

# Property Tax Referendum Survey Results

## July 2024



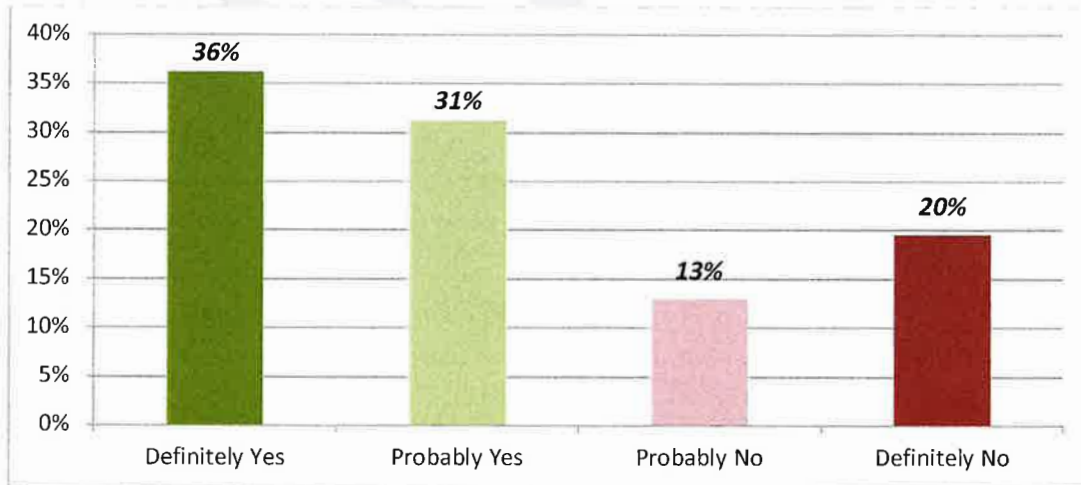
In late June through late July 2024, the Village of Maple Bluff conducted a community survey to gather resident input related to a potential property tax referendum in November 2024. The survey was conducted using both Survey Monkey—an internet survey tool—and hard-copy surveys, with the selected tool based on resident preference. One hard-copy survey was mailed to each Maple Bluff household. The Village utilized various approaches on different occasions to encourage survey completion. The survey elicited 506 responses, which represents about 51% of Maple Bluff’s adult population. Basic demographics of survey respondents compared to Maple Bluff’s adult population as a whole are provided below.

### Question 1: Would you support a \$791,500 referendum for OPTION 1?

#### OPTION 1: “Maintain Essential Services”

- Inflationary and budget shortfall adjustment \$261,000
- Competitive staff wage adjustments \$530,500

If a similar referendum question were approved in November, Option 1 would result in a property tax increase of \$843.53 annually (\$70.29 per month) on a home valued at \$750,000. The estimated property tax impact per \$100,000 in fair market value would be approximately \$112.47 annually (\$9.37 per month).



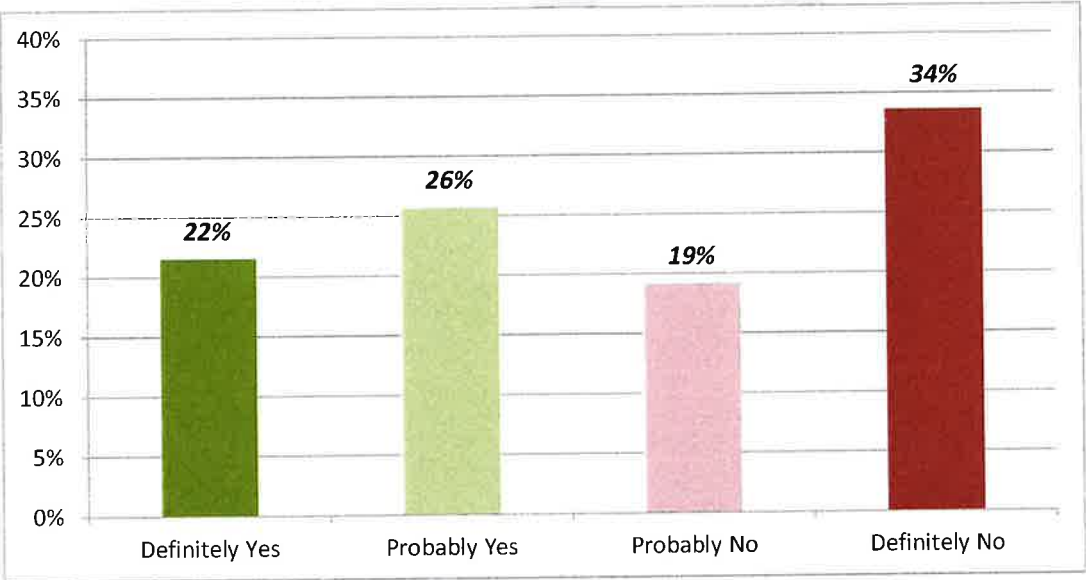
67% of survey respondents stated they would “definitely yes” or “probably yes” support a referendum question for Option 1: “Maintain Essential Services”.

**Question 2: Would you support a \$974,100 referendum for OPTION 2: “Maintain Essential Services” + “Add Priority Positions”?**

**OPTION 2: “Maintain Essential Services” + “Add Priority Positions”**

- Inflationary budget shortfall adjustment \$261,000
- Competitive staff wage adjustments \$530,500
- One Administrative Support staff (full-time) \$118,000
- Increase Public Works Labor (2,000 part-time hours) \$64,600

If a similar referendum question were approved in November, Option 2 would result in a property tax increase of \$1,038.14 annually (\$86.51 per month) on a home valued at \$750,000. The estimated property tax impact per \$100,000 in fair market value would be approximately \$138.42 annually (\$11.54 per month).



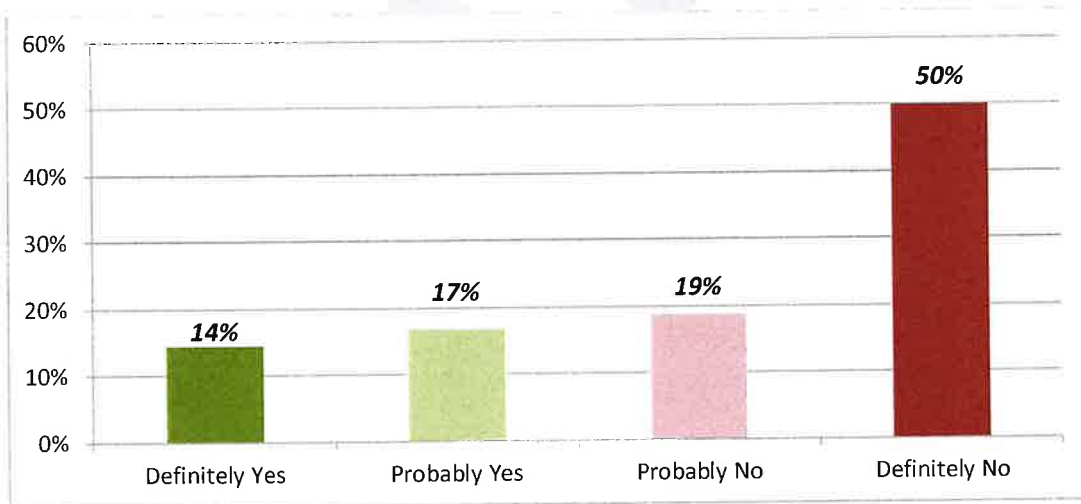
47% of survey respondents stated they would “definitely yes” or “probably yes” support a referendum for Option 2: “Maintain Essential Services” and “Add Priority Positions”.

