A Recipe for Growth: Discovering the Ingredients of a Successful Tax Proposal

Byrum & Fisk Advocacy
Presented by: Steve Faber
I'm not a lawyer!

Merry Christmas from your lawyer:

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

[URL Image]
Types of Local Taxes:
- Bonds
- Millages
- Income Tax
- Surcharge

Regardless of the type, you need to answer 3 questions for your residents:
- How much is it going to cost?
- Why do you need it?
- What happens if it fails?

The opposite of "yes" isn't "no", it's status quo.
"When reason and emotion collide [in the voting booth], emotion invariably wins." The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation (Public Affairs, 2007)

The facts of a proposal are critical, but so is making the case for what catastrophe may be avoided, what achievement will be gained, who will be impacted and how it will make your community a better place to live, raise family, grow old, etc.
Community group or coalition has an idea and approaches a school district, authority or local municipality.

Municipality, authority or school district has an idea and approaches a community group or coalition.

Usually a "partnership" of government, nonprofit and ballot committee.
There's no crystal ball

Each election has pros and cons: March, May, August, November

Need to consider what else is in the pipeline and on the horizon.

Do we have a choice?
Ingredients of a successful campaign

- Early v. Late Communications
- Coordination of Education/Information and Advocacy/Lobbying
- Numbers matter
- Building a plan: timeline & budget
- Targeting audiences
Ingredients of Success: Communication

- Research: polling & focus groups
- Message discipline
- Clear & transparent
- Bipartisan support
- Earned & paid media
- Speed
Non-political communications: Just the Facts

Early communication is key

Harmonize with advocacy messaging

Nonprofits can spend up to 20% of their budget lobbying and advocating
Main reasons people oppose or vote against a proposal

Very seldom is opposition to a proposal about the issue or question itself. People aren't anti-school, anti-parks, anti-kids, anti-safety, anti-infrastructure, etc.

Lack of trust: generally there's more trust the more local you go

Millage fatigue: people feel worn down by special taxes

Taxes too high: perceptions of high taxes
Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage:
Kent County

Grand Rapids Parks Millage

Caledonia Community Schools
Frequently Asked Questions about the Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal

1. What is the Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal?

If passed, the Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal will help ensure Kent County children under age 5 have access to vital services that ensure they are healthy and ready to learn by kindergarten. Voting “Yes” on the proposal will provide funding for community-based early childhood programs that are proven to work.
Vote YES for the "Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal" on Tuesday, Nov. 6!
It's almost over! Vote YES Ready by Five! www.yesreadyby5.com

Are you tired of the Election?

Don't keep it a secret. Tell your friends to Vote YES Ready by Five!

340 People Reached
18 Engagements

Photos

Boost Post

3 Shares

Like
Comment
Share

Write a comment...

Building a Strong Foundation
Kent County’s Future Starts Here

Voting YES for early childhood will:

- Provide health and developmental screenings for all Kent County kids which are essential in the early detection of speech and hearing impairments, autism or other learning disabilities and making sure kids get the treatment they need.
- Support new parents and help them ensure their children are healthy and ready for kindergarten.
- Increase access to high-quality early learning experiences that build a strong social, emotional and intellectual foundation for Kent County kids.

Research shows children who start ahead stay ahead. However, every year thousands of Kent County kids slip through the cracks and aren’t ready to learn when they enter kindergarten. That’s why we need to vote YES on the Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal!

Look for the Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal Near the End of your Ballot

www.yesreadyby5.com
Most of a child’s brain develops by age 3

Vote YES for the “Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal” on Tuesday, Nov. 6!

“The brain is developing very quickly during early childhood making it a critical time to support healthy brain development. Early childhood programs help connect families with the tools they need.”

– Gwenden Dueker, Ph.D., local parent and developmental psychologist

Provide health and developmental screenings for all Kent County kids which are essential in the early detection of speech and hearing impairments, autism or other learning disabilities and making sure kids get the treatment they need.

Support new parents so they can ensure their children are healthy and ready for kindergarten.

