently Patrolled? Do you know what half

of our communities are patrolled?

Ask Yourself The Following Questions About The Increase Of Police Officers?

Will the increase improve the run down conditions of our communities? No!

Will the increase eliminate slum landlords? No!

Will the increase provide continued education and employment for our youth and adults? No!

Will the increase eliminate youth gangs in our communities? No!

Will the increase eliminate the sale of drugs in our communities? No!

Will the increase prevent Corporate America from taking their profits out of our communities into the suburbs? No!

Or Will There Be!

An invisible fence like a net that will control our adult citizens and youths? Especially African Americans. Yes!

Will police control the movement of our citizens in the Core City? Yes!

It's A Sure Fact!

Property taxes will increase.... And it will be passed down to the tenants in the Core City who are already overcharged for rent to pay taxes.

If you are solicited to consider raising your taxes for additional police

officers in our city, tell the solicitors to raise taxes to have bus services from 5am until midnight to travel to all cities outside of Grand Rapids.

Why have city officials not suggested raising taxes for supporting continued education and employment for our youths?

What about renovation for our community, and a concentrated effort to rid the core city of drug

infestation which has been planted there deliberately to destroy African Americans.

VOTE NO On March 28 On The Ballot Proposal To Hire 95 Police Officers, And, Continue To Vote NO Until The Grand Rapids Community Looks As Decent As The Suburban Communities

Sincerely, Concerned Citizens of the Core City



Is This Really Why The City Wants More Officers?

Behind the statistics

*Although major crime is down,
city still has plenty of victims*

Grand Rapids voters have good reason to wonder why they need to give up a chunk of their money in order to take a bite out of crime. Statistics showing that serious crime is decreasing in the city seriously undermine the best reason to vote "yes" next month on a tax increase for more police.

The latest crime statistics, released last week, are grist for the "no" voters. Murder, rape, burglary, larceny, auto theft and total violent crime all were down from 1993 to 1994. Even more telling, the crime rate has been dropping since 1991, bringing into question whether even one more police officer is required.

For his part, Police Chief William Hegarty believes that more officers can help reduce serious crime, but that has not been his primary argument for adding 95 officers. He wants to combat the nagging, minor offenses that make neighborhoods unattractive and drive people away. His position has merit.

The chief says the Police Department doesn't respond quickly or sometimes at all to complaints about loud parties, juvenile curfew violations, loitering and the like. Calls about loud car radios are shrugged off by police who have their hands full with crack dealers and robbery investigations. Many victims of petty larcenies never even see an officer; their complaints are taken over the telephone. In fact, more than 43,000 complaint calls last year were handled over the telephone.

This is not a knock against the Police Department. In setting priorities, Chief Hegarty has put the emphasis on responding to and investigating serious crimes. In the suburbs, with fewer serious crimes, police are more visible in neighborhoods and respond quickly even to such minor problems as barking dogs. Grand Rapids residents' best solution is to wear earmuffs.

Chief Hegarty says the additional officers, bringing the total force to 408, would enable his department to respond, and promptly, to relatively minor complaints. Every neighborhood would have routine patrols.

The effectiveness of a police department can't be measured by major crime statistics alone. The categories cited represent fewer than 5 percent of the 311,000 calls to the department last year. Not included, for instance, are drug and weapons violations, both of which hit their highest levels in 1994. The crime statistics could also be low in part because of the number of officers. If more are hired, the reported crime rate, ironically, may go up.

There remain, however, good arguments against the income tax proposal. The Cato Institute, a libertarian, Washington-based think-tank, concluded that more police don't result in less crime. Cato researchers said an area's economy has a bigger impact on crime. A tax increase would hurt Grand Rapids' economy.

The number of police officers sought, 95, also is questionable. It came not from a thorough review of policing needs but from Mayor John Logie's pledge more than a year ago to hire another 100 police officers. The coincidence of this initiative and the fall municipal election, in which Mr. Logie likely will be a candidate for re-election, is too close to ignore. If more police are justified, why don't city commissioners take the money from existing revenues? If police and fire are the city's top priorities, shouldn't money for them come off the top? Does the possibility of improved police service offset the negative of higher taxes?

Determining the best level of police staffing isn't easy. The answer varies with each community. In Grand Rapids, it might depend on the following: Yes, major crime has been going down, but do citizens feel safe? Are residents satisfied with the current level of police response? Do they believe that more police will give them more protection?

If residents feel they want more police are they willing to pay the price being asked? If the tax is defeated, should city government cut something else to afford more police? Will the courts and the jail be able to handle the additional cases brought by additional officers? At what cost?

The crime statistics are helpful, but they don't tell the full story about the impact of crime or how taxpayers should react. Over the next month, the commission and the chief have a responsibility to help tell that story.

Major firms lead drive to hire more cops

► *Several high-profile people and organizations have donated money to an income tax campaign. One group missing is a police officers' union.*

By Ed Golder
The Grand Rapids Press

Michigan Consolidated Gas Co. and Butterworth Hospital together have contributed more than half the campaign money for a proposed income tax hike that would put 95 more police on Grand Rapids city streets, records released Wednesday show.

MichCon contributed \$5,000 of the \$12,475 raised by the committee, which gathered more than 60 contributions from individuals and corporations for the pri-



vately funded campaign

The figures – disclosed in campaign finance filings required by law – covered a period from the beginning of the campaign in January until Monday

MichCon regularly contributes to political campaigns and considers this one “positive overall, especially in light of the fact that we have 420 active employees and several hundred retirees who live in this community,” said Rich Steketee, manager of public af-

fairs for MichCon's Grand Rapids office

“We look at it as a quality of life matter”

Butterworth donated \$1,500 because the hospital is “very involved with neighbors and recognizes the power of police on the street,” according to Jean Hitchcock, director of communications for the hospital. “We just felt it was a real good cause to get involved with ”

William G. Gonzalez, president and CEO of Butterworth Health Systems, is part of the 32-member Safety 95 Campaign Committee, which is promoting passage of the ballot proposal

The list of contributors also includes Grand Rapids City Commissioners Roy Schmidt, Linda Samuelson and George Heartwell, who each gave \$25.

David Cassard and Robert Buffham, both members of the city's Downtown Development Authority, contributed \$300 and \$100, respectively.

Grand Rapids Mayor John Logie pitched

see **POLICE TAX, B2**

POLICE TAX

Union says it avoids all political campaigns

CONTINUED FROM B1

in \$100, as did Grand Rapids City Manager Kurt Kimball. Several other city employees contributed as well.

So far, the campaign to raise the city's income tax rate from 1 percent to 1.3 percent for residents and from 0.50 percent to 0.65 percent for non-residents — with an accompanying 2-mill rollback of property taxes — has been comparatively low-key.

But as the March 28 vote nears, the campaign's war chest will be put to use, according to David Doyle, campaign coordinator for Safety 95.

"The strategy was to come hard the last 10 days to two weeks," Doyle said. The efforts will include posters, fliers, promotional materials and a direct-mail blitz to 25,000 city households.

"That's a substantial amount of money in itself," Doyle said of the direct-mail campaign. "That's where most of it is going to go."

The tax increase would generate \$5 million a year and ensure 24-hour patrols citywide, according to proponents. The Grand Rapids Po-

lice Department would grow from 313 officers to 408.

A separate ballot question would permanently commit at least 32 percent of the city's budget to the police department.

Noticeably absent among campaign contributors was the Grand Rapids Police Officers Labor Council, the bargaining unit for 270 officers and sergeants on the city's police force, which contributed \$300 to a similar 1989 effort to raise the city's income tax.

But the organization has not contributed to any political campaigns for the last few years because it doesn't want to offend its members, according to Officer Terrence McGee, chief steward of the union.

Besides, the union doesn't want to engender bad blood between itself and elected officials it didn't support, McGee added.

"Paybacks are hell and paybacks are involved in politics," he said.

While two other city bargaining units — the fire and general employees unions — voted down requests to donate to the campaign, the Grand Rapids Police Officers Labor Council never brought it to a vote.

TOP DONORS

The largest contributions to the Grand Rapids police income tax campaign:

■ Michigan Consolidated Gas Company — \$5,000.

■ Buttenworth Hospital — \$1,500.

■ Paulstra CRC — \$500.

■ Richard Wendt, a local attorney who does work for the city — \$500.

■ David Frey, one of three co-chairs of the Grand Action committee — \$500.

"I don't believe there's ever been any conversation in our organization about it," McGee said.

The union has, however, agreed to endorse the ballot proposal.

In 1989, the city asked voters to approve a 50 percent income tax hike for city residents to be used in the city's general fund. It failed 55.1 percent to 44.9 percent.

This campaign will be easier, Doyle believes, because the money is earmarked for police.

"It's not as difficult of a sell," Doyle said. "People are going to tend to support it, knowing their tax dollars will be used for what they want them to be used for."

Six former city officials question need for cop tax

► *There's no convincing evidence that 95 more officers are needed, tax opponents say.*

By Peg West
The Grand Rapids Press

Six former Grand Rapids city officials have signed a letter opposing a proposed tax hike to fund more police officers, stating concerns that range from locking the city charter into a set police funding percentage to whether more police officers will reduce crime.

The letter was spearheaded by Don Souter, a retired Grand Rapids attorney and former member of the Grand Rapids Library Board and the Grand Rapids Public Schools Board of Education. Souter called the other officials, drafted a letter they could all agree on, then sent it to local news organizations.

The others who signed the letter — all former city commissioners — are William Blickley, Harold Dekker, Carl Eschels, Robert Jamo and Mary Alice Williams.

They say their intent is to provoke discussion about the issue, but they don't plan an organized, yard-sign-style opposition campaign. However, their letter represents



the first group to move publicly against the ballot questions.

Souter believes the department hasn't made a convincing case for more police on the streets. Both he and Blickley believe the lack of opposition springs from an unwillingness to confront the police department.

"Being against the police is sort of like being against motherhood and apple pie," said Souter, "until you really start to think about it."

Williams said it goes against her grain to oppose such a proposal, but she, too, isn't convinced that more police alone makes a safer community, and she believes that officials "pulled out of thin air" the number

see **POLICE TAX**, A10

POLICE TAX

They say spending rules eliminate flexibility

CONTINUED FROM A9

95 when they decided they needed additional officers.

"Creating public policy based on the fears of the people is not a good way to do public policy," she added.

The signatories especially are concerned about one ballot question that changes the city charter to permanently commit 32 percent of the general fund budget to police spending. They believe that move limits future flexibility for changing needs.

It would make the police department less responsive to city officials, Blickley believes.

"My experience in City Hall was that the appointed officials – the city clerk, the city attorney, the city treasurer and the city manager – are very responsive to elected officials, trying to make sure they're doing what the public wants and what elected officials want," he said. "Other department heads are less so."