**Question 3: Would you support a \$1,348,600 referendum for OPTION 3: “Maintain Essential Services” + “Add Priority Positions” + “Address Public Safety Concerns”?**

**OPTION 3: “Maintain Essential Services” + “Add Priority Positions” + “Address Public Safety Concerns”**

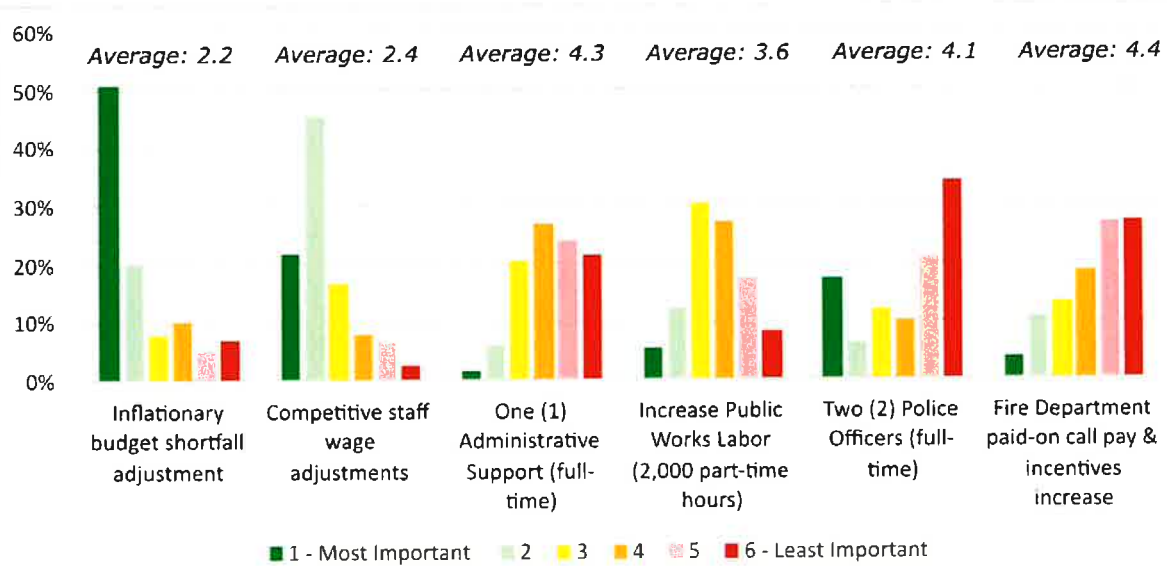
- Inflationary budget shortfall adjustment \$261,000
- Competitive staff wage adjustments \$530,500
- One (1) Administrative Support (full-time) \$118,000
- Increase Public Works Labor (2,000 part-time hours) \$64,600
- Two (2) Police Officers (full-time) \$297,500
- Fire Department paid-on call pay & incentives increase \$77,000

If a similar referendum question were approved in November, Option 3 would result in a property tax increase of **\$1,437.26 annually (\$119.77 per month) on a home valued at \$750,000**. The estimated property tax impact per \$100,000 in fair market value would be approximately \$191.64 annually (\$15.97 per month).



31% of survey respondents stated they would “definitely yes” or “probably yes” support a referendum for Option 3: “Maintain Essential Services” and “Add Priority Positions” and “Address Public Safety Concerns”.

**Question 4: Please rank the following options by importance with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important:**



There appeared to be three tiers of ranked importance for the above options:

- Tier 1: "Inflationary Budget Shortfall Adjustment" and "Competitive Staff Wage Adjustment"
- Tier 2: "Increase Public Works Labor" (2,000 part-time hours)
- Tier 3: "Two Police Officers (full-time)" and "Fire Department Paid-on-call Pay and Incentives Increase"

**Question 5: If you answered “no” to one or more of the options, what added information, if any, would you like to receive?**

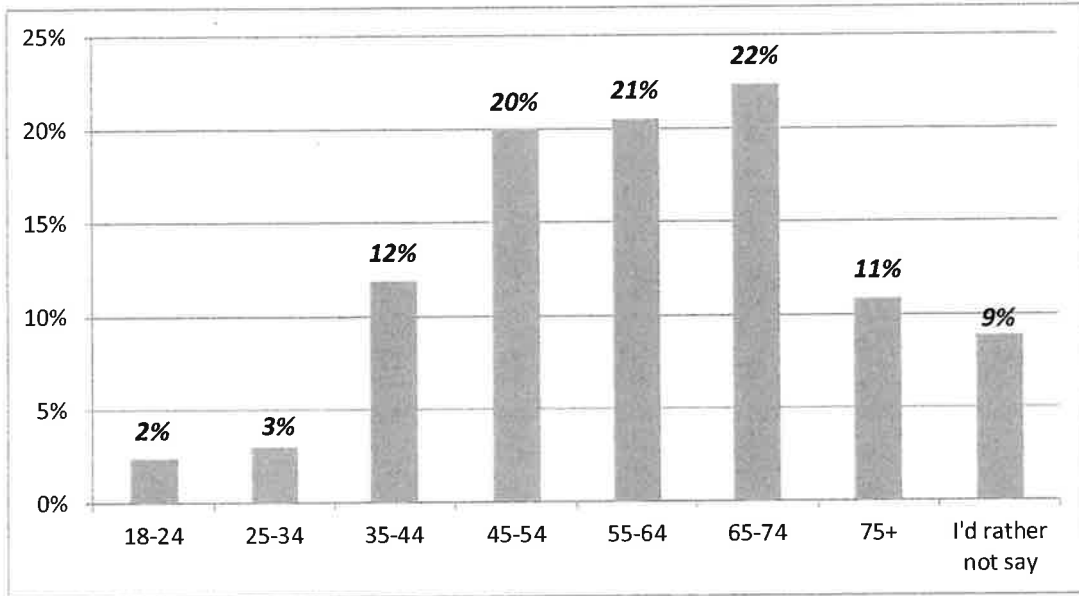
ChatGPT (Artificial Intelligence software) summary of most common responses to Question 5:

1. *Concern with High Property Taxes:* Many respondents expressed frustration with significant increases in property taxes over the past few years and are concerned about further increases. Why have taxes risen significantly over recent years? How will the proposed tax increases affect residents?
2. *Budget Cuts and Efficiency:* A common suggestion was to look for ways to cut the budget or find efficiencies within existing operations rather than increasing taxes. Several respondents suggested that the Village should prioritize delivery of essential services. Are there alternative revenue sources or cost-saving measures that can be explored instead of increasing taxes? How can the Village budget be reduced? What specific programs or services could be cut to manage costs? What would be the impacts of cutting services?
3. *Desire for More Detailed Information:* There was a strong demand for more detailed information about the Village’s budget, including a breakdown of expenditures, salaries, and the specific need for additional staff. What are the salaries of village staff, including police and administrative roles, and how do they compare to similar positions in other communities? Why is a new administrative staff position needed, and what is its salary and workload justification? Many respondents called for transparency and clarity in how funds are allocated and how staffing needs are justified.
4. *Desire for Comparisons with Similar Communities:* There was a call for comparative analysis with similar communities to understand whether Maple Bluff’s staffing levels, salaries, and services are in line with other similar communities. How does Maple Bluff’s referendum preparation process compare to other communities?
5. *Opposition to Increased Police Staffing:* Numerous respondents did not support adding more police officers, particularly given the current level of service and the community’s good safety status. Why is there a need for additional police officers? What are the actual crime statistics, other data, and safety concerns that justify the need for additional police officers? How does Maple Bluff compare to other communities?
6. *Question of Duration of Referendum Fix:* How far into the future will the selected referendum option cover before another funding referendum might be needed?

**Question 6: Is your primary residence located in the Village of Maple Bluff?**

96% of respondents answered “yes”.

**Question 7: What is your age?**



Approximately 33% of survey respondents indicated that their age range was 65 years of age or older. Per the 2022 American Community Survey (Census Bureau), about 32% of Maple Bluff’s adult population as a whole is 65 years of age or older. Approximately 17% of survey respondents are aged 18 to 44 years old, while the ACS suggests that about 33% of Maple Bluff’s adult population is aged 18 to 44 years old. Therefore, survey respondents tended to skew slightly older than the Village’s entire adult population.

**Question 8: How likely are you to vote in the general election this November?**

94% of respondents indicated that they “definitely will vote” and 3% indicated that they “probably will vote”.

**Question 9: Any additional comments you would like to provide?**

ChatGPT (Artificial Intelligence software) summary of most common responses to Question 9:

1. *Concern with Tax Increases and Village Financial Management:* Many respondents expressed concerns about significant tax increases and their impact on residents, especially given recent property tax increases. They instead expressed a desire to find savings or alternative funding methods to avoid large tax increases. Why is there a significant proposed increase in property taxes despite previous assurances, and what efforts have been made to decrease the tax burden on residents? How are budget shortfalls being managed, and what steps are being taken to ensure fiscal responsibility and transparency?
2. *Interest in Further Evaluation of Services and Costs:* Many requested detailed breakdowns and justifications of costs and budget allocations. What are the specific areas where tax money is being spent, and how is it allocated among different services and departments? Some respondents requested more information on how services like police, fire, building inspection, and zoning are utilized and their cost-effectiveness. What are the staffing needs and salaries for village employees, and how do they compare to similar positions in other communities or state positions? Some respondents questioned the necessity and cost of Village fire and rescue services, including the decision to bring EMS back in-house. Others questioned the need for additional police officers given the current safety levels, and how their presence would impact the budget and community. Can the village explore cost efficiencies, outsourcing, or technology to reduce expenses and manage the budget more effectively?
3. *Staffing and Role Separation Suggestions:* There were suggestions to separate the roles of Village Administrator and Police Chief, with some suggesting appointment of two current Village staff members to those separated roles. Some respondents called for hiring a Zoning Administrator.
4. *Public Works and Maintenance Suggestions:* There were suggestions to reorganize public works activities, such as decreasing the frequency of yard waste pickup and improving the maintenance of roads, parks, and public areas. Some respondents wanted to see better management of these services.
5. *Search for Alternative Funding Sources:* Some respondents proposed increasing fees for Village special programs or services to help cover budget shortfalls and exploring alternative funding sources, such as increased contributions from entities like the Country Club or other municipalities. Would/could reassessing properties have a similar outcome without the need for a referendum?
6. *Other Questions and Comments:* How does the Village compare to similar communities in terms of services and expenses? What would be lost if a referendum is not approved? Is there a need for a long-term strategic plan for the Village to avoid repeated tax increases and budget shortfalls? Can the Village explore alternative public school options or reduce contributions to the local school district to alleviate the tax burden on residents? Finally, some respondents used this space as an opportunity to thank the Village and its staff.