Increase access to high-quality early learning experiences that build a strong social, emotional and intellectual foundation for Kent County kids.

www.yesreadyby5.com

Endorsed by the Heart of West MI United Way, Progressive Women’s Alliance of West MI PAC, Grand Rapids Chamber and many more.
Our Community Supports

YES
Ready by

Join these supporters by voting YES for the “Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal” this Tuesday, Nov. 6!
Healthy and Ready to Learn

The “Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal” will be on the Tuesday, Nov. 6 ballot

✔ Endorsed by Family Futures

Healthy and Ready to Learn

You have experienced the peace of mind that comes from knowing how your child is developing through your participation in Connections.

The Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal will allow many more children in Kent County to participate in early childhood programs like those that helped your family.

If approved, the Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal will:

✔ Provides all Kent County kids with health and developmental screenings through programs like Connections.

✔ Support new parents so they can ensure their children are healthy and ready for kindergarten.

✔ Increase access to high-quality early learning experiences that build a strong social, emotional and intellectual foundation for Kent County kids.

For more information www.firststepskent.org/earlychildhoodproposal

Vote Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018

Healthy and Ready to Learn

Shall Kent County levy $.25 of one mill which is equal to 25 cents per $1,000 of the taxable value of all real and personal property subject to taxation for the period 2018 through 2024 inclusive for the purpose of providing planning, evaluating, and providing early childhood development services to persons up to age 5 and their parents? The amount raised by the levy in the first calendar year is estimated at $5,702,887.

Family Futures

257 Port Ave. W., Suite 210
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Healthy and Ready to Learn

If approved, the Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal will:

✔ Provide health and developmental screenings for all Kent County kids, which are essential in early detection of speech or hearing impairments, autism or learning disabilities so kids get the treatment they need.

✔ Support new parents so they can ensure their children are healthy and ready for kindergarten.

✔ Increase access to high-quality early learning experiences that build a strong social, emotional and intellectual foundation for Kent County kids.

What you need to know:

✔ All funding dollars will go through an independent audit and be reported to Kent County every year to ensure taxpayer funds are spent wisely and transparently.

✔ The proposed rate of $.25 per mill means a homeowner with an average home value of $150,000 will pay about $10.75 per year, or $1.09 per month.

✔ Studies show that a dollar invested in early childhood development saves $6 down the road with reduced costs for health care, education and prisons.

Visit www.firststepskent.org for more information.

Vote Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018

Healthy and Ready to Learn

n

Building a Strong Foundation

Learn about the Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal on the Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018 ballot

Healthy and Ready to Learn

Shall Kent County levy $.25 of one mill which is equal to 25 cents per $1,000 of the taxable value of all real and personal property subject to taxation for the period 2018 through 2024 inclusive for the purpose of providing planning, evaluating, and providing early childhood development services to persons up to age 5 and their parents? The amount raised by the levy in the first calendar year is estimated at $5,702,887.

Children who build a foundation of intellectual, social and emotional skills in early childhood are more likely to succeed.

Healthy and Ready to Learn

First steps growing into healthy adulthood

First Step Center

670 Port Ave., Suite 110
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

269-486-9690

www.firststepskent.org
Children who start ahead stay ahead.

The Ready by Five Early Childhood Proposal will establish a dedicated, stable source of funding for quality early childhood services and programs proven to work.

What you need to know:

- All millage dollars will go through an independent audit and be reported to Kent County every year to ensure taxpayer funds are spent wisely and transparently.
- The proposed rate of .25 mills means a homeowner with an average home value of $150,000 will pay about $18.75 per year, or $1.56 per month.

Research shows children who start ahead stay ahead. However, every year thousands of Kent County kids do not receive the health screenings and support they need.

Studies conclusively show:

- Most of a child's brain develops by his or her third birthday, making early years a critical time for learning and development.¹
- Thousands of Kent County kids are slipping through the cracks each year and aren't ready to learn by kindergarten.²
- A dollar invested in early childhood development saves six dollars down the road in reduced costs for healthcare, education and prisons.²

“I have seen firsthand how hard it is for a child to catch up once they're behind. Early childhood services are vital in making sure children are ready for preschool and kindergarten.”

— Ana Aleman, elementary principal

“Early childhood programs are essential to support children and help parents catch up with health and developmental issues early so children can get the help they need.”