They also say the proposal fails to address the root causes of criminal behavior, makes the "policing power less responsible to our elected officials" and that the "correlation between the number of police officers and decreasing crime in Grand Rapids has not been shown," the letter says.

"We feel both of the proposals should be VOTED DOWN and the Mayor and City Commissioners requested to rethink the entire issue, and propose funding that takes into consideration both the causes of crime and the protection from it," the letter says.

Both Police Chief William Hegarty and campaign director David Doyle say residents prefer dedicating a percentage of city funds to certain services – in this case police spending – so they know where their tax dollars are going.

"It tends to fly in the face of representative government, but it's clearly what the public wants," Doyle said.

Hegarty also disputed the contention that there's no correlation between number of officers and decreasing crime. He unveiled statistics Tuesday that say crime rates have fallen in Grand Rapids neighborhoods where police concentrated personnel over the last 10 years, while crime rose in areas with fewer regular patrols.

And he points to the neighborhood service center effort launched last summer as an indication that the department is addressing the root of crime.

"I respect the former commissioners but I feel they are very, very wrong about this matter and are not aware of the needs of the people in our neighborhoods," said Hegarty.

Voters will decide Tuesday whether to boost the city income tax from 1 percent to 1.5 percent for residents and corporations, and from 0.5 percent to 0.65 percent for non-residents.

An income tax increase would trigger a 2-mill property tax cut that was approved by voters in 1989. City officials have said that would be phased into effect over two years.

Hegarty and Mayor John Logie have said the proposal to permanently commit 32 percent of the general fund budget to police spending – which wouldn't go into effect unless the tax hike passed – offers a guarantee that future police spending will be maintained at a level that could support the increased staff of 404 sworn officers.

Press reporter Ed Golder contributed to this report.

GR police unite with city

► *If approved, the tax increase would put 95 additional officers on the street.*

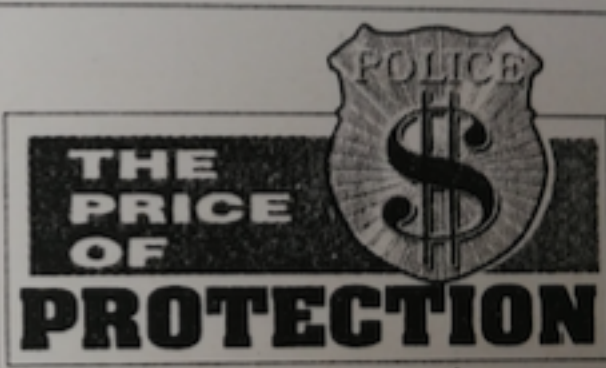
By Ken Kolker
The Grand Rapids Press

3/12/95

When Grand Rapids police officers and city bargainers agreed on a new contract four days ago, the two sides locked arms on more than a labor pact.

The police union is endorsing a proposed tax hike for 95 more officers, something city bargainers requested during contract talks.

"That was part of the agreement," said patrol officer Terrence McGee, chief steward of the Grand Rapids Police Officers



Labor Counsel, which represents 270 officers and sergeants.

"To say that you're going to find every cop in favor of it, you can't say that," he said. "There are guys who have some questions about it."

Frank Smith, the city's human resources director, said the request was not a condition of the contract.

ty for proposed tax hike

"I think we made it clear in the negotiations that . . . even though we wanted their support, it wasn't a leverage point," Smith said.

However, he said, he believes some union members wanted to withhold support to get a better contract.

The union, which had been without a contract since June, hadn't taken a position on the tax.

In describing the new contract, a union memo to members indicated the group "agreed to give support to the March 28, 1995, income-tax proposal vote to hire more police officers for GRPD."

"We wanted all of our members to be aware of that," McGee said. "We didn't want anybody coming back saying, 'Hey, you didn't tell me about it.'"

The contract, approved 197 to 29, calls for a 2.9 percent pay hike the first year, 3.1

percent the second year and 3 percent the third year. The raises are comparable to those received by other city employees.

The contract must be approved by the City Commission.

Officers had rejected a contract in December, mostly because they felt they were paying too much toward their pension, McGee said. The new contract reduces that amount by about \$200 an officer, he said.

The police tax would generate \$5 million a year and ensure citywide, around-the-clock patrols, supporters say. The department would grow from 313 to 408 officers.

If passed, residents' income tax would increase from 1 percent to 1.3 percent; for non-residents, the hike would be from .50 percent to .65. At the same time, Grand Rapids property taxes would be rolled back by 2 mills.

Retirees hear pitch for tax hike, more officers

► The mayor and police chief find most people at the meeting in favor of the plan. Some already had voted yes through absentee ballots.

By Doug Guthrie
The Grand Rapids Press

3/14/95

Grand Rapids' mayor and police chief Monday kicked off their campaign for a city income tax hike to hire more police officers, speaking to a crowd already sold on the March 28 ballot.

"I'm sure you will find most of us have already voted on absentee ballots and have already voted yes," Jack Witt, president of the Grand Rapids chapter of American Association of Retired People, told Chief William Hegarty on Monday.

A show of hands at the luncheon gathering of about 50 AARP members at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 45 Jefferson Ave. SE, showed all in favor and none opposed to the proposal that is designed to generate \$5 million and result in the hiring of 95 police officers.



Witt, 71, said he already mailed his absentee ballot - voting yes to raise the city income tax for residents and corporations from 1 percent to 1.3 percent and on non-residents from 0.5 percent to 0.65 percent, and to permanently commit 32 percent of the city's general fund budget to police operations.

"You will find most people here are in favor of this. Safety and security are a very high priority for senior citizens," Witt said. "I think this will pass because the funding for it is very fair."

Hegarty ate lunch with the group before being introduced by Mayor John Logie.

The mayor wasted no time in aiming his message at the crowd of retirees. He emphasized that pension and disability income isn't taxed by the city - while the promised property tax cut would give a break to home owners living on a fixed income.



PRESS PHOTO/REX D. LARSEN

Listening to the plan: Jack Johnson, left, and Ronnie VanderVen listen to Police Chief William Hegarty explain city crime-fighting efforts.

This tax hike actually could result in a

tax break for some, explained the mayor. "I suggest particularly to this group, that this is not a bad idea," Logie said. "You are,

see POLICE TAX, A8

More GR police means a safer city

DISSENT!

The Press encourages readers to respond to events as reflected in the news and editorial page columns of this newspaper. In addition to the Public Pulse, we offer this Dissent! space to readers who offer alternative viewpoints.

patrols.

Not surprisingly, like grabbing the center of a deflated balloon, crime has expanded rapidly into these unpatrolled neighborhoods. Some outlying neighborhoods have seen an increase in serious criminal activity of over 50 percent in the last 10

3/14/95

Hegarty garners support for more officers at West Side meeting

By C.T. Revere
The Grand Rapids Press

3/17/95

Bernice Cramer arrived at the Sts. Peter and Paul Grade School Thursday night liking the idea of having additional police officers patrolling the streets of the West Side neighborhood where she has lived her entire life.

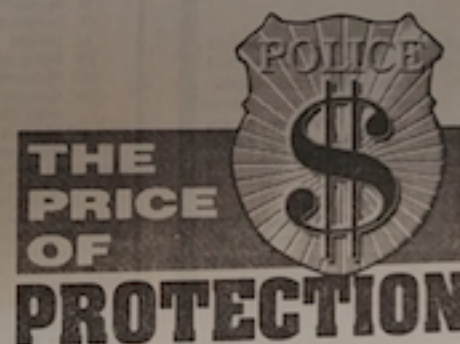
After more than an hour of listening to Grand Rapids Police Chief William Hegarty espouse reasons why she should support a March 28 ballot proposal to pay for 95 new officers, her vote was sealed.

"I'm all for it," the 64-year-old Davis Street resident said. "We need the officers, that's for sure. I'm for anything that will give us peace and quiet."

Cramer's sentiment appeared typical of the approximately 100 people who turned out at 1433 Hamilton Ave. NW for the chat with Hegarty, who is in the midst of a neighborhood-to-neighborhood campaign to promote the income tax proposal that would raise \$5 million to hire the new officers.

"I thought it went great," Hegarty said after the meeting with residents and of the West Grand Neighborhood Association.

The ballot proposal will ask Grand Rapids residents to raise the income tax for city residents from 1 percent to 1.3 percent and to increase for non-residents who work in the city from 0.5 percent 0.65 percent, allowing the city to dedicate 32 percent of its operating budget to police operations.



ations.

At the same time, the proposal would reduce property taxes by two mills.

Hegarty promised the crowd they could

count on seeing more uniformed officers in their West Side neighborhoods if the ballot proposal passes. Because his officers are forced to focus on more crime-ridden areas of town, the six patrol districts located on the West Side typically have no more than five patrol cars on duty at any given time.

With the more officers, he said, that would change.

"Most of the time in most of the neighborhoods, there is no assigned patrol unit," he said. "We want to have officers to staff every one of the patrol units all the time."

Of the new officers, 71 would be assigned to street patrol, allowing police to respond more promptly to calls and to in-

see WEST SIDE, A12



PRESS PHOTO/NOEL WEBLEY II

Explaining his view: Police Chief William Hegarty addresses the crowd at a West Side church.

WEST SIDE *Prospect of more patrols is popular*

CONTINUED FROM A11

vest more time into investigating each call, Hegarty said.

He also told the audience passage of the proposal would mean more undercover officers to work drug enforcement, more detectives to track career criminals and more warrant officers to bring them to justice.

"You're going to see an awful lot of enforcement, folks, that we can't provide today," he said.

Residents asked Hegarty for assurance that officers assigned to their neighborhood would remain there, to which he responded "Absolutely."

Terry Hanes, 40, said he is "all in

favor" of hiring the new officers despite having no complaints about current police protection.

"I guess I'd want to see a little more protection at night," he said.

Roberta Reitman, 75, said additional officers will help keep criminals at bay. "I've noticed when we have more patrols, we have fewer problems," she said.

Reitman also likes the idea of an income tax increase to pay for the added protection.

"It's the only way they can do it," she said. "It's the most equitable way."

Hegarty declined to respond to a letter to The Press from state Rep. Thomas Mathieu encouraging readers to vote down the proposal.

Mathieu questioned the city's commitment to protecting its citizens, saying it shouldn't take a tax increase to make law enforcement the top priority.

Mathieu also wrote that the property tax reduction would offset the burden of an income tax increase only for the rich.

"I'm not commenting on that," Hegarty said. "I'm not doing anything negative. I'm working with the people for the people."