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



**Question 5: If you answered “no” to one or more of the options [Option 1, 2, and/or 3], what added information, if any, would you like to receive?**

- Taxes have risen over 30-40% the past 5 years
- Work on lowering the budget rather than increasing taxes.
- Our current dispatched calls for service do not warrant additional officers. If we currently have enough officers to have 2 in separate squads coverage only in the 7 p - 3 a shifts, that should be sufficient. Additional officers will just generate more self-initiated administrative work through traffic enforcement. Don't feel the necessity for hiring more officers to do more self-generated activity that requires more administrative support, jail time, and court time!
- I can support the money for everything but extra officers, but only if it isn't tied to a levy hike. If we are able to staff the 2nd and 3rd shift with 2 officers, that is sufficient officers. Otherwise, we are just hiring more cops to generate more self-initiated activity, which requires more jail time, more court time, more down-time to write reports, and more administrative overhead to handle the paperwork.
- Average property tax increase last 4 years
- Assess lake properties at market value
- How can you reduce the budget? I would eliminate elective programming
- We do not need to add police to compensate for Madison's growth. Madison should add.
- I do a lot of hiring. There are plenty of qualified workers available at lower wages than we are currently paying. The "inflationary" wage pressure does not exist right now.
- Detailed Village operating budget including income, positions, salaries, and job descriptions.
- No other info needed
- Building a strong, vibrant, and well run community is critical!
- Did we consider reducing public works services? I mean I love them, but they are maybe too great.
- I would love to know how the competitive wage adjustment will be distributed, because that's \$27k each at 20 employees...
- Cost of turning services over to county or city
- None
- None
- High taxes
- Taxes up!
- I didn't answer no, but how many residences are there? How many are owned by seniors over 65? Would anyone be priced out of their home? How soon are we due for reassessment? How large is the reserve fund? Did \$261,000 equal more than 4-5% of reserve fund? What percentage of homes are valued greater than \$300,000? What is the estimated time passage before we would have to revisit this same issue? 3, 4, 5, 6 years?
- Cost too high. Don't need more police

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



- None. Cost is simply too high. I don't see the need for additional policing.
- Why admin is prioritized over police and fire
- Full breakdown of wages and comparable wages i.e. admin staff is \$118k/year? Rookie police officer is 150k/year?
- Full breakdown of wages and comparable wages i.e. admin staff is \$118k/year? Rookie police officer \$150k/year?
- In proposing these referendums, it behooves the Village Board and Administration to publish the Village Budget, in its entirety, for residents of the Village of Maple Bluff to examine, including: departments and their current budgets, employees within the departments, and their current salaries, income for the Village, and justification for any and all recommended changes.
- Statistics on crime and emergencies How additional staff could be used and why to address increases in crime/emergencies
- Written response is illegible
- None
- 80,000 max with college degree.
- See below
- I'd like to see a percentage breakdown of where tax dollars currently go.
- Job description for an administrative staff position that's needed at \$118,000
- I would like to know the total Number of police officers patrol hours per resident population in like communities, Shorewood hills,....
- We pay enough in taxes and it goes up every year. Like most companies, work with what you have.
- Give me a break. Manage your resources.
- Why does mutual aid not accomplish risk mitigation for high risk stops? Is the goal to get dual officer coverage to 100%? If so, articulate it and the policing vision with quantifiable goals.
- My property taxes have increased over 8.5% CAGR since '20, sharply outpacing the rate of inflation. Your inflation arguments are simply not sound. Once the Village chooses to articulate how it has wrung out all (in)efficiencies before asking for more bodies, I may be interested in being in favor of a more reasonable ask. On adding 2 police officers, perhaps the Village should lean on the City of Madison to patrol the surrounding areas before asking for MB taxpayers to fund additional oversight due to City of Madison issues bleeding into the Village. Pretty tired of hearing the pumped up bass from Warner Beach, the Audubon from Northport out to Thompson Drive, among other dynamics. The confiscatory pieces of filth leading the City and Dane County thought nothing much of draining the tax base with restrictive Covid-19 shutdown policies - they do not have the right to scratch their heads and say, "hmmm... we have a budget shortfall - let's soak the property taxpayers...again." To the City: Maybe focus less on BRT and instead plug your own budget hole versus hitting us - not our problem. In terms the Village asks - got to demonstrate what cutbacks in services versus hitting us more with property tax increases. How much is enough. Thanks in advance

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



for soaking those without earned income, have paid their mortgages in full and are now getting taxed out of their homes. I am a hard no on all of the above options.

- Who is getting 118,000 salary? How many of the current “20 full time staff equivalents” have more than one position, Either with the village, or including jobs outside the village? (ie: Kurt, who holds two, presumably full time, positions?) Are current MB police officers paid \$150K? What is comparable salary of surrounding PDs?
- I do not support having a combined village administer/police chief position. As long as that is the structure used, I question administrative priorities and am unlikely to support a referendum to support those priorities.
- What are the recreational activities funded by the Village?
- What are the "public safety concerns" requiring two more police officers?
- My taxes have raised in unexpected and exaggerated ways over the last two years. The property value has gone up but also taxes seem to rise up in a way no one has been able to explain to me. Even more now seems outlandish.
- Data supporting need for more policing, not words
- Do the numbers support additional police officers or firefighters?
- It is unclear why we would be adding additional police officers with our current mutual aid in place with Madison.
- Actual numbers alongside percentages in communications on these issues would be helpful.
- I'd like to see a clearer breakdown of the property taxes paid by Maple Bluff Country Club versus the property taxes paid by Maple Bluff residents. I do not believe that the club pays a proportionate amount. I would try to fill village budget shortfalls by lessening subsidization of the club through property tax rate and use of village services.
- None
- less services and new employees that want to work like the rest of us- outsource
- I do not feel like the options to make adjustments to no increase taxes were looked at adequately. Maybe go to part time admin staff so benefits don't need to be offered. Not everyone is looking for or needs benefits. This could save taxpayers money. Don't collect yard waste as often as we currently do. Even if it were done every other week it would still be more than anywhere else.
- I support Tanner and what he feels he needs to continue to staff the police appropriately. I would like to see an option for police and to adjust for the inflationary budget shortfall. I need more information regarding the needs of the Administration and I would be interested in hearing about process and technology used to make the current staffs lives easier rather than adding more staff.
- Tax rates and data comparisons to neighboring towns / villages. How does Maple Bluff compare and are we below the average and therefore looking for additional funds? Where are the current dollars allocated and are there are options to reallocate?

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



- After carefully reviewing the numbers I believe there is at least 25% fluff and some things just don't make sense. However, I would vote for a referendum that would equal option 3 but at a budget of \$1,000,000 maximum.
- Will the detailed budget still be posted as Sarah mentioned? Thanks
- What are the absolute #s of cases in the reporting of % increase in crimes reported, investigated, etc.?
- Look, MB has one full time person for each 65 residents. What a luxury. What is the statistic for Dane County at large? For the city of Madison? For comparable communities? I'd like to see that comparison publicized as part of this information gathering process. Great, it makes life in MB very comfortable. But, if the reality is that it's becoming too expensive to be independent from the city of Madison, this is the real question that needs to be addressed. I personally believe that being part of Madison would raise the taxes a lot more - so I'm not necessarily advocating for that. Raising my property tax by hundreds of dollars in one single year is going to be a significant financial hardship. I understand raising taxes a modest amount annually is necessary - May I offer these caveats: We need to put pressure on the state to pony up some cash. Why is the largely GOP assembly given so much power? Then look at the line item for MATC (Madison College) - they seem to have been given carte blanche - do they really need that much money from residents given the fact that the services they offered have diminished over the past 4 years? Why can't they be asked to raise tuition? We need to ask the hard questions of our greater community as well - why are THEIR services diminishing but we continue to pay the same amount? (Look closely at the past 10+ year history of what Madison College levies on our taxes - there are many question marks, corruption? there). I'm also going to pose a real safety question - I live in the 500 block of N Sherman - and a lot of the expense for police, fire, and ambulance is being spent on a single home - the owner of that home should be fined a proportionate amount for mismanagement of property, thus resulting in excess police calls. Yes, I want safety and I value the staff that picks up my trash, keeps my yard waste manageable, and provides for safety and security, but there needs to be more than just "charge more" as an option. If we're all being asked to tighten our belts, then we need to ask the same of the village of MB. What other cost saving measures are being considered? When I see such answers, I might consider voting yes to Option 1 or even possibly Option 2. Until then, I'm not convinced that the people who have put this together have done enough homework and research to justify my support.
- Our property taxes have increased by thousands of dollars in the last few years, we can't keep raising them
- What other options do you have to raise \$\$\$. Increase the marina fee. Increase fines e.g.: dogs not on a leash in public areas.
- I think adding one officer this year would make it easier to pass. Good luck!
- How will board work to find ways to cut budget even if some services need to be cut 1. Let Madison take over police 2. Let Madison take over fire 3. Decrease admin staff 4. Decrease services