— Linda Pickett Ph.D., local professor of early childhood

“As a parent of young kids, I know how important early childhood services are for children under age 5 and it makes a difference in their development and future success. This proposal will support parents so they can ensure their children are healthy and ready for kindergarten.”

— Anissa Eddie, parent

“It's in everyone's best interest to invest in all Kent County children.”

— Lew Chamberlin
Co-Chair of the First Steps Commission and owner of West Michigan Whitecaps

Making a Positive Impact
Five Years of Parks Millage Results

2018 Project Highlights

- 2,800 people engaged in community events.
- 24 new playgrounds installed.
- Special needs-friendly playgrounds.
- $4,963,290 in total park improvements.
- $10,908,601 in total park improvements.
- $5,741,545 for park improvements.
- 20,401 volunteer hours with 5,154 volunteers.
- 23,001 park visits.
- 95% community partners.

Keeping a promise for future generations

✓ VOTE YES for the “Parks, Pools and Playgrounds Proposal”

Tuesday, November 5

Our community has stepped up and made significant gains in addressing a massive backlog of repairs, keeping our neighborhood pools open and delivering on the promise of park improvements inspired by neighborly requests. However, there is still work to be done and we cannot lose momentum or risk going backsliding.

- Mayor Rosalyn Blais

“Great neighborhoods need great parks! That’s why we need to permanently review the parks millage.”

- Devon Slone, East Hills Resident

On the path to park excellence

City of Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Millage Update

Full Year Report

Our Mission

Creating and supporting healthy, vibrant communities.
- Future neighborhoods
  - Inclusive play for all ages
  - Sustainability initiatives
- Community policing
- Community safety

Our Vision

Connecting our community
- Our parks, pools, and playgrounds connect our community.
- Our neighborhood park associations are vibrant and thriving.
- Our community is safe and vibrant.
- Our city is a place where people want to live, work, and play.

Connecting Network

- City of Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation
- Neighborhood associations
- Local community groups

Sustainable Community

Our parks, pools, and playgrounds are designed to be sustainable and environmentally friendly.
- Water conservation
- Energy efficiency
- Waste reduction

North Park

2018 Pool Season

- Open June 14 - September 16
- 220,000 visits
- 19 swimming classes
- 2,500 swim lessons

2018 Summer Activities

- Over 1,200 classes and activities
- 20,000 participants
- 450 volunteers

2018 Project Highlights

- 2,800 people engaged in community events.
- 24 new playgrounds installed.
- Special needs-friendly playgrounds.
- $4,963,290 in total park improvements.
- $10,908,601 in total park improvements.
- $5,741,545 for park improvements.
- 20,401 volunteer hours with 5,154 volunteers.
- 23,001 park visits.
- 95% community partners.

Keeping a promise for future generations

✓ VOTE YES for the “Parks, Pools and Playgrounds Proposal”

Tuesday, November 5

Our community has stepped up and made significant gains in addressing a massive backlog of repairs, keeping our neighborhood pools open and delivering on the promise of park improvements inspired by neighborly requests. However, there is still work to be done and we cannot lose momentum or risk going backsliding.

- Mayor Rosalyn Blais

“Great neighborhoods need great parks! That’s why we need to permanently review the parks millage.”

- Devon Slone, East Hills Resident

On the path to park excellence

City of Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Millage Update

Full Year Report

Our Mission

Creating and supporting healthy, vibrant communities.
- Future neighborhoods
  - Inclusive play for all ages
  - Sustainability initiatives
- Community policing
- Community safety

Our Vision

Connecting our community
- Our parks, pools, and playgrounds connect our community.
- Our neighborhood park associations are vibrant and thriving.
- Our community is safe and vibrant.
- Our city is a place where people want to live, work, and play.

Connecting Network

- City of Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation
- Neighborhood associations
- Local community groups

Sustainable Community

Our parks, pools, and playgrounds are designed to be sustainable and environmentally friendly.
- Water conservation
- Energy efficiency
- Waste reduction

North Park

2018 Pool Season

- Open June 14 - September 16
- 220,000 visits
- 19 swimming classes
- 2,500 swim lessons

2018 Summer Activities

- Over 1,200 classes and activities
- 20,000 participants
- 450 volunteers
Thank You

Q & A