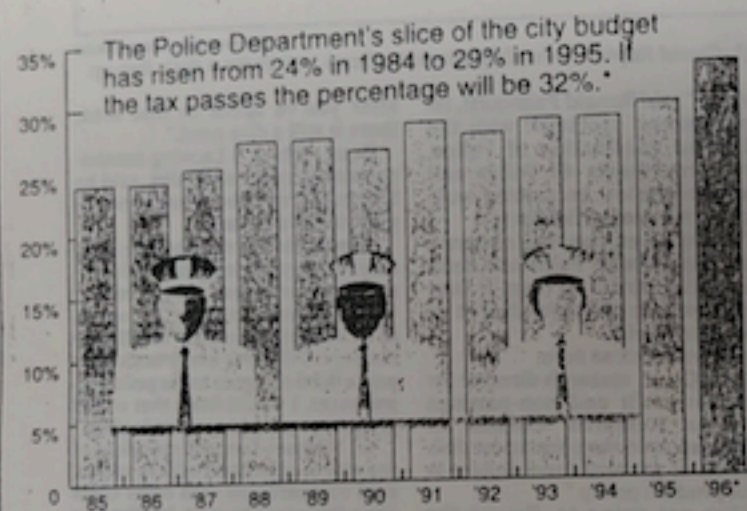
Hegarty encouraged those who turned out for Thursday's meeting to call friends and encourage them to support the income tax increase.

"Additional staffing does help a neighborhood become safer," he said. "That's all I'm asking."

PRICE OF PROTECTION



THE TAX:



The question facing voters – whether to raise income taxes to put more police on patrol – raises other issues involving money and power

GRAND RAPIDS PRESS

3-19-95

By Doug Guthrie
The Grand Rapids Press

When Grand Rapids voters go to the polls in nine days, Matthew Grady will be watching with interest – from 104 miles away.

Grady is the keeper of the purse strings for the city of Flint. And if Grand Rapids residents give the go-ahead for higher taxes and more cops, Grady hopes Flint officials will jump on the bandwagon.

"I'll tell you, the sound of it is good," the Flint budget director said. "If you guys can get something going like this, it would be great."

It also would be unique, experts say – not all of whom believe that's so great.

In addition to raising income taxes to finance 95 more police officers, voters are being asked March 28 to amend the city charter in another way: To require, by law, that almost one-third of the city's general fund be committed to police operations every year.

"I cannot say I've heard this done anywhere else in the state, but perhaps it will start a trend," said William Mathewson, a lawyer with the Michigan Municipal League. "It certainly sets forth a clear priority."

Supporters say the \$5.2 million tax increase is necessary to put an officer in every neighborhood, and that locking in a budget percentage protects the new money from being used for other purposes.

A question of power

But, at least initially, the new money won't be enough: training, equipment and other costs will require almost \$500,000 more than the tax will raise by 1997, city budget figures show.

And some question whether writing a minimum police budget into the city charter places too much power with the police chief, who won't have to justify to city officials the amount of money he receives annually.

"It could become a real problem for accountability and to accommodate changing needs," warned Alan Burns, Ann Arbor's budget director. "I know I wouldn't like getting a phone call from the chief every year simply asking how much his 32 percent is going to be."

The priority emerged from a City



Supporters say the \$5.2 million tax increase would put an officer in every Grand Rapids neighborhood.

Commission goal-setting session last year in which promises were made to enlarge the police force. Officials settled on 95 new officers – more than a 30 percent increase – to bring the number of sworn personnel to 408.

Here's how the increase would be financed:

- Proposal 1: Would raise the income-tax on residents and corporations from 1 percent to 1.3 percent; and for non-residents from .5 percent to .65 percent.

- Proposal 2: Would amend the city charter to require at least 32 percent of the general fund – the city's main checkbook – be dedicated for police operations. That would total about \$30 million the first year, equal to current funding plus estimated new taxes. The department presently consumes 29 percent of the budget, up from 24 percent a decade earlier.

The second proposal won't go into effect unless the tax hike is approved, but the new income tax could take effect without approval of the budget commitment.

To offset costs for city residents, the property tax would be cut by 2 mills.

see ISSUES, E4

ISSUES *Tax proposal is just the beginning of questions about money* 3/19/95

CONTINUED FROM E1

That's not mentioned on the March 28 ballot because voters already required the cut.

In June 1989, Grand Rapids residents rejected an income-tax hike, but approved a companion measure that promised to lower property taxes should income taxes go up. If the present proposal is successful, the previously approved millage reduction kicks in, and property taxes couldn't rise again without another public vote, according to Robert White, Grand Rapids fiscal services director.

The taxes would be phased in. The higher income-tax rate would go into effect on Jan. 1, and property owners would find their July 1996 taxes reduced by 1 mill as the first income-tax proceeds begin to flow in.

Property taxes would be cut another mill in 1997, when the full estimated tax increase will be realized: \$5.2 million.

But that won't cover start-up costs for increased police staffing, city budget figures show.

Shortfall and other problems

Wages and benefits of the new officers would consume \$5 million the first full year. But more cops means more guns and more bullets, \$5 new uniforms and 20 new patrol cars. And the new officers must undergo training.

In fiscal 1997, that will cost the city \$480,000 more than the new tax will bring in, due mostly to first-time costs, city estimates show. The following year revenues and expenses ought to match, the city's records estimate.

White said decisions on where extra costs would come from is for city commissioners to decide in the future.

Representatives of the city's non-police unions worry their operations will suffer should the city's general fund be tapped to cover the \$480,000 or other unforeseen costs.

"We're not sure how it will impact us, but generally when the general fund is impacted we often take the brunt of it," said Charles Bylsma, president of the general employees union.

Frank Verburg, president of the Grand Rapids firefighters' union, said his group has taken no official position, but he is worried about the financial effect.

"I'm not sure they have given serious consideration to the long-term implications," Verburg said. "Flint used to have 90 people in their fire department and now they are down to 42. Someone pays the price for increasing other areas."

The domino effect of boosting police staffing also could have an impact on the rest of the criminal justice system.

Last year, Grand Rapids District



Ready to serve: Before beginning their shift, Grand Rapids Police Department officers gather for a daily line-up. PHOTO BY NEDENFUE

Court handled 56,068 cases with a court administration that is so cramped into the Hall of Justice that some clerks have desks in what used to be closets.

Putting more police on the street doesn't necessarily mean a crushing arrest load, especially if their time is in low-crime areas, as Police Chief William Hegarty has promised, said Josef Soper, Grand Rapids District Court administrator. Still, there is bound to be some fallout at the Hall of Justice, he added.

"This building has literally run out of space," Soper said. "If the police department begins to crank more cases through here, well, we've always been creative, but I'm not too sure we'll have that much luck this time around."

One undetermined cost may come in creating space where the new recruits will be lockered, and the 20 new cruisers garaged.

"I can say there isn't any more space in the men's locker room," said Officer Terrence McGee, president of the local Fraternal Order of Police, whose union has supported the tax drive.

Hegarty said locker space is the least of his problems and that accommodations will be made at minimal cost.

The 32 percent solution

Questions of space and hidden costs aside, setting a guaranteed funding level for police "would be

unique," said Ronald Palmquist, labor relations specialist with the Michigan Association of Police, which represents 40 police and command-officer bargaining units mostly in eastern Michigan.

"Being an ex-cop, I'm always a little suspicious," Palmquist said. "But more power to them if they can guarantee police funding at an adequate level."

Others aren't so sure.

Paul Good, research director for the non-profit and non-partisan Citizens Research Council of Michigan, said the permanent dedication of general-fund dollars is "not prudent policy."

"I'm not going to dispute the public perception of the need for police, but I would caution against the wisdom of literally earmarking and using such precise language. You could tie yourself up in knots," Good said.

"Having a safe city is a very high priority. But there are all kinds of priorities that need to be hashed out. What happens next year, five years from now? What happens when that 32 percent is inappropriate?"

But Matthew Grady, the Flint budget director, said public safety is always a high priority. Flint spends slightly more than 32 percent of its budget on police operations.

Unlike municipal spending on roads or utility services, Grady said, "You never catch up. There is always a dire need for police. And

after you've spent in that area, there is still a dire need."

Doug Rubley, a Lansing municipal management specialist, said he is unconcerned about dedication of general fund dollars.

"Dedication is not bad. We have only recently started going in that direction ourselves," said Rubley, whose city spends about 28 percent of its budget on police. "To tell your taxpayers that for every buck they pay, a third of it goes to the police department, I would think that would give some people a warm feeling."

Lt. Michael Lennon, president of the city's command officer union, said comparisons with other cities are a fine place to start, but the true measure of need comes from an evening of listening to police radio chatter.

"Any citizen in doubt should turn on a scanner and listen to us. The traffic is always the same. 'I'll try to find a car. I'll find you back up when I can. This call is an hour old. I know you are three hours past lunch. I'm trying to clear you as soon as I can.' That is the sound of a department that is at saturation," Lennon said.

"The issue is less how we look like Detroit or Flint and more how are we going to measure the problems in Grand Rapids," he added. "The question is whether we are doing the job the way the citizens want it done. If you have a scanner, you know."

For residents, the tax plan will have an effect on the streets and on the pocketbook.

By Kelley Root
and Lawrence R. Heibel
The Grand Rapids Press

A lifelong Detroit, John Williams moved across the state to Kenwood last year "looking for a better life" - including less exposure to violent crime.

That's why he supports Grand Rapids' proposed March 28 income-tax increase, even though - as a non-resident who works in the city - he'll be among those hardest hit financially if it passes.

Williams can't vote on the ballot issue that would take an extra \$72 from his paycheck each year, and he won't get the corresponding 2-mill property-

tax decrease, either.

In fact, commuters in general will shoulder about half of the \$5.2 million increase to hire more Grand Rapids police.

But the 47-year-old automobile salesman says non-residents who use city streets should share the cost of hiring 95 new officers to patrol them.

"You can imagine, having come from a situation as serious as Detroit's, the relief of having the lack of crime - relatively speaking - in Grand Rapids," he said. "But at the same

see RESIDENTS, E4

GRAND RAPIDS
PRESS

3-19-95

RESIDENTS *The public must weigh the decision in terms of costs, cops*

CONTINUED FROM E1

case, I understand if you don't cut out crime, it can become a problem here also."

After living in Detroit and being taxed for everything we did there, I'm more concerned about the effectiveness of city government than about the dollars it costs me.

How the increase would affect individual taxpayers varies.

Those who would fare worst include renters and suburbanites who work in the city, but don't own land there.

Those who can expect a break include elderly homeowners living on non-taxable retirement income. Property ownership is a defining factor because the proposed 30 per cent income tax hike comes with a 20 percent property tax reduction. Those who own land in the city will fare better than those who don't.

Slicing up the pie

Under the city's proposal, the personal and corporate income tax rate would rise from 1 to 1.5 percent annually, while non-residents' rate would rise from .50 to .65 percent - the lowest highest levels in Michigan. At the same time, property taxes would be lowered by 2 mills.

In its first full year, the income-tax increase is expected to generate roughly \$10.6 million, the property-tax cut would reduce revenues by \$5.4 million.