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



- Learn to cut budgets
- Look for efficiencies in current ops.
- The needs analysis for the added positions. I'd like to understand the cost/benefit and how critical the needs are. If all critical, I'd be likely to support.
- I am tired of tax increases in the Village.
- Hopefully these changes will result in this next budget sorts out ...
- Taxes are already too high, especially for elderly. Sewer and water bill is outrageous, even though I am judicious with my water use.
- We will also likely be getting a Madison schools referendum which is going to be a huge increase in taxes even if it is eventually only partially funded. Add to that our home insurance increased drastically due to the hail last fall. On a fixed income, we may be in a situation that we are locked out of paradise and need to move.
- Cut the spending
- Why are the police officer salaries being requested at "top Pam"? Why is the administrative assistant salary so high? Why aren't more user fees being proposed to offset some of these costs? Is the police department still pursuing high speed chases?
- Where our tax dollars are currently going
- I think safety is the highest priority
- I was at the meeting and what I heard was that there has been very little done to tighten up the budget or manage the state of current spending and cutting of extra programming, etc.. Also, I do not want my tax dollars to subsidize the blatant racial profiling, high speed chases, and fear mongering that has become a part of the neighborhood culture for those new to the neighborhood. I am all for fair wages for our hard working village staff, but increasing wages won't get to the root of the problem when certain positions have extremely low retention rates. Lastly, I have a huge problem with the exclusivity of the country club (and what it brings to the neighborhood) and the fact that the village not only subsidizes its existence but excuses it from paying its share of tax revenue. That is a large portion of land and potential tax benefit that only benefits the very privileged few who are able to afford the exorbitant costs. The fact that the majority of village board members are also country club members is a HUGE conflict of interest and is potentially litigious. For these reasons I will vote no on this referendum.
- Don't know what the inflationary budget shortfall really is about
- Too much at one time
- What analysis has been done of employee tasks and efficiencies? Employees in all professions are regularly asked to do more with less. What guidance are Village employees given regarding prioritizing workload? How can they "work smarter" without adding stress? Why does the Village Administrator and the Board feel the only way to address the issues outlined in the Referendum Options Report is to throw more employees into the mix? It is ok for employees to say "no" to requests that are outside of the scope of responsibilities. In my opinion we are currently overstaffed for the size of the community.
- How many police stops are happening outside the Bluff?

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
 July 2024



- I did not answer no. But I would like to know how often we might expect another referendum.
- The report while difficult to read does not provide enough information regarding police staffing. i.e. Residents need to see a monthly break down of calls like the Fire Department provides. Why was an administrative position moved to be the Police Administrator? What does the Police Administrator do that the Police Chief cannot do? Why are the Village Administrator and Police Chief not two separate positions as recommended by the outside consultant. This could free up the Police Chief to respond to calls and take on the Police Administrator duties freeing up the position for its' original administrative purpose. The Village Administrator could take on additional high level duties related to operating the Village including compliance with all village, local, county, state and federal regulations. Police and Fire Department needs should be separated for referendum purposes. The Fire Department paid-on call pay & incentives increase of \$77,000 should be removed from Option 3 and added to Option 2. Public Works should increase the 2000 part time hours request to one additional full time 2080 hours plus benefit package position. This allows for ongoing staffing and training needs of all Public Works staff under the current Public Works Director prior to their eventual retirement.
- Retired. On a fixed income.
- I appreciate the current situation. However, there's a limit on what retired Villagers, on a fixed income, have the ability to pay.
- Instead of raising taxes — what can be cut to pay higher wages (i.e. not buying a new fire engine)
- "We don't have data to make informed choices: Police - Salaries compared to other Madison area communities - Serious crime compared to other Madison area communities - How much of the increase in police activity data are due to Maple Bluff police stops on Serman Avenue of cars not entering the Village proper We already have more police per resident than other Madison area communities. The proposal would make it even more skewed:
 

	Population	Police Personnel	Police	Public served per	Madison	
Personnel	273,000	600	455	Fitchburg 30,834	67.5	457
	55	406	Verona	14,521	24	605
McFarland	9,378	20	469	Cottage Grove	8,857	22
	403		VMB	1,433	7	205
VMB Proposal	1,433	9	159	VMB Admin		
- None.
- -Details on budget shortfall -Details on MB wages vs nearby municipality wages -Details on current admin support staffing -Details on need for add'l public works hours - what does PW do now? what is not getting done? what add'l things would get done w add'l PW hrs? -

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



Details on police & fire staffing: current staffing in comparable municipalities? optimal staffing desired in municipality like MB? -What is being done currently to reduce costs/control budget in MB?

- No more police
- This is a very safe municipality and no need to add two full time police officers. I have no safety concerns living in Maple Bluff and the data does not show the need to add positions. Property taxes are already very high and were recently raised. I do not support any of these options. The workload is reasonable for the 20 staff in the Village and does not require adding another Administrative Support person. These are great jobs in the Village, with reasonable wages for the work being performed. I am not concerned with turnover. There is turnover in every government agency.
- Apples-to-apples local municipality wage and staffing comps and state wages for comparable positions. For the public to be made aware of the Dane County police call data that was presented at the 4/8/24 Police Committee meeting and discussed at the 4/9/24 Village Board meeting, neither of which met Wisconsin DOJ Office of Open Government posting or agenda clarity standards. Neither meeting's agenda was posted at an accepted media source at least 24 hours before the meeting occurred and the agenda line items did not clearly state the topic to be discussed such that it would be readily understood by village residents. I would like village residents to be made aware of recommendations by PAA, the staffing consultants recently engaged by the village to assess our staffing challenges, in regard to the dual position of village police chief/administrator: "We would likely never recommend that a municipality the size of Maple Bluff move to a joint Administration/Chief position if they were seeking to reorganize. Would the Village Board be willing to try to explore separating these positions to free up more focus on Village Administration by the Admin/Police Chief is a question that should be explored ... The dual position can also become a problem at budget time when potential conflicts of interest in priorities can create perception issues, even when not intended." Asking residents to vote on tax increases when village administration fails to post meeting packets and make meeting recordings available in a timely manner online and the board has been unwilling to remedy its transparency issues is a problem. I would like to see administration make the easy transition to posting public materials instead of requiring time-consuming open records requests (for both residents and staff) and the board to take responsibility for past actions and properly inform the public according to state DOJ standards going forward.
- Your packet contains no data on effects of higher property assessments. What has been the total tax revenue to the Village for each of the last ten years? How does it compare to inflation?
- I would like to know the actual raw numbers of arrests for each category instead of just % increase.
- What efforts have been made to find productivity improvements through labor saving software or changes to scheduling? What could the total tax increase be if Madison referendum items are adopted?

