



## **FISCAL PRIORITIES HIGHLIGHTS OF 2010 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

All City residential households were delivered a survey along with the City newsletter in January 2010. There were 513 surveys of the approximately 2200 households in the City returned with a response rate of about 23%. An additional nine surveys were received via the City internet site and were tabulated separately, although the answers were comparable to the mail returned surveys.

The survey was divided into four parts: A) Ranking of priority of various City services; B) Ranking of potential expenditure reductions; C) Ranking of potential revenue increases; and D) Summary Question. In addition, an open ended question asked for input on ideas and comments for spending and revenue priorities.

### **SERVICE PRIORITIES**

Not surprisingly, public safety services were rated of highest priority to the residents of Grosse Pointe. Fire and police services were ranked first and second in importance with more than 88% and 86% of the households, respectively, considering these services either important or very important.

Basic public works and utility services, such as refuse services, snow removal and street maintenance and repairs comprise the next level of services most highly prioritized by the residents.

The services ranked with lesser importance were recreation programs, community events/concerts, and public information. Almost half of the households ranked recreation programs as not important or slightly important. Community events/concerts were scored as the least important service with 52.2% of the respondents ranks these programs as either not important or slightly important, and less than 5% considering them as very important.

### **POTENTIAL SERVICE REDUCTIONS**

By far the potential service reduction garnering the most support was instituting curbside garbage pickup only. Nearly the half of the households agreed completely with this approach, and 65% either agreeing or somewhat agreeing with this change.

Other expenditure reductions that more than half of the households indicated some measure of support (either agree or somewhat agree) were, in declining order of intensity of full agreement: a) 62% - deferring purchases of City vehicles and equipment; b) 53% - eliminate City supported community festivals/events/concerts in Park and Village; c) 57% - reducing the frequency of

street sweeping and road maintenance; d) 52% - defer upkeep of City buildings; and, e) 50% - reduce parkway and tree maintenance programs.

On the other hand, more than half of the households indicated some level of opposition to (either disagree or somewhat disagree) to a reduction in the number of police and fire personnel on duty per shift. Nearly half of the residents had some level of opposition to reduction in housing code enforcement, and eliminating sidewalk snow clearing. Even though only 16% ranked Village upkeep as a very important service priority on the previous question, almost half of the households either disagreed with or somewhat disagreed with reducing upkeep expenditures in the Village.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

Respondents to this survey showed a very high level of support for various concepts for increasing the level of intergovernmental cooperation among and between the Grosse Pointe municipalities. Of the nine ideas, eight received votes of agreement by 200 or more households and were supported to some degree (either agree or somewhat agree) by more than half of the respondents. The highest support was given to the idea of eliminating the City's municipal court and establishing a Grosse Pointe wide District Court. The next highest-ranking intergovernmental initiatives all involved jointly operating, coordinating or consolidating some aspect of the City's public safety operations involving police and/or fire and dispatch services. Two-thirds of the respondents agreed or somewhat agreed with creating a Public Safety department for police and fire that covered some or all of the Grosse Pointes. Significantly more City residents who responded preferred that the City remain independent and share various services rather than combining the City with one or more of the other Grosse Pointes into a new, merged local governmental unit.

## **POTENTIAL REVENUE OPTIONS / SUMMARY**

Based on the survey responses received, there is widespread support for increasing fees for services offered. 68% agreed or somewhat agreed with charging more for items such as licenses, permits, inspections, facility rentals, and recreation programs. Adding special purpose levies for public safety, recreation, or roads were opposed. The only other revenue option that received close to half of the support of those surveyed (46%) was for collecting as much property taxes next year as this year – and an additional 19% were undecided. 174 of 513 respondents were fully opposed to collecting less property tax next year compared to this year. In addition, 19% supported, partially or fully, raising more taxes next year than this year.

In the final question, when asked, in summary, whether the household was willing to keep paying the same amount of property taxes as they currently do in an effort to maintain as much of the City services as possible, 276 of the 513 respondents supported this proposition, more than half. In fact, a combined total of 70% of the households surveyed supported raising tax revenue or keeping it at the same level, to keep services the same or as much the same as possible. Only 14% of households felt that paying less in property taxes was worth elimination or reduction of services.