The net increase for police, \$5.2 million, city fiscal services director Robert White said.

For the "average" Grand Rapids resident, that translates to \$26 annually based on a taxable income of \$13,000 and a \$63,000 home, both city medians.

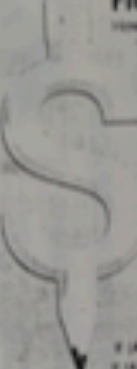
Some suburbanites who work in the city, however, protest the plan amounts to taxation without representation. In keeping with current patterns, non-residents' income taxes would account for just over half of the full amount, or \$2.65 million.

But White pointed out that figure counts all non-residents - including landless - do not own property in the city and therefore will not benefit from the property-tax cut.

He said it's difficult to predict precisely how much of the increase will be shouldered by non-residents because the city doesn't keep statistics that way.

Non-residents aside, what's safe to say is that renters "would not substantially benefit" from the income-tax increase, White said. Most service citizens, on the other hand, will see some tax relief.

"Pensions, annuities and Social



FIGURING YOUR TAX

How much will 95 new officers cost you? Figure it out. You'll need two numbers - your annual household taxable income and the market value of your home.

RESIDENTS

Your income tax increase
(A) Household taxable income \$ _____ x .005 = _____

Your property tax decrease
(B) Home's market value \$ _____ x .002 = _____

If (A) is larger (B), then (A) - (B) = your additional tax.
If (A) is smaller than (B), then (B) - (A) = your tax savings.

NON-RESIDENTS WHO WORK IN GRAND RAPIDS

Your income tax increase
(A) Household taxable income \$ _____ x .0075 = _____

(A) equals your tax increase. Non-residents without property in Grand Rapids do not benefit from the property tax cut.

Security are entirely exempt from city income tax, and senior citizens are very aware of that," he said.

Measuring the impact

One of those seniors expecting a break is Ed VanderSluis, 78, a retired quality-control analyst for Fisher Body VanderSluis, who has owned his Northwest Side home for 45 years. It is in line for a \$78 per year property tax decrease if the ballot issue passes.

"I feel we can always use more police, but the main reason I support it is it's not going to affect my pocketbook," he said.

Indeed, at a local meeting of the American Association of Retired Persons on Monday, many members told Police Chief William Hingerty they had already voted for the proposal - by almost 400 votes - for the same reason.

Other city residents won't be as lucky. Mauricio Aguiar, 25, a hospital-supplies salesman, who rents an apartment at Wyndham Hill Apartments off Knappe Street NE, stands to pay an extra \$120 a year if the tax hike passes.

Aguiar said he will vote no for two reasons - he doesn't believe there is a need for more police, and he thinks the income tax is unfair.

Aguiar said he would pay higher taxes for jails or improvements to the justice system, but not for what he called a "band-aid" fix to a system that lets criminals off too easily. "If they would just put the gun in jail we wouldn't need more police," he said.

Taking care of business

Whatever its impact on individuals, some community leaders are concerned the income tax could hamper business development, said Milton Rubner, president of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce.

Though all but two of the chamber's 25-member board voted to support the ballot issue - "People were generally persuaded that additional police patrols would be beneficial to the community" - members expressed two reservations, Rubner said.

First, the board hopes the city will focus on crime prevention as well as enforcement, he said. Second, board members are concerned higher corporate income taxes could prompt business owners to leave the city for the suburbs.

"Is this particular tax question, by itself, sufficiently large to make a major change in location decisions? Probably not," Rubner said.

THE EXTRA COST

The new tax won't pay for everything. Expenses will exceed revenues by nearly \$200,000 the first full year - due to start-up costs such as training and uniforms - after which officers say costs should balance. Here's a breakdown.

REVENUES

Income tax increase \$10,631,475
Property tax decrease \$5,434,074
Net gain \$5,207,401

EXPENSES

Wages/benefits \$5,000,000
Training \$290,000
Uniforms/supplies \$147,000
Vehicles \$190,000
Total \$5,627,000

SHORTFALL: \$479,601

"We as a chamber just don't want to see Grand Rapids get into a situation where there's a large difference between those communities and the surrounding ones."

Most city property tax is paid by homeowners. In 1994, residential property owners contributed 58.4 percent, commercial property owners, 21 percent, and industrial property owners, 2.8 percent.

Slowest is the city's biggest property taxpayer, with its Grand Rapids property valued at \$80 million in 1994. It also pays corporate income taxes. Between the income-tax hike and property-tax reduction, the result will be a "wash," Slowacki spokesman Peter Jeff said.

"Our position is that we respect the need for all our employees and residents in the greater Grand Rapids area to live and work in," he said.

Grand Rapids is among 18 cities that levy an income tax of 1 percent for residents and .5 percent for non-residents, according to data compiled by the Michigan Municipal League.

If the hike is approved, the city's income-tax rate will rank fourth in the state behind Saginaw, which levies 1.5 percent on residents and .75 percent on non-residents.

Only Highland Park, which levies 2 percent for residents and 1 percent for non-residents, and Detroit, which levies 3 percent and 1.5 percent, rank higher.

City officials back millage for police

Editor's note: On March 28 voters in the City of Grand Rapids will go to the polls to decide whether to raise their own taxes to enable the city to hire 95 additional police officers.

The police would be used to consistently patrol each neighborhood in the city, according to Grand Rapids Chief of Police William G. Hegarty.

In an effort to assist voters in making an informed decision, Mayor John



JOHN LOGIE



WILLIAM HEGARTY

Logie and Hegarty agreed to answer questions posed by Advance reporter Todd Julien regarding the upcoming ballot initiative.

The questions are citizens' concerns as expressed to officials of several neighborhood associations. Officials from the North East Citizens Action Association, the Garfield Park Neighborhood Association, the West Grand Neighborhood Association, and the Creston

Please see MILLAGE, Page 2

MILLAGE

Continued from Page 1

Neighborhood Association, and the Creston Neighborhood Association provided the questions posed to both Logie and Hegarty.

Q. *Differences between the additional officers provided in President Clinton's Crime Bill, and the officers which would be added by a successful election outcome?*

A. Hegarty: Because of "President Clinton's Crime Bill," the department employed 17 additional police officers on or about January 1, 1993; actually, the financial support for these positions is from the Federal Police Hiring Supplemental Act that was joined together with the "Crime Bill" during the last quarter of 1994.

The deployment of these officers is restricted to the neighborhoods with the most critical problems in Grand Rapids, i.e., homicides, assaults with firearms, robberies, etc. The grant award is temporary, i.e., for a period of three years and directly affects about only 11 percent of our residents.

If the voters permit us to employ 95 more police officers on March 28, 1995, they would be assigned to all of our neighborhoods. Contrary to federal and state programs, these police officers' positions are permanent, and are intended to assist all residents regardless of the level of criminal activity in their neighborhoods.

Q. *Can you guarantee each neighborhood in the city will see additional officers without having to have crime in the neighborhood go up first?*

A. Hegarty: Yes, because one of the goals of the proposal is to prevent a

variety of neighborhood problems before neighborhoods feel the effect of further criminal activity.

Q. *Recent reports have shown several serious crime categories decreasing in Grand Rapids. How does this affect the proposal for more police officers?*

A. Hegarty: Because of the high level of enforcement activity by the department and the work of the neighborhood associations during the past 10 years, the most significant decreases of serious criminal activity occurred in our central city neighborhoods.

Because of our goal of preventing violent criminal activity, our patrol and investigatory units were geographically deployed in a very concentrated manner.

And this caused another very serious problem for the department.

We do not possess the ability to provide police services in most of our neighborhoods most of the time.

Additionally, units assigned to our neighborhoods leave their districts to assist other units during their responses to more critical problems.

The sole purpose of the "proposal for more police officers" is to put a police officer back in all of our neighborhoods or patrol divisions all of the time.

Q. *If voters approve dedicating 32 percent of the city's general operating*

fund to police services, what will happen to other percentages during times of recession, or financial crisis?

A. Logie: We have two alternatives. The language on the ballot will force that obligation on current and future city governments. The first option is to find other areas of government services to reduce to maintain the budget. The other is to go to voters with a request to live up funds.

I don't particularly like either answer, but it is most important to assure our voters that if they want it, it will be done that way. The dedicated percentage is there to provide a sense of comfort for the voters, and to assure those people we will be committed to that level of funding.

Q. *Please provide a definition of the "community policing" the new officers would be assigned to perform?*

A. Hegarty: It is the intent of the department to assign patrol units to all of our neighborhoods or patrol divisions. The units will work directly with neighborhood associations, block clubs, and neighborhood schools for the purpose of preventing or controlling a variety of neighborhood problems.

Together with their responses to requests for police services and enforcement activity in the neighborhood, they will respond to neighborhood problems that are mutually

concerned by the department, neighborhood associations, or other community groups in their assigned patrol divisions. For example, property thefts, general youth problems, safety of children, disorderly activities, i.e., noise complaints, gang activity, complaints about vehicles, i.e. speeding and other reported violations, etc.

In other words, the responsibilities of the assigned neighborhood patrol unit will be mutually outlined by the department, the neighborhood associations, neighborhood schools, etc. This is a very successful form of community policing.

Q. *Will 95 additional police officers fit into the police department's current location next to the Hall of Justice, or will new facilities follow a successful election?*

A. Hegarty: Yes, because the additional officers assigned to our patrol units will work in the neighborhoods and not in the Grand Rapids Police Department facilities.

Q. *Is there any connection between the request of 95 additional officers and the new Neighborhood Service Center project?*

A. Hegarty: No, but neighborhoods may wish to design their own program for encouraging service delivery to their residents and a part of this effort may be their assigned neighborhood police officers.

Q. *Is there any way for the department to put more emphasis on neighborhood patrols without having to hire 95 more officers?*

A. Hegarty: No. Because of the volume of requests for police services and the enforcement activity of the officers, the department is reaching a point of being organizationally and individually exhausted.

We are not asking for additional "administrators," "supervisors," or employees to be assigned to staff or support services; we are simply asking for the material resources to deliver critical police services to all of our neighborhoods.

Proposal would hike income tax

The March 28 ballot proposal to provide the City of Grand Rapids with 95 additional police officers will ask voters to raise their city income tax from the current 1 percent to 1.3 percent.

If the question is approved, the income tax of homeowners who work within the city limits will be raised from the current .5 percent, to .65 percent.

To help offset voters' loss resulting a "yes" vote, city officials have tied the income tax hike to a property tax decrease. If the ballot question is approved, property taxes will be automatically reduced by 2 mills when the proposal is fully implemented.

A second ballot question will ask voters to dedicate no less than 32 percent of the city's general operating fund to police services.

If approved, the proposal will generate approximately \$1 million per year in net revenue increases.

In December, when the proposal was introduced by the City Commission, Grand Rapids Chief of Police William G. Hegarty said, "Very simply, this proposal is about being safe."