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



- none
- More information in where the competitive wage adjustments will put us compared to Dane County communities our size. Are you also comparing other benefits? For example, how much the Village contributes to employees' health insurance premiums.
- None
- None
- MB police department is already big enough for 1,400 person community. Especially since we share resources with Madison.
- I think we need more information on how the apartment building added any tax benefit to the neighborhood. The residents there are high utilizers of streets, sidewalks, parks, dog waste receptacle. Also, what benefits of added commercial property brings. Explain it to us like we are 6 years old.
- Absolutely no to these! Let's stop turning the village into a police state!!!! I am for keeping wages competitive. But let's use appropriate comps for wages.
- I have attended several of the Village Board meetings and I don't believe the case has been made for the need for 2 more police officers. As a matter of fact I believe a convincing case has been made in these meeting that we don't need need two more policeman.
- Related to the 86% turnover rate in the PD, I would like to see the feedback (assumed exit interviews or the like, complaints, etc.) which may shed light on the outrageous turnover rate. I do not believe this is solely related to salary issues or single police officers on duty. I suspect there is a lack of support and/or other issues firmly based in leadership, or lack thereof.
- Unfortunately my wages to not increase proportionally to inflation making it difficult to pay more for this and everything else. Service reductions may be more viable long term.
- The city of Madison and similar size cities manage with one police officer per approximately 550 residents. This referendum would leave the village with one officer for 200 residents. It seems extravagant. Should we explore more contracting with Madison Police?
- Actual crime statistics. I feel overpoliced already.
- Nothing, tighten your budget like we all are! Reduce the Vermeer from coming around wkly to EOW
- Instead of percentage changes in the reports, I would like to see both number or dollar changes. In addition, explicit facts regard increases in threats to safety. Also, what specific services would be cut or decrease if property taxes are not increased. The report is entirely too vague.
- I need to understand more about the impact the "scale back staff, programs, and/or services" would have on life in Maple Bluff -- what are the programs that would be cut? what are the staff that would be cut? what are the services that would be cut? Are some of these programs and services "nice to have" vs. "essential"? Thank you for all you are doing and for offering this survey to get feedback.
- Yes
- Taxes are already high. Aren't there other options be raising taxes

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



- No more police!
- It seems as if resident paranoia is driving the ask for more police presence. Does current police staff voice the need for increased staff/police presence? Apologies If this info is out there and I missed it.
- We do not need more police. We are a sleepy village. You are trying to inflate crime stats for your purposes. Stop the police chases
- Insufficient information provided to approve anything. Need a detailed explanation of budgeted increases. Need comparison of costs to similar communities in WI. How do VMB costs for fire and police compare per capita to other communities? How do existing admin costs compare to other WI communities? How does the VMB crime rate compare to Dane Co and to WI as a whole? How will VMP rank in total tax per resident compared to WI as a whole?
- Why do we need these additional services. Can we pay for these services with a flat fee opposed to building it into the property tax base.
- Would the residents of Maple Bluff be better served if the City of Madison took over the Fire Department services like what happened in Shorewood Hills?
- The assessed value of my home went up by 46% just a few years ago. At the time I was told my taxes would most likely not increase by that amount. It did and I know a number of people who experienced the same. I would be more likely to be agreeable if this was addressed. Also, some of the competitive comparisons in Option Reports makes wage comparisons to "Madison Area Averages". Does that include Madison? Waunakee which has over 16,000 residents and McFarland has 9,300. In addition, all of them are much larger in land area than Maple Bluff. I think we are closer to Shorewood Hills, in overall size and type of community. How do we compare to them? It seems a little overgeneralized to make an informed opinion.
- Who performed the study? How are wages adjusted for the size of the job compared to other municipalities? What cost savings efficiencies were investigated?
- Taxes are so high already. Everyone at the village does an amazing job. I am understanding, but it's a lot of money.
- Cost if only 1 police officer is hired.
- You are missing the most important priority which is prioritize programs and services and make adjustments to meet budgets. Companies have budget cuts and are able to do more with less, be more efficient, eliminate low use/low benefit services and come up with new high impact/low cost services and programs. I would like to see this evaluation and recommendation. I do not support tax increase given I've just had HIGH increase. Work within your budgets!
- None - our property taxes have skyrocketed every single year to a ridiculous degree.
- Public safety data is insufficient. We keep hearing of "incidents", heightened security posture, hot spots" without any quantitative evidence.

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



- \$118,000 for an administrative support position is WAY too EXPENSIVE!! Also what is the salary breakdown for the increase. \$500,000+ seems excessive. We don't need more police officers either!!!!
- quit marketing that we are not safe! Arresting more people on Sherman Avenue and then saying our crime rate is increasing and we are not safe is misleading.
- What would we consider outsourcing? What other revenue sources are available?
- I would like to see options listed that are not all or nothing for Wage increases, Additional Police resources. As shown below in my comments I think there are a significant amount of people that would support an additional officer and some wage increase....but not necessarily the full option 3.
- We definitely don't need more police.
- none
- The only thing I would vote for is more police. you are taxing the residents out of house and home. find a different way to raise money. There are plenty of people would love to help create more donation and fundraising opportunities. absolutely no more money for admin.
- Your report was well written, the information is compelling, and it is clear that more funds are necessary -- thank you for the time and energy it took to put this together. Well done!  
What is missing: -- There needs to be more information about the Village's property assessment process and how it may need to change going forward. Can you provide a follow-up analysis of the history of Maple Bluff's current property assessment process, whether there is any plan being discussed to ensure that all properties are assessed (and reassessed) in a timely manner on an ongoing basis, and how this change could impact tax revenues. This analysis should include a comparison to the assessment processing in surrounding communities. From first-hand experience, I know that Maple Bluff's assessment process is very different from either Madison or Monona - why? -- I would also like more information about fees for recreational programming. Does fee income support the staffing and facility costs required to conduct those programs? If not, are discussions taking place to increase fees? -- I would also like to see a thorough and transparent analysis of whether our property taxes and village staff resources support the country club. The country club is obviously a huge asset to our neighborhood, but it is not used by a significant majority of residents. All residents, especially those of us who are not members, deserve a clear understanding of how our tax dollars might be supporting its operations, or how its tax-exempt status is failing to contribute to the coffers. We live in an affluent community and our services and programs are amazing -- it benefits all of us to live in a place that is desirable. However, we should be paying fairly for those services and the staff who run them. We need transparent and factual data about where and how all of our tax dollars are being spent in order to make informed choices.
- I would prefer making the Chief of Police and Village Administrator full time positions. Those two positions call for completely different mind sets.
- I would only support the referendum for the most \$\$\$ option because that is what the village really needs. I would not vote for less unless, that is all that appears on the ballot.

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 5**  
July 2024



- What raises have staff received in the past 3-5 years, if any? What percentage of police calls are in the Village and outside the Village? How does the City of Madison help Maple Bluff (i.e. do we ask for mutual assistance and receive it)? Why isn't there an option for Inflationary and budget shortfall adjustment: \$261,000 only? Are staff wage adjustments based on CPI?
- Don't understand why we need more police officers
- The Village can achieve and accomplish its services using the existing resources and not squeeze village residents for more money, especially following such large increases to residents over the last years. Practice frugality and demand high productivity from those on the payroll.
- With the significant increase in Madison taxes and recent increase in valuations. The board needs to consider how to cut the budget. Such increases on a fixed budget retirement situation is not possible
- It is not an issue of information, it is a matter of affordability.
- I'd be most likely to support an option for maintaining essential services and police staff increases.
- Look to outsource services and/or install technologies to reduce human costs.
- I need to see what cuts need to be made in order NOT to seek an increase..perhaps services need to be reduced/not increased
- Do not need more police officers

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 9**  
July 2024



**Question 9: Any additional comments you would like to provide?**

- Dear Board Members, Thank you for your service and a special thank you for taking on the challenge of formulating a comprehensive consideration of the issues in advance of the referendum. Early on at the informational meeting on July 8, I posed what I called an "omnibus" question - has the Board made a determination how far into the future the three referendum options will carry us before a further referendum funding is likely to be needed? The response was a simple affirmative. Unless I missed it in the informational packet or other communications, the question does not seem to have been addressed in any detail. Others have suggested that the affirmative answer given at the meeting may not be correct. Survey Item 5 limits requesting added information to those responding "no" on the options. My spouse and I did not respond "no" to any of the options. We would like to request additional information regarding the "omnibus" question or to be directed as to where a more informative answer can be found. Thank you for your consideration.
- A huge "thank you" to entire staff - you are a big reason Maple Bluff is so special.
- Make Tanner Police Chief and Sarah Danz the head Administrator. She does the job anyway and Tanner is alienating residents. Get rid of dual hats and hire outside Zoning Administrator to take over the entire zoning and Building Board roles after all ordinances are made with measurable standards they say they are doing.
- We need a separate Village Administrator from Police Chief - i.e., not the same person doing both jobs.
- I'd like to question why we brought back the whole fire rescue business to the village without a referendum, when it took about 5 years in the past to get to the reasoning to get rid of that service and rent it out to Ryan Brothers, after much debate and consulting expenses and a referendum to make that decision. Now we once again have the EMS expenses associated with having this in-house service. Isn't it interesting that the more officers we hire, the more administrative support they need and now we don't have that person in the office helping Sarah, because they are busy in the P.D. helping with police administration to handle all the self-initiated activity generated by our officers? The fact is that probably only 1-2% of our police time is from taking dispatched calls within the village itself. I would like any new money to go toward a new Zoning Administrator to take over from Nystrom, and to take the place of the Building Board. Nystrom has not been effective or responsive in this role. Make him the Police Chief. Make Sarah the new head Administrator. Separate out these 3 roles just like the consultant advised. Right now, Nystrom gets to decide what codes he will and will not enforce, and then sets himself up as the sole judge and arbiter of the law and zoning codes, and won't back down when he is proven wrong, and repeatedly threatens residents with enforcement action. I would rather pay for a new Zoning Administrator than for new officers who will only generate more self-initiated activity and crime stats. We have good officers doing a good job, and getting backup from the City.
- Property taxes are currently driving some long term residents away. We need to look for savings. Thanks.