The proposal was the result of two main factors. The first being that serious crime in Grand Rapids had increased significantly during the previous 10 years while the police department staffing did not increase. The second factor was the assurance the police department is undermanned.

Hegarty presented statistics which showed the police department currently has 1,495 officers for every 1,000 residents. Hegarty said the number is far below the national average of 2.2 officers per 1,000 residents, and the Michigan average (for cities with more than 100,000 residents) of 2.78 officers per 1,000 residents.

Hegarty's numbers show more patrols equal less crime

► *The police chief's statistics show crime has declined in areas where police power is concentrated. Others are not convinced.*

By Doug Guthrie
The Grand Rapids Press

Although some experts disagree, Grand Rapids Police Chief William Hegarty believes more police officers equal less crime.

Campaigning for next week's vote on a tax hike that would allow the hiring of 95 new cops, Hegarty unveiled statistics today that say crime rates have fallen in Grand Rapids neighborhoods where police concentrated manpower over the last 10 years — while crime rose in areas with fewer regular patrols.

Hegarty's statistics compared 1984 reports of serious crime and overall incidents

with the same categories in 1994.

To be fair, Hegarty concedes, the number of crimes remains higher and the types of crime more serious in several inner-city neighborhoods where he has focused the most intense police efforts.

But he contends manpower has been drained from low-crime areas for the past decade, creating a security void that has allowed those neighborhoods to suffer.

"The growth of problems in all the neighborhoods needs the activity of assigned units," Hegarty said. "The concept of working with neighborhoods does work."

He pointed out some of the most crime-

rected patrol, and more recently the Neighborhood Service units," Hegarty said.

Even so, a Massachusetts criminology professor who testified before Congress last year on the issue of police staffing said studies have shown consistently that more police don't necessarily mean less crime.

"There may be other reasons you want more police in the city — maybe the police are overworked, they're working too much overtime, too much stress," said Richard Moran, a professor of sociology and criminology at Mount Holyoke College.

"(But) don't make the mistake that if you hire more police you're going to reduce crime. That's the overwhelming opinion among criminologists."

Michael Blankenship, a research methods and statistics professor at East Tennessee State University, said studies have

shown police don't actually stop crime — they just respond to it.

Blankenship, a former police officer who now edits the American Journal of Criminal Justice, cited a "preventative patrol" experiment in Kansas City that tracked the crime rate after saturating a specific area with two to three times the normal number of patrol officers.

After a year, the study showed "not a bit" of change in the crime level of that area when compared to those with the usual number of officers, he said.

"Having cops riding around looking for crime is about as effective as having firefighters driving around looking for fires," he said.

Be that as it may, Hegarty said another



intensive neighborhoods have seen reports of serious crime drop from 1984 as much as 56 percent and total reported incidents decline as much as 25 percent.

"This is in direct proportion to patrol activity, Neighborhood Patrol Unit, vice, di-

see CRIME, A8

CRIME

Other experts dispute chief's conclusions

CONTINUED FROM A7

part of his department's statistical study surprised and pleased him because it showed a drop in serious crime in an area that wasn't a primary focus.

But it did involve the "concept of working with neighborhoods" that Hegarty boosts.

He said the near-Northeast Side neighborhoods stretching to North Park benefited from cooperation with police and hard work by members of the Creston Neighborhood Association.

"They have been working with this department, and the goal of this program is the ultimate assignment of a patrol unit to every neighborhood all of the time," Hegarty said.

Hegarty has said his proposal will have an officer 24 hours a day in each of the city's 32 patrol districts. He said these officers would decrease response times to calls for help, would do more foot patrols, and would work in schools and with neighborhood organizers.

To pay for this, voters will decide on March 28 whether to boost the city income tax from 1 percent to 1.5 percent for residents and corporations, and from 0.5 percent to 0.65 percent for non-residents.

An income tax increase would trigger a 2-mill property tax cut that was approved by voters in 1989. City officials have said the cut would be phased into effect over two years.

A second ballot proposal would change the city charter to permanently commit 32 percent of the general fund budget to police spending. The department now receives about 29 percent. The city's net gain of about \$5 million from the tax proposal would push the department's share of the general fund to 32 percent.

Hegarty and Mayor John Logie have said the second proposal, which wouldn't go into effect without passage of the tax hike, offers a guarantee that future police spending will be maintained at a level that could support the increased staff of 404 sworn officers.

I say, 'yes,' Grand Rapids needs more police

3/12/16

At the risk of blowing the whole plan for Police Chief William Hegarty, I would like to throw in with the side that supports the tax increase to pay for additional police. I do this even though I moved a couple of years ago to a part of the city where it isn't necessary to call the police every other night or day.

But I certainly still remember the culture shock of moving from the suburbs to the city and realizing for the first time in my life how important the police were for a basic sense of security, not to mention actual security.

It will never dim in my mind that night the police roared up on Wealthy Street as I was being threatened with death from a gang of people who had already brandished a gun in my direction.

It was always comforting to see the police arrive after I called them about drug activity or burglaries or violent activities involving people who settle differences of opinions with sharp objects or other implements of destruction.

But I also remember the frustration concerning some of



JOHN DOUGLAS

the basic quality-of-life issues that the police couldn't always handle on a busy night — the loud all-night parties, the people standing outside of my home screaming obscenities or some automobile parked near my house at 2 o'clock in the morning with the radio blaring horrible sounds which also sometimes carried obscenities.

"If it's still going on in an hour call us back," the police dispatcher would say. That was a frustrating time when you were trying to sleep.

I was eventually able to leave the area which provided so much horror, but I know there are plenty of people who aren't as lucky as me. There are people who are trapped in the high-crime

areas because that's the only place they can afford to live. Those people need the support of the rest of us. They need additional police protection.

I say this knowing that the police already do a pretty good job. There are not many violent crimes that are not solved in Grand Rapids, but what we need are more police visible in high-crime areas so that there will be fewer crimes committed that need solving.

Unless you've lived where crime is a fact of life, then you really can't know what it's like. I say this knowing that I didn't really live in the worst crime areas of the city (although I was pretty close to one).

So if you live in a part of Grand Rapids that is safe and you're considering a vote against the tax increase, please think again. I say let's get those police officers that we need and see if we can't get some relief to those folks who are being tormented on a daily basis by crime and criminals.

Remember, the hero from "Les Misérables," Jean Valjean, is dead. What's left is pretty bad.

THE PRICE OF PROTECTION

West Side grills chief on Tuesday tax issues

► Police Chief William Hegarty is greeted with both tough questions and pledges of support in his latest talk.

By Peg West
The Grand Rapids Press

Grand Rapids Police Chief William Hegarty had just finished his familiar presentation Thursday on the proposed tax hike to hire more officers, when a familiar tax opponent spoke up.

"You know, Chief Hegarty, I really want to support the police department, but I can't support this proposal because I think 95 officers is way too much," said local activist and Grand Rapids Board of Education member Mary Milanowski, who said she thinks such efforts as neighborhood watch groups are helping curb crime.

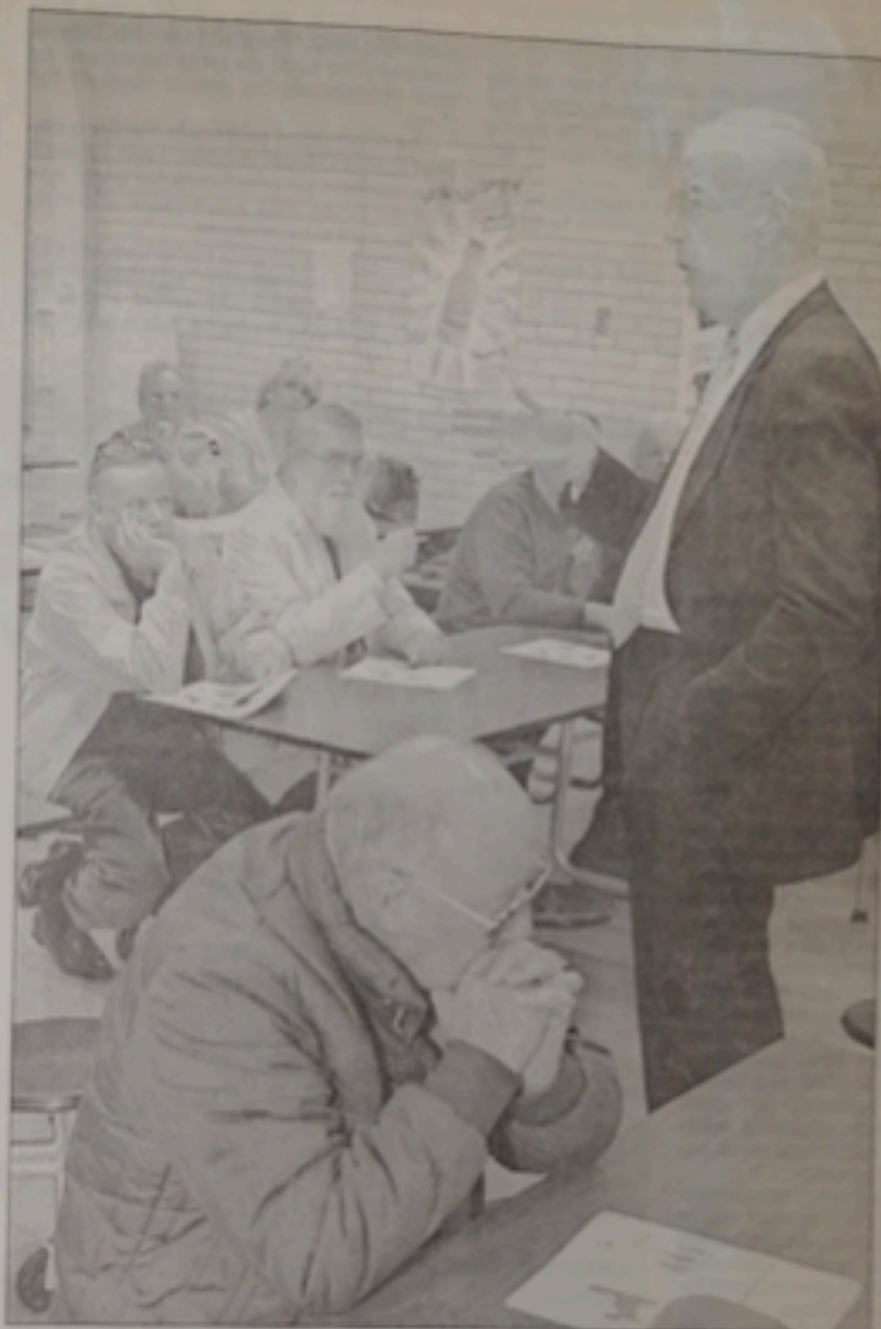
To which Maryalyc Makowski spoke up, asking Hegarty, "May I disagree with Mrs. Milanowski?"

After getting a wholehearted go-ahead from Hegarty, Makowski recounted her troubles with children as young as 10, and then told how an officer told her police couldn't keep track of the juveniles because they're taken out of the neighborhood on other calls.

"The reason I'm here this evening is because I'm so delighted you're doing something like this," she said.

And so began the West Side forum at Westwood Middle School Thursday night. It was another meeting in Hegarty's neighborhood-to-neighborhood campaign to promote Tuesday's ballot proposal for hiring 95 officers.

One ballot question asks Grand Rapids residents to raise the income tax for residents from 1 percent to 1.3 percent and to increase it for non-residents who work in the city from 0.5 percent to 0.65 percent. At the same time, property taxes would decrease by 2 mills.



Making a point: Leon Engel, in foreground, listens to Chief Hegarty's pitch for the tax.

The other ballot question asks voters to amend the city charter so that 32 percent of the general fund would be dedicated to police spending.

The group of about 25 came armed with both tough questions and pledges of support. Campaign director David Doyle said this meeting probably produced the biggest grilling on the issue, but that was to be expected on the West Side.

"There's always difficult questions here. The people are very aware of what's going on on the streets and they're concerned," Doyle said.

And at one point, when Milanowski suggested having an officer in every neighborhood would mean the one in her patrol district would have enough down time to drink coffee at her house, Hegarty became frustrated.

As he tried to respond, and Milanowski continued talking, Hegarty finally said, "It may be more important for you to learn

than to speak," a remark that drew applause. After the clapping died down, Hegarty said, "...the kind of thing you are saying is stupid."

Sylvia Stratton was among those who praised the proposal, saying her work in Circuit Court brings her a close-up of the crime problem.

"I know some of you live in a safe neighborhood where you don't have to worry about safety," said Stratton, who added she wants to see all neighborhoods receive the kind of patrols "that the chief has seen fit to go in the inner city."

Other concerns raised include the impact the tax hike would have on the city's economic development. Another school board member and West Side activist, Ed Kettle, said the income-tax increase is a "pass-along cost" that triggers an adjustment in the wage structure, but a property-tax decrease would be "highly intriguing" to some firms.

'Yes' for more city police

Risk that high taxes will hurt GR is outweighed by anti-crime needs

3/24/95

The tax proposal on Grand Rapids ballots next Tuesday recognizes that this is a good and strong community but one which, at a modest price, can be made better — more secure, more comfortable and more stable. Those gains are worth the money being requested and justify a "yes" vote.

The proposal would raise the city income tax from 1 to 1.3 percent for residents and from .5 to .65 percent for nonresidents. Property taxes would be reduced by 2 mills. The combination would raise \$5.2 million annually, which would go to add 95 police officers.

This "yes" recommendation includes reservations. None of the money will go to the Grand Rapids District Court, although that court will see more cases. And a tax increase of any size always has some effect on the location decisions of businesses and individuals.

But there is no doubt that safety and confidence are bigger factors in location decisions than taxes. Those security factors can't be measured solely by annual crime statistics. Only serious crimes — like assault, murder, rape and robbery — are included in those figures, and they represent just 5 percent of the calls to the police. The numbers don't include the smaller, nagging incidents that Grand Rapids residents are conditioned not to report: suspicious or unruly persons, fights, curfew violations, loud parties, cars speeding on residential streets and some burglary attempts and vandalism. Those and similar matters are unlikely to get a swift police response, if there is any response at all. There simply aren't enough police to go around. The crime data also don't take into account the desire of most people to see a police car cruising their area from time to time — a sight most suburbanites take for granted.

Police Chief William Hegarty has pledged that if the tax is approved, his department will have a round-the-clock presence in each of the city's 32 patrol areas. The additional officers will allow the department to work more closely with neighborhood associations and block clubs on anti-crime programs. That's the sort of grassroots effort which will keep neighborhoods safe and stable over the long haul.

Each voter should consider this proposal carefully in light of his or her own experience in the city. Police aren't the sole answer to crime, but there is no questioning the importance of an adequate police presence. That's something Grand Rapids doesn't now have, but which this proposal can provide.



Police proposal put to voters on Tuesday

► *City residents will decide if 95 new officers on the streets are worth a hike in their income tax.*

By Ed Golder
The Grand Rapids Press

Tyler Korfhage feels safe enough. "I take precautions," says the 30-year-old accountant and father of three. "And I'm a gun owner."

So — "without knowing all the details and sitting down and doing some figuring" — the Northeast Side man says he'll probably vote against Tuesday's proposal to add a cop to every neighborhood and \$5.2 million to the city budget.

■ Wyoming residents consider millage for parks. C1.

But if police-tax supporters have their way, Korfhage will sit down and do some figuring this weekend, as would thousands like him.

Some 25,000 red, white and blue pamphlets were mailed last week in an effort to persuade civic-minded voters like Korfhage, all with proven records of showing up for primary and special elections.

"In every election, there are a certain number of people who are going to vote, come hell or high water," said David Doyle, coordinator of the Safety '95 Campaign.

Their numbers could be few this Tuesday. Normally the city sees just 20 percent of registered voters show up for special elections. Based on absentee ballots returned through last week, Deputy City Clerk Marie Gowell predicts even fewer this time, about a 15 percent turnout.

The special election asks voters to finance 95 new officers — about a 30 percent increase — by raising the city income tax: from 1 percent to 1.3 percent for residents and corporations; 0.5 percent to 0.65 percent for non-residents. The hike would be accompanied by a 2-mill reduction in property tax.

A separate ballot question asks voters to change the city charter to permanently devote at least 32 percent of the budget to the police department.

The literature mailed out during the middle of last week includes a map showing rising crime in outlying neighborhoods and a note from Police Chief William Hegarty.

"Today, most Grand Rapids neighborhoods are without regular patrols most of the time," Hegarty says, adding, "every new officer hired as a result of this initiative will be used on the street, in direct

PROPOSAL

Officials expect a small turnout

CONTINUED FROM A1

crime-fighting activities."

Until recently, Safety '95's soft-sell strategy — which relied primarily on appearances by Hegarty and Mayor John Logie at neighborhood meetings — has prompted little organized opposition.

But last week, six former city officials signed a letter questioning the wisdom of guaranteeing 32 per-

cent of the budget for the police department, and saying the proposal fails to address the "root causes" of criminal behavior.

State Sen. Glenn Steil, R-Grand Rapids, is adding his voice to the opposition. "Raising the city income tax promotes flight to the suburbs," Steil wrote in a letter opposing the hike.

Still, riding on a popular fear of rising crime, the campaign has

won its share of converts.

"I think Grand Rapids needs the extra protection," said Daniel B. Hess, a lawyer and Southeast Side resident who is among the 25,000 voters targeted by the campaign.

"And I think that it will strengthen the city and make it more viable for people that want to continue to live here and other people that want to come in and move here," he said.

THE CITIZENS OF GRAND RAPIDS SHOULD STEP BACK AND THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE VOTING ON MARCH 28!!

We, as former Grand Rapids City Officials, have great respect and support for our city government, but we have some serious concerns about the ballot proposal to increase the city income tax, reduce the property tax, and provide additional funding for police services:

1. To lock into the Charter, 32% of all future general operating funds solely for police services is not good public policy. No one can predict the needs of the community 10 years from now. Changing communication and technology alone can make present methods obsolete.
2. The proposals fail to address the root causes of the problem of criminal behavior.
3. We believe the governmental function of policing power should be made more responsive to our elected officials. These ballot proposals make the policing power less responsible to our elected officials.
4. The need for adequate police staffing and protection is not in question. What is adequate staffing, the manner in which it is funded, and the impact it will have on the future of the city is. Correlation between the number of police officers and decreasing crime in Grand Rapids has not been shown.

We feel both of the proposals should be VOTED DOWN, and the Mayor and City Commissioners requested to rethink the entire issue, and propose adequate funding that takes into consideration both the causes of crime and the protection from it.

William Blickley, Former 3rd Ward Commissioner
Harold Dekker, Former 3rd Ward Commissioner
Carl Eschels, Former 2nd Ward Commissioner
Robert Jamo, Former City Controller and 2nd Ward Commissioner
Don Souter, Former Member, Grand Rapids Library Board, Board of Zoning
Appeals, & Recreation Board.
Mary Alice Williams, Former 2nd Ward Commissioner

Paid for by The Responsible Citizens Committee, Don Souter, Treas. 2637 Littlefield NE GR 49506

000214-000

Necesitamos más Policías

En Grand Rapids todavía tenemos costumbres de una ciudad pequeña cuando en realidad las estadísticas nos presentan como una ciudad en camino a grande, aun tenemos la idea de que somos una ciudad en los años 70, pero en realidad estamos casi tocando el próximo siglo. Todo esto sin contar que en esta "pequeña" ciudad usted puede encontrar todo lo que busque en una gran ciudad.

Con este crecimiento de sorpresa vienen todas aquellas cosas de las grandes ciudades que a mucho de nosotros no nos gusta, vienen los crímenes, de acuerdo con las estadísticas de la policía los arrestos por violaciones con armas de fuego han aumentado en un 117 por ciento desde 1984 hasta esta fecha, pero si esto parece poco, la insidencia de los casos de drogas a aumentado en un 209 por ciento para el mismo período de tiempo.

El alcalde John Logie ha lanzado una campaña con la finalidad de convencer a los ciudadanos que se necesitan más policías para contrarrestar este aumento en los actos criminales. La ciudad está proponiendo un aumento en impuesto al Ingreso (income-tax) de la ciudad y una reducción al impuesto a la propiedad.

De acuerdo con datos del organismo éste aumento permitiría emplear 95 nuevos policías que se encargarían de ayudar a reducir el índice de criminalidad. Este número de policías sólo llevaría al departamento de policía de Grand Rapids a estar en un promedio de 2.0 policías por cada mil ciudadanos, cuando el promedio estatal es de 2.8 por cada ciudadano.

El 28 de Marzo los ciudadanos de Grand Rapids se verán frente a la boleta que autorizaría este aumento, tendrán frente a sí dos preguntas básicas la primera: un aumento en el impuesto a el ingreso, y la segunda: el que se autorize a gastar un 32 por ciento del presupuesto en policías.

Creemos que todo ciudadano debe de

valorar la importancia de aumentar el número de agentes del orden público, debe de pensar en función no sólo del costo sino del valor de lo que está comprando, debe de ver más alla del simple costo y ver la inversión que representa.

Es una inversión en la familia, en las propiedades y en todas las cosas por las que trabajamos cada día, si no existe seguridad de nada sirve el tratar de lograr algunas comodidades, puesto que estas podrían desaparecer en un abrir y cerrar de ojos, al igual que uno de nosotros mismos o algún ser querido.