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 9**  
July 2024



- Option 3 is the only option that keeps our village running.
- Areas of financial mismanagement hopefully were addressed - for example, the waste of money and time with "we will call police" signage all over Village.
- Best wishes - important work!
- Police and Fire and Public Works are very important. We have a safe and pleasant Village and I would like to keep it that way.
- Fix the potholes. No need to pick up yard waste every week.
- It would be helpful to know Madison school burden relative to this - I believe it to be the majority of the tax burden. Have you considered changing school districts? I am certain Waunakee (contiguous via water at least) would love our money and our kids! Maple Bluff residents go to more than a dozen different schools so it's obvious Madison is NOT the answer.
- I would put them all [question 4] as a 1!
- Defund the police
- You're doing a great job - it's a difficult balancing act. Thank you!!
- Fire and police services should primarily for Village. Appears these employees are serving Madison often.
- Maple Bluff taxes have always been reasonable in the 22 years I've lived here. I appreciate that you work hard to do that. On a limited income, any increase is difficult for me but seemingly necessary to maintain our quality of life. Thank you!
- Such a good idea to put out this survey
- Our Village taxes would go up 27% for Option 3
- Our vote is taxes would increase 27% for option 3. Option 1 is only 15.8%!
- It seems like a bad time to face a large tax increase, given MSD's proposals (Madison School District)
- Want to maintain Village services to the highest level but would like to see further breakdown and justification of cost presented.
- Want to maintain the Village services to the highest level but would like to see further breakdown and justification of costs presented
- Perhaps it is advisable that the Village adopt a "do more with less" approach, like most homeowners have had to adapt. In all the comments that "everything costs more" where exactly does the Board think the homeowner is to access additional funds for their personal household budgets?! Only by publishing the budget can the constituents determine how to move forward.
- That we in the village are presented with this large accumulation of issues seems to reflect poor planning and budgeting. We should have been planning and budgeting over time for all of these issues, instead of presenting them to us in one expensive lump. Very disappointing. I indicated support for all issues as they are important, but we should have addressed them sooner and as they arose. Inflation, for example, is not news and should have been handled in each year's annual budget. I hope we can limit this in the future. For example, are we accruing money for our next squad car or fire truck?

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 9**  
July 2024



- Thank you
- My taxes have increased by \$6,000 in the past two years - it's not time for another increase. Bad timing.
- How much are fireworks? Are they donated? I believe they used to be. They pollute the lake.
- Comparative data analysis should only be completed and summarized by outside firm/third party.
- My primary residence is still Tennessee, so I can't vote here.
- Serving on the Village Board is a difficult responsibility and I appreciate those who will take the time to do what they think is best. However, with all due respect this survey appears to me to be a cop out. It is the Board's job to make these decisions. The Village does not have the necessary information (nor should it have to ask for it) to answer this survey. And, so what, would you vote based on the survey which is hardly the voice of an informed electorate. I would rather you held public meeting for give and take and to discuss the more basic issues such as why do we have our own Fire Department, are there policing alternatives such as sharing work forces with other jurisdictions and information on what other jurisdictions do to address these matters. In my view, a survey to an uninformed citizenry is irrelevant and a poor substitute for the responsibilities of those who choose to serve as Village Trustees. And, as to the expanded police force, I have had two occasions when we had suspected break ins (we were out of town). The Village's response was embarrassing, a rude referral to 911, no response from that and no one answering the phone. When we offered to send our Ring video, the officer and then the Village office said they weren't interested. Please turn the policing responsibilities over to a more professional operation such as a joint arrangement with other jurisdictions. My thoughts, thanks for asking but next time please don't survey the public, have a series of public meetings, listen to those that participate but otherwise, do your job, make the hard decisions and, I promise you, everyone will "get over it".
- Our taxes are already comparatively very high
- I would like more information and transparency about how our police officers respond to calls and how many are outside the Village. I would like to return to the more community police force philosophy of Tim's administration.
- No more playground equipment. Use the bocce money to help fund operating expenses.
- This is outside of taxes that are going up for schools that basically no one in Maple Bluff use. Show us tangible consequences for not supporting this and please don't make it hypothetical. Data would be nice.
- Cut services -
- Covered above. Thank you for the opportunity to respond.
- I understand that the village budget is stressed, but so are homeowners with already high property taxes. Please look for additional ways to perform services more cost effectively and lobby to get mor funding from WI state government

# Property Tax Referendum Survey Results

## All Responses to Question 9

July 2024



- See all of above comments. Plus, Why do you want to know survey respondent's age on this survey? How does that impact how you interpret their responses?
- I feel we receive an excellent level of service as things now stand, and if non-competitive wages are causing us to lose staff this should be corrected. I strongly feel the police presence in the Village is adequate and we should not add another position. Our property taxes have more than doubled in the past 5 years due to an increase in the assessed value after we remodeled. We said yes to the last referendum, but 2023 property taxes were up 11.3% over 2022--another \$1,800--and we do not welcome ANY additional increases.
- I am not in favor of the hiring or funding of any additional police for the Village of Maple Bluff. In fact, it seems obvious to me that one way to meet budget shortfalls for administration and public works in the village would be to cut back on police. I am disappointed that this is not proposed as an option above. Until the village police end their policy of employing high speed chase through the village, I feel that they are a threat to my personal safety and the safety of my neighbors who enjoy walking and biking throughout the village.
- I feel we could charge for any requests for documentation/building/planning/ etc
- I feel strongly about adding to our police staff. Perhaps this should be re-evaluated and included in option 1 or 2.
- WE need to solve problems verses spend money correcting short falls of operations
- We had a huge tax increase a few years ago that was very hard to swallow and to do another one so quickly is not well received. I also don't feel the options were presented in a way that some people might want. If we support some extra police services, why do we only get that if we approve all other asks?
- Thank you to the team for sending the survey and your time and involvement in our community.
- I love MBCC and the village -
- I cannot argue with the village's needs, they seem justified and I believe can be achieved at a much lower cost than your proposals.
- I would like to see all the municipalities around the state that are facing similar financial deficits to lobby the state for our share of revenue. The fact that I've already paid state taxes that are being held by the legislature that would provide support to the village is unconscionable. Unless these rules from Act 10 are challenged, I suspect we'll be doing more referenda to keep our community intact. Demographics in the area are not favorable to maintain standards as we've known without these "asks".
- Can the admin role be staffed with multiple volunteers?
- I'm not opposed to paying a reasonable amount more in taxes to support important services, but I'd want the analysis to be done with a rigorous look at what can be cut or restructured for savings and what tangible improvements can be made. I don't know the answers to these questions but am just thinking out loud based on what I've heard discussed: 1) If it's true that we haven't had a structure fire in 20 years and a majority of our medical calls are to assist other municipalities, is fire/rescue something that needs more

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 9**  
July 2024



funding, and do we need multiple command level staff positions? (Nothing against anyone--I'm sure they're all great--just don't want to take spending for granted.) Likewise, do we need another new fire truck? 2) Do those other municipalities reimburse the Bluff for its assistance? 3) Do we need a municipal court? 3) If we hire additional police, will the DA's office be able to secure charges, convictions, and meaningful sentences to take criminals out of circulation so we're not continually trying to re-solve the same problems? From a services standpoint, if we hire additional public works people, will they be able to take on the kind of detail work that would make the neighborhood really look good and function well (e.g. maintaining the common area landscaping in a country club-type way vs. the constant cycle of weeds growing, dying, and growing again; painting the fire hydrants; leveling manholes; abandoning hand patching and chip sealing of the roads in favor of smooth blacktop or concrete; etc.? I really appreciate the public works people we have, so none of this is meant as a criticism, but it would do my heart good to see things done in a hands-and-knees, perfectionist-type manner vs. a fast, big equipment-type way (e.g. sweeping the streets so they're clean vs. running an expensive looking bobcat with a brush attachment over them that leaves half the debris behind; treating, bracing as needed (with cables), and carefully trimming trees vs. cutting down and replanting. Again, none of that is meant as a criticism--I very much appreciate what our staff does--just my brainstorming to hopefully make this an opportunity for bold improvement and not just an exercise in funding the status quo. Thank you very much for all of your efforts! We have a lot of good things going. I really appreciate your efforts to bury above-ground power and communications lines. I would love to see that continue until they're all underground. I also like the street signs with the logo you added. It would be great if all of them could be like that. Lastly, if an opportunity ever presented itself to acquire Burrows Park from Madison and use it to more cohesively connect Fullers Woods to the rest of the Bluff and possibly add a town square-type area, as well as more lakefront amenities, I think that would really pay dividends, possibly in terms of additional tax revenue and potential sales of some of the land. Thank you again!