Sabemos que existe una tendencia a rechazar todo lo que tenga que ver con aumento de impuestos, pero si no somos cautelosos podemos caer en el error de rechazar las soluciones en aras de no pagar un poco más, sería como intercambiar centavos por el valor de una vida.

No creemos que debemos de aceptar ningún tipo de aumentos sin antes estudiarlos detalladamente, buscarle otras vías o formas de solución al problema, se debe de hacer todo lo posible por evitar nuevos aumentos, pero cuando estos son necesarios, debemos de ser inteligentes para no cometer el error de "caminar descalzos y guardar los zapatos para que estos no se rompan".

No podemos hacer más que levantar nuestra voz, y la levantamos en apoyo a esta propuesta de aumento del impuesto al ingreso, a la seguridad de nuestros hijos, a la paz y el sosiego. Sabemos que el aumento del número de policías no es una panacea pero creemos que es un paliativo urgente y necesario.

De pasar esta proposición también creemos que el número de los miembros de las fuerzas públicas debe reflejar la composición de la comunidad a la que sirve, necesitamos más policías His-panos, Afro-americanos y asiáticos. Necesitamos diversidad en la misma proporción de la diversidad de la población. Entonces, y sólo entonces seremos buenos administradores de la confianza pública.

**“Our Goal:
A Police
Officer
In Every
Neighborhood,
All of the
Time...”**

Bill Hegarty, Chief of Police



Dear Voter,

In my 13 years as your Police Chief I have never asked the public for additional financial support — until now.

Neighborhood problems have increased in Grand Rapids at an alarming rate in the past ten years. Police staffing has not kept pace. Today, the Grand Rapids Police Department is one of the lowest staffed forces in Michigan.

As the enclosed map shows, by concentrating our crime fighting activities in high crime neighborhoods some areas have seen a reduction in crime. But other neighborhoods have paid the price. Today, most Grand Rapids neighborhoods are without regular patrols most of the time.

*On March 28th, I urge you to vote "Yes-Yes" on the ballot proposal. If passed, for the first time in years, we will put a police officer in every neighborhood all of the time. **Every new officer hired as a result of this initiative will be used on the street, in direct crime fighting activities. They will work directly with local schools, neighborhood associations and block clubs to protect citizens and prevent crime.***

For these reasons, I ask for your support. On behalf of all of the brave officers of the Grand Rapids Police Department, thank you.

Chief William G. Hegarty

As Mayor of Grand Rapids I urge your support of this important ballot initiative.

Mayor John Logie

What You Need to Know About the March 28th Ballot Proposal

The Proposals — The first proposal will increase the City income tax from 1.0% to 1.3% for residents and from .5% to .65% for non-residents, and decrease property taxes by 2 mills for the purpose of hiring 95 additional police officers. The second proposal would insure that the city actually uses these funds for the intended purpose by requiring that at least 32% of the City's annual general fund budget goes to police protection. Voters are, therefore, asked to vote "Yes-Yes".

The Goal — To have at least one police officer assigned to each of the 32 police patrol districts twenty-four hours a day.

Why 95 Officers? The Police Chief along with the Grand Rapids City Council has determined that it will take 95 additional officers to achieve this goal.

What About the Crime Bill? The recently passed crime bill provides Grand Rapids 17 positions for 3 years. Those must be used in high crime neighborhoods. In other words, the Crime Bill provides services to approximately 11% of the Grand Rapids population for a limited period of time.

Where Is the 2 Mill Property Reduction on the Ballot? In 1989 the voters mandated that any increase in City income taxes would trigger an automatic 2 mill reduction in property taxes. The 2 mill reduction does not have to be voted upon to be enacted if income taxes are increased.

What Will It Cost Me? The resident income tax increase will equal \$3 for every \$1,000 of taxable income. The average homeowner will save \$1 for every \$1,000 of home market value. The average family living in the average home in Grand Rapids will see a net tax increase of \$3 per month.

What About Senior Citizens? Seniors on fixed incomes (pension, Social Security, annuities) will see no income tax increase. If they own their own home, they will see a significant property tax reduction.

On March 28, Grand Rapids citizens will
consider two ballot questions:

- 1. Add 95 police officers.**
- 2. Guarantee all of the money
will be spent only for additional
police officers.**



Vote March 28!



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

Neighborhood Problems are Growing



In the past 10 years, the number of police incidents in Grand Rapids has increased by 21%. *In many neighborhoods, the number of police incidents has nearly doubled. The average annual number of arrests by each police officer increased from 33 in 1984 to 70 in 1994 (106%). While problems are worsening, the productivity of the Police Department has doubled.*

Most of Our Neighborhoods are Not Patrolled

An increase in violent crime has concentrated many police officers in only a few neighborhoods. *Very simply, the City cannot now provide police services to most of our neighborhoods most of the time.*

If the Ballot Proposal Passes

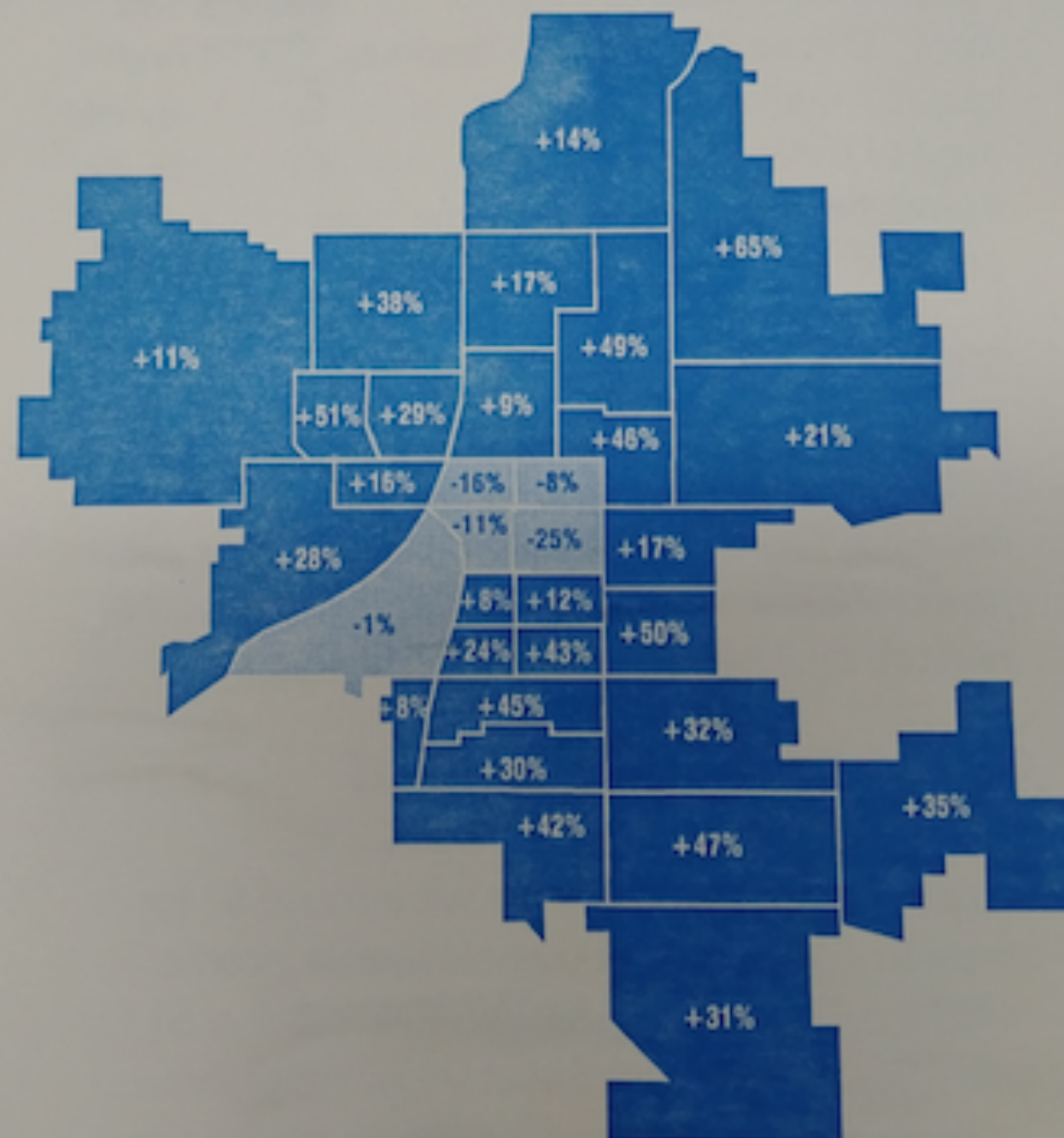
The Grand Rapids Police Department plans to assign officers to all of our neighborhoods all of the time.

Police officers will be able to more promptly respond to calls; prevent and control neighborhood problems such as property thefts, disorderly youth, gang activity, drug violations, and traffic complaints; and work directly with neighborhood associations, block clubs, and neighborhood schools.

Grand Rapids Police Patrol Districts

Total Incidents 1984-1994

■ Decrease
■ Increase



Mayor gets out early to vote

► *City residents are being asked to OK an income tax boost to add police officers.*

The Grand Rapids Press

3/28/95

The first voter this morning at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 45 Jefferson Ave. SE, was none other than Grand Rapids Mayor John Logie.

"I think we had a story to tell, and I hope the people were listening and I hope they agree," Logie said as he cast his ballot at 7:02 a.m.

Grand Rapids residents are deciding today whether to approve an income tax hike, coupled with a property tax cut, to add 95 officers to the police department.

That would increase staffing by 30 percent, giving the department 408 sworn officers.

Not everyone agreed with the message. David Pummell, president of Pummell Business Forms Inc., said he voted no this morning at his West Side polling place.

"I had great concerns about the property tax offset and the amount that might be raised by the income tax," Pummell said. "I don't think people in my neighborhood, where there are some higher incomes and expensive homes, felt comfortable with the explanations."

Also today, voters in Wyoming are deciding whether to approve a 1.5-mill five-year property tax hike to keep parks and senior centers open and maintain recreation

see VOTE, A4



VOTE

Tax hike would add to police force 3/28/95

CONTINUED FROM A1

programs. The levy would raise \$2.1 million.

The Grand Rapids tax proposal is split into two ballot questions:

If voters approve the first, the personal and corporate income-tax rate would rise from 1 to 1.3 percent a year for residents, while the rate for non-residents would jump from 0.50 to 0.65 percent. At the same time, property taxes would be lowered by 2 mills.

The average Grand Rapids resident — with a taxable income of \$33,000 and a \$63,000 home (both city medians) — would pay an additional \$36 a year.

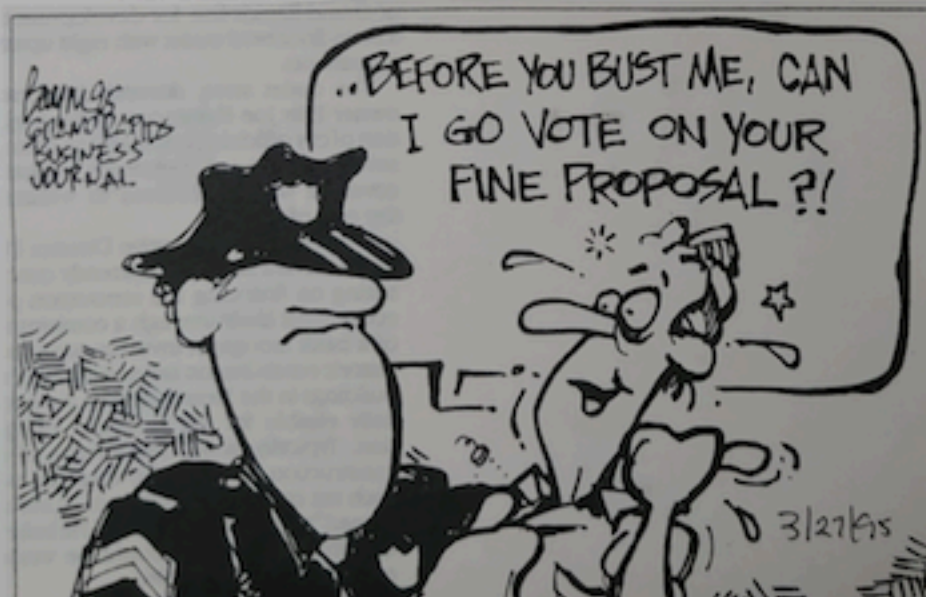
The tax would raise \$5.2 million and guarantee around-the-clock patrols in each of the city's 32 patrol districts, Police Chief William Hegarty has said.

The second question would change the City Charter to guarantee 32 percent of the city budget for police; now the department gets about 29 percent.

On Monday, the last of a series of neighborhood meetings on the ballot proposal was held at Hillcrest School, 1415 Lyon Ave. NE. Hegarty and Logie answered questions.

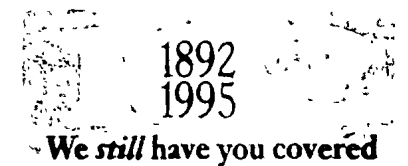
Ann Dunham, a resident of the Fulton Heights neighborhood, was mainly concerned about whether city officials had "exhausted all other sources" of funding. Logie said the money could not be raised through cuts in the general fund.

In Grand Rapids and Wyoming, polls will remain open until 8 p.m.



The Grand Rapids Press

© WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 1995



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Commission
portedly
o back
no plan

oup appointed to advise
or will call for casinos in
ve cities.

Press

Voters' tradeoff: Tax boost for more cops



Mayor Logie

► *Only 18.9 percent of the city's voters turn out to decide whether to put 95 more police officers on the streets.*

By Ed Golder, Peg West
and Theresa D. McClellan
The Grand Rapids Press

During the campaign to raise Grand Rapids' income tax, suburbanites who work in the city – but pay nonetheless – complained about taxation without representation.

GRAND RAPIDS

Income tax increase	
✓ Yes	11,786
No	9,507
32% Budget Lock-in	
✓ Yes	10,990
No	10,186

But as the issue came to a vote Tuesday, even those who have a voice didn't use it.

Four out of five of Grand Rapids' registered voters stayed home, with just 18.9 percent approving a

two-part package that will add 95 police officers.

"Any of us engaged in the political process would like to have more of our city participate with us," Mayor John Logie said of the anemic turnout.

While passing by a strong 55 percent, the tax hike didn't win support in all neighborhoods. The far West Side opposed the increase, with turnout as high as 35 percent in some precincts.

"I don't think they need either the extra cops or the percentage of the budget," said Richard Meyers, 61, who lives north of Union High School.

The increase passed on the near West Side and all but a handful of precincts east of the river.

see TAX, A4

TAX TIMELINE

The police-tax package will be phased in gradually. Here's how:

March 1995	July 1995	January 1996	July 1996
Ballot questions approved	1-mill property-tax cut shows on summer bills	Income-tax withholding begins; half of new cops hired	Remaining new cops hired; full 2-mill tax cut begins

PRESS GRAPHIC

TAX

Vote will enlarge police force by 95 officers

CONTINUED FROM A1

"I am convinced that if you have more police officers on the street, you won't have a crime committed," said LuAnn Mowrer, of 1312 Worcester Drive NE, who voted yes on both questions.

"I've seen kids trying to sell other kids drugs at the Dickinson School playground," added Scott Flegel, of 1811 College Ave. SE. "They should have more cops on the street and that would not happen."

A second ballot question — ensuring at least 32 percent of the city's general fund goes to police — passed by a narrower 52 percent.

Residents will see their income tax jump from 1 percent to 1.3 percent, and commuters from 0.5 percent to 0.65 percent. At the same time, the city property-tax rate will be reduced 2 mills.

The net increase will be \$5.2 million a year — about half paid by outsiders who work in the city.

City officials, who failed to pass an income-tax increase for the general fund in 1989, were overjoyed.

Police Chief William Hegarty said he was "very thankful and pleased and a little bit tired" after a campaign that took him from neighborhood to neighborhood.

Hiring begins in January, and all new officers will be on the streets by the end of next year. "Between tomorrow and the beginning of the year," Hegarty said, "we have an awful lot of work to do."

Logie said the passage showed people will vote for a tax hike if they know where their money is going.

"I give Chief Hegarty a lot of the

credit," the mayor added. "He was a tireless campaigner. I don't ever remember a city employee investing as much in a campaign."

An analysis of the election figures show:

■ Voters in outlying areas were most suspicious of the 32-percent budget lock-in and were more likely to split their votes — supporting the tax hike but not the budget mandate. The latter proposal carried by just 804 votes of more than 21,000 cast.

■ The 1st Ward was the only one to split its vote, passing the tax, 3,519-3,401, and rejecting the budget percentage, 3,355-3,519.

■ Though much of the campaign targeted outlying areas — where some neighborhoods are without regular patrols — core-city voters supported the initiative overwhelmingly.

■ And the low turnout — one Southwest Side precinct had just 3.6 percent of voters show up — may have helped. When the 1989 income-tax request failed, 36 percent of city voters turned out.

Despite its popular crime-fighting theme, the campaign had its detractors.

Don Souter, a former city official and school board member, spearheaded a letter opposing the measure, also signed by five former city commissioners. He said he's not surprised by the outcome.

"It's a popular thing," Souter said. "It's based on fear."

The head of the city officers' and sergeants' union said many are adopting a wait-and-see attitude regarding implementation of the initiative, which will increase the force by one-third.

COP-TAX QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

When would the income-tax increase go into effect?
Employers will begin withholding the extra tax on Jan. 1.

Then how soon would I benefit from the 2-mill property tax cut?

Half of the cut will come in this July's property-tax bill. The rest will come in July 1996.

How soon could new officers be on the street?

The first half will be hired beginning Jan. 1 and the second half after July 1, 1996. Those who hold state certification as police officers could be on the street within weeks after being hired.

Those who aren't certified would have to undergo 440 hours of state-mandated classroom training.

Am I guaranteed to see more officers?

Nothing voted on Tuesday mandates that the city hire 95 officers. It merely increases taxes, and guarantees 32 percent of the general fund for police operations.

Will the officers be in my neighborhood?

The city has 32 patrol districts. The police chief says he will place one officer per shift in each of the patrol districts.

What's to stop the city from raising my property tax later?

The city charter, for one. Following Tuesday's vote, the city's maximum property-tax levy is 6.4148 mills and cannot be increased without a public vote.

"I guess they got what they wanted. We'll see how it all works out," said Terry McGee, president of the Grand Rapids Police Officers Labor Council.

The average Grand Rapids resident, with a taxable income of \$33,000 and a \$63,000 home — both city medians — will pay an additional \$36 a year.

The initiative will hit renters who work and live inside the city the hardest, and will be easiest on retired homeowners on non-taxable incomes.

While Logie and other city officials celebrated the victory, not all were so jubilant. Third Ward City Commissioner George Heartwell supported the initiative but sounded a cautionary note.

"If we as a community and we as elected officials think we've solved the problem of crime in the streets by adding 95 new officers, we're sorely mistaken," he said.

Citing the need for more job-training programs, educational opportunities and income support for struggling families, Heartwell said, "We can't only throw blue at the problem and expect it's going to solve it."

NOW WHAT?

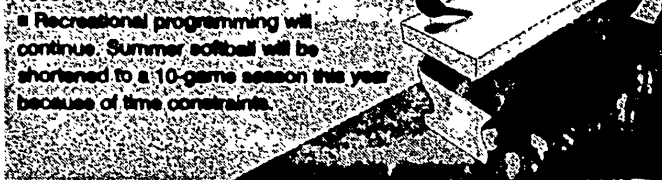
The property-tax hike will generate about \$2.1 million a year for the next five years. The money means:

■ All 16 parks and both senior centers will see improvements, including new playground equipment and building repairs.

■ Senior Meals will continue to operate out of both senior centers.

■ Two full-time employees will be added to the Parks Department, one this year and one in 1996.

■ Recreational programming will continue. Summer softball will be shortened to a 10-game season this year because of time constraints.



PRESS GRAPHIC



PRESS PHOTO/NOEL WEBLEY II

Millage supporters Carl Paganelli, left, and Charley Steen check results.

WYOMING

Voters OK millage hike to save programs

CONTINUED FROM A1

excited to get going," she said.

The millage was approved in 29 of the city's 32 precincts, with voter turnout nearly 28 percent.

The largest opposition came in southern Precinct 32, one of the city's most well-to-do areas.

"Those people (can afford) other options for recreation," Wyoming Recreation Director Terry Fields said. "We did this millage for people who don't have those other options."

If the tax hike had failed, the City Council pledged to close both senior centers, eliminate all recreation programs and cease all but the most basic grounds maintenance at parks.

The victory comes after a 1-percent income tax went down in August and a 2.5-mill property tax was defeated in November. Pro-

ceeds would have helped boost no-

but we've held our tryouts and sign-ups. We proceeded all along assuming it would pass," Edgerle said. Games will begin April 22.

Edgerle credited millage backers with "overcoming" lack of support from City Council. Council members made it clear public safety needs are a bigger priority.

"The people have spoken, and council will abide by their wishes," Mayor Jack Magnuson said. "But if 1.5 mills are not needed to provide adequate parks and recreation services to the public, then the council won't levy 1.5."

But Sparana pointed out a five-year plan was circulated to voters, outlining Parks and Recreation Commission proposals for how the money will be spent each year.

"We have made a commitment to the voters," Sparana said. "If council refuses to honor that, I don't think it will be very pleasant."

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