- If you want 2 extra officers then maybe give up one public works position that you're asking for, or give up half of the new administrative position. You can do with fewer public works people if you cut back on planting all these median strip island gardens that take up so much time weeding and just cause visual traffic obstructions. Try collecting yard waste every other week on recycle weeks instead of every week. Let Tom retire so you can pay less high wages to the next supervisor. If you want more money for the fire department, work on organizing it better to make it more cost effective. Did we really need to bring back the ambulance? Are you saving the income earned from EMS conveyances and Medicare payments, and putting it in a pool of money that is separate from the Operating Fund so it can be used for upkeep of the ambulance service? Create career ladder opportunities in the Fire Dept by having only 1 chief, 1 asst. chief, and make the other two open chief positions duty officer positions and specify when hiring them that they get less pay and have to work all the weekend shifts that the chiefs don't want to work. If you're going to pay for Fire Dept intern schooling, then require interns to contractually agree to work for us for

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 9**  
July 2024



1-2 years after the completion of their schooling, and use them to help with storm cleanup, fire hydrant cleanup, snow removal around hydrants, foliage removal around hydrants, downed tree incidents, storm drain cleanup, etc. They can pick up some of the slack for the public works people when there aren't any calls.

- The property taxes in this village are already higher than other good neighborhoods. At some there needs to be some plateau of property taxes if you want your community residents to stay here.
- I say we opt out of funding for Madison Public Schools
- Thank you for offering this poll. I appreciate being able to offer my opinion, as well as informed observations.
- Thanks to the Village for outstanding public service.
- We should do what will make Maple Bluff a strong vibrant community.
- The All Village meeting was very helpful.
- These increases cannot be sustained by people retired.
- Reduce wages across the board.
- The village board should take into consideration the huge likely increase in school taxes that will result from the ... referendum.
- Police and public works would be my priority for spending.
- Keep up the great work!
- Increase fees/cost for Village special programs to help pay for budget shortfall. ie: camp for kids, - increase fees.
- I've only missed 2 elections in 62 years!
- Staff cannot be expected to continually "do more with less." But it is very possible to prioritize services and balance them with a tax rate that won't bankrupt some of us. Reduce frequency of brush pickup, outsource some admin/accounting services that don't require full time attention; and drop the notion that doubling police coverage is a necessity. Municipalities share fire department resources, surely the Village can arrange similar collaboration for safety prevention. MB tax rates are already excessive - a new/different approach is needed. And stop filling up the parks' greenspace with "stuff!" Let people employ their imagination, and enjoy sitting under trees.
- Taxes are ALREADY very, very high.
- I'm guessing you are also considering cost cutting measures and other sources of funding. If you could share those, that would be great. 2. It might also help for us to calibrate our taxes vs. other municipalities. It would be good to see what our tax premium is for the great services that we receive.
- Stop increasing real estate taxes.
- Will this increase annually or would the increase ... for several years?
- Are new policemen essential for our safety or just to ... the city + traffic etc - maybe only one
- Due to the significant increase in property values, has a new property assessment been considered as the best way to raise these funds? I realize assessments are expensive but it would probably be a better avenue.

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 9**  
July 2024



- we do appreciate all the village staff does.
- Couldn't get 1/6 to work
- We just gave you a huge amount of extra tax revenue a few years ago. You are going to tax people out of their homes. If you need more money make the Country Club pay more than \$100,000 a year. That is an obscenely small amount for the land they own. One million dollars a year would be more like the correct amount. That would pay for your staff raises.
- Fire and Police appear to serve adjacent communities. Concerned that increasing personnel is not primarily a Village benefit. Thank you for inviting our participation in these decisions.
- Kevin said at the information session that he doesn't necessarily have a long-term or strategic plan for the village beyond 5 years. Given that we are in a similar/the same position as we were 4-5 years ago when we approved a levy (which I supported at that time), there is no real assurance to me that you won't be back asking to raise property taxes another 20% in 4-5 years (my taxes have gone up 24% since 2020 and if option 3 were approved they would go up an additional ~15%). Given the legislative constraints around property tax collection in WI and the fact that Maple Bluff has only a few properties that are able to be developed and next to no sales tax income, is Maple Bluff even financially feasible as an independent municipality any more? I don't see why we need 2 more police officers and all of Tanner's responses on the FAQs were half-baked and didn't really provide details. So I likely would NOT support a levy including additional officers (but DO support the fire department's asks and think what we pay for on-call is criminal). Outside of those issues, we absolutely need to be paying fair wages to village employees (the public works salaries were also appalling to me), BUT... can we realistically keep up with those wage requirements in the future? Perhaps it's time to explore other options.
- We live in a safe community and do not need additional police
- Did the comparison of salaries look at state salaries for similar positions? Madison has a very high percentage of state workers and if state salaries were not included in the analysis that's a large omission.
- Maybe we need to see actual information about where the tax money goes?
- I would wait until after the presidential election and see how the economy recovers w a republican in the office.
- Great details you provided for being able to make well informed choices! Thank you
- I am very much in favor of Option 3. I appreciate all who are trying to make our neighborhood better and I don't think the financial increase in taxes is very much in comparison to what we will get. I can't wait to vote in favor of this! Thank you!
- village administrator position should be separate from police chief position
- I don't like the fact that the budget shortfall is combined with competitive wage adjustments. The Board chose to plug the budget shortfall by dipping into reserves, now they should live with the decision and not ask residents to pay for it. If this is the practice of balancing the budget, then soon the reserves will be gone. Perhaps a better approach is to budget within our means. It is difficult, but these challenges are faced regularly by every

# Property Tax Referendum Survey Results

## All Responses to Question 9

July 2024



business. We elected you to make these hard decisions. The feedback session on July 8 was great; very well facilitated. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

- It seems hard to justify a big increase in police when there's no crime increase and it seems our police are chasing people into Madison against the explicit wishes of the Madison police chief
- I appreciate the town meetings as it helps me understand the staff issues AND the concerns of my neighbors.
- At any given time staffing positions should remain filled to their current budgeted levels as provided by resident tax dollars. Departments should not be operated with currently budgeted vacant positions. Currently budgeted positions should be filled for their intended purpose. Village President, Village Board members, Village residents, and Village Staff need a clear understanding of what the job duties and responsibilities related to the budgeted Village Staff positions truly do and don't consist of. Requests outside of these budgeted Village Staff positions duties and responsibilities may need to be fulfilled by consultants, volunteers, or not at all.
- Can we PRIORITIZE the MBPD positions over the other choices, rather than adding it at the end (with Option #3)?
- This increase would result in the highest Personal Property taxes of any community in Wisconsin. The Country Club pays below average rate for a similar facilities. - I am not OK with these proposed increases
- I will retire soon and need to keep property taxes as low as possible; otherwise, I won't be able to afford to live in Maple Bluff.
- Have we ever considered to eliminate the fire department and contribute funds to station 8, 9 or 10? they are all within 10 minutes distance and I think it is a luxury that we cannot afford with 1,300 residents. Francisco (414 Kensington)
- For question #4, while competitive staff wages is my priority, all others options are considered an equivalent second place tie (although unable to rank them the same on survey). Thank you for all that you do for us!
- The village uses a sandwich board at its entrance for everything from fire department pancake breakfasts to beach park concerts because it's an effective communication tool. Why not for open meetings? Why not to alert the public to town halls?
- The Village does an amazing job and some residents cause a lot of busy work for you - which is unfortunate. We need to explore development of condos to have additional tax revenue and options for downsizing. Such a shame the Gordon was not a condo. We love our public works but the City of Madison does yard waste a couple times /year, not weekly. There are some things that seem a little more than needed. How can we dump the Madison school district that no one uses?
- Sharpen your pencils. What cost efficiencies are the Village pursuing? Police turnover seems extraordinarily high. Is it just about the money? Have you considered the same kind of study you did for the administrative jobs for police and fire?

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 9**  
July 2024



- We are appreciative of the many services the Village provides, but also supportive of budgets being balanced, and employees receiving pay commensurate to their positions compared to like employers.
- We just had an increase in property taxes based on shortfalls and policing. I understand costs increase but I also understand that organizations tend to grow into the budgets they are given. And continues to grow beyond those.
- Thanks for doing the work on the referendum so we can hopefully address the shortfall problem proactively so we can maintain, if not improve, the quality of life in Maple Bluff.
- Thanks for all you do!
- See above.
- Not voting because I am not a Wisconsin resident.
- Thank you!
- \$118k seems like a steep cost for an administrative assistant
- Thank you for the opportunity to question. I do understand why our police want more shifts covered by two officers. I just don't know if we have explored ways to get there outside of supporting full staff with our small village.
- I would be interested in exploring if the Village has any opportunity to explore its relationship with the Madison school district. Almost half of property tax revenue goes to MMSD, but most Village families opt for private options. Could the Village support MMSD at a lower level? Understand the Village and MMSD have a complex relationship and changes would likely require legal proceedings.
- Appreciate the opportunity to weigh in
- I would vote for less police but increases for other workers.
- Really. Why not break it down to daily cost or even hourly. Maybe sell it as only a cup of coffee per day. Sad thing is I love this city but I'm being taxed out of it. Question for you, did only government suffer from inflation? If this is the case maybe don't cause inflation. Just a thought. Insert expletive here.
- I am supportive of all 3 but specifically am in favor of option 3.
- I would like to see options regarding how to address the budget shortfall in ways other than increasing taxes. My property taxes have increased so much in the last 5 years it is incomprehensible!
- No
- Understand the need for public works and Fire/EMS, but the Village does not need more police. Separating the administrator and police chief positions should happen before adding any new personnel to the village.
- Despite previous promises of property taxes, not going up due to new survey assessments of house values, our property taxes have gone up over 25% in the last few years. I do not feel the need to pay even more taxes
- No police. I need to see org chart, salaries, and needs before considering staffing adds and changes to salary

# Property Tax Referendum Survey Results

## All Responses to Question 9

July 2024



- With referendums for MMSD over \$500K and the potential for a City of Madison \$27M referendum in November, it will be interesting to see what folks prioritize. The ubiquitous budget shortfalls should be a huge concern for all residents, whether Village or City.
- Because of additional development of apartments near our village, we should seriously consider making Maple Bluff a gated community.
- please publish wages being paid by the village
- This survey provides insufficient information and cannot be reasonable completed, esp question 4. Ranking.
- Understanding that we have excellent staff and services in Maple Bluff, how do we compare to Shorewood? What specifically would we lose in services if the referendum fails.
- This study did not share any critical review of Maple Bluff's current operation. In my view this is a necessary component of the study.
- The other taxes we pay for schools etc keep raising our tax bills but MB has remained reasonable. Probably need to raise to keep up our quality of life.
- Appreciate the report being put together to explain the tax increase.
- I am expecting to be able to vote against any option that increases taxes in your referendum.
- We value our local municipal services in the village. We support competitive wages and proper staffing levels. The village is a very safe place to live and does not need to have additional police officers. The only security incidents of concern that have occurred were caused by our police officers chasing perpetrators into our village.
- Cut trash and waste removal to once every two weeks or bill residents by the number of trash receptacles put out on the street. Fewer all village sponsored events. No fireworks shows. It's time to cut back on the extras.
- For the first time in ~25 years, we recently needed to call the EMS for a minor accident. I appreciated the peace of mind and the response time. Over the years we have thrown away a lot of crap that has been removed by the Village without complaint. I'm OK paying an additional \$1,200 - \$1,500 to keep that. Also, is the "value" assessed value or fair market value (i.e the Zillow value)?
- competitive staff wage adjustments seem high. 25k per police employee, 33.75 per fire, 12,8k per admin on average.
- I understand the complexity of trying to bucket the priorities but I don't believe that this should be an all or nothing vote. I would like to see an option 4 which takes a more conservative approach to each while addressing most of the urgent needs. In option 4 I would like to see \$261K budget shortfall, \$260K in wage adjustments, \$64K for Public works and \$150K for 1 additional police officer. Total \$735k Reason being: -The budget shortfall should not really be contentious. -It is clear that the Public Works Crew has been overworked with all the dying trees, storms and aging infrastructure. This should be a no-brainer for everyone. The function and attractiveness of our neighborhood is part of why people live here. I don't believe a full wage reset is necessary for all positions. For example the proposed wage increase is 10% or less for some positions but 50% for others. I and probably others would be in favor of a solid increase that shows we appreciate their hard

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 9**  
July 2024



work and dedication but is realistic. Many village residents including myself are underpaid right now relative to market rates/inflation, this is not abnormal. Lastly but not unimportant, I believe an option for 1 more full time Police Officer is a solid step in the right direction as opposed to only saying 2 or none. My proposal is a bit more balanced while addressing the core needs of Maple Bluff and stays under Proposal 1 in terms of \$'s. Based on some discussions with neighbors I feel several folks would similarly like to see an alternate option such as mine. -Chris Drewes

- Police/Fire increases are probably what I have the most problem with. Has there been a dramatic increase in crime (that is, in Maple Bluff, not Middleton or Madison where we are voluntarily answering calls because our officers are available)? Dramatic increase in drama is all I've seen. And paid staff for time spent "on-call"... is that really necessary when there is often latency when on-duty? I would imagine it balances out.
- There needs to be a "police funding only" option on the referendum or myself and everyone I talk to will vote against all increases.
- All of the options seem important. Of the four staffing options, I can't judge which are most needed and important to village operations.
- We need to support what our village staff are telling us they need -- that is why I support Option 3.
- Since the last referendum, what efforts have been made to decrease the tax burden on residents? How is this pattern sustainable? At what point are people taxed out of Maple Bluff? If we can't/won't raise revenues how can we over the long term sustain police, fire, etc.? The issue of sustainability is woefully missing from the options report. These sentences on page 10 of the report are problematic, "Similarly, the Administration Department has observed incremental increases in labor demands for their services. In 2023 the village observed a 152% increase in records requests from 2022, and a 24% increase in building permits compared to four years ago. Similarly, the number of committee and board meetings held in 2023 was 43% higher than the previous 5-year average." An increase of committee meetings seems to point to mismanagement at the board level and tax payers should not be on the hook for that -- reduce meetings or find ways to not involve staff. The increase of public records request between 2022 and 2023 should be a. reported in numbers, b. isn't enough of a timeframe to indicate a sustained need, and c. reflects a few big neighborhood issues (signs, halloween, etc.). Right now, Maple Bluff's Village Hall is open the fewest hours in comparison to almost all peers and offers the least transparency (does not make recordings freely available and does not make the board/committee packets available). If this was done, I would imagine the requests would decrease. The increase in police needs seems predicated on our proactive policing approach. If we hire more police officers, follow the same policing pattern, won't we logically be asking for more funding in a few years for police officers to meet the growing need? The Village needs to do long term planning rather than make important strategic decisions via referendum every few years. If I believed the Village had a vision, based on community input and need, I would have an easier time supporting some of these options.
- My need to look at options that are more affordable

**Property Tax Referendum Survey Results**  
**All Responses to Question 9**  
July 2024



- Evolutionary change is much preferable to a huge increase in tax liability.
- Village cost and tax increases would be more palatable if we weren't shoveling so much money into a garbage school district. We should explore moving Maple Bluff's affiliation to the Deforest District.
- I want to vote yes on the options because it helps keep our quality of life high! That said, if my math is correct it will double my taxes? Whoa! Whilst it's not a hard "no" that is a bitter pill to swallow
- I won't be voting in MB for the November election, since my primary residence is out of state. However, as a homeowner in the Village, I support the effort to improve wages and staffing shortages.
- The services that are provided to village residents is amazing and truly increases our property values. However, it's beyond frustrating that over 40% of our taxes go to schools that are subpar.
- Look to outsource services and/or install technologies to reduce human costs.
- Please consider adding dictation software for police officers to decrease the amount of time and energy needed for clerical tasks. Are there opportunities for residents to volunteer other than recreation or fire departments?
- I'm committed to our fire/police department. However, are they committed to the village? How often do they get pulled outside the village to assist Madison? Does MB receive compensation if/when their help is needed from outside departments?
- Maple Bluff should strive to be the most well-funded and best run community in Dane County, so I support tax increases to support improvements in services. I also believe the village should pursue a different public school option for its residents; perhaps through a partnership with Waunakee School District (i.e., MB kids can enroll in WSD and tax dollars go to Waunakee Schools). If this is possible, it would immediately drive up the value of homes in MB, increasing tax revenue and providing MB residents a viable public school option for those parents that value quality education in a safe environment.
- While I appreciate all the village has to offer it's residents, our taxes are already extremely high and not everyone has the same financial situation in the village. While a property tax increase for some may not be a big deal at all it can be a burden for others. My spouse and I both work full time and have 2 children. One of us hasn't had a raise in 3+ years due to cuts at their company. While not everyone feels the costs of inflation, many of us do.
- I am a part time resident and my property taxes went up 40+% in the prior year; this would add another 5% increase...I vote in another state