



Wade Kapszukiewicz
Mayor

mayor@toledo.oh.gov

phone 419-245-1001

fax 419-245-1370

One Government Center

Suite 2200

Toledo, Ohio 43604

→ toledo.oh.gov

July 20, 2020

Dear Council Member,

After weeks of conversation with members of City Council, leaders in the business community and citizens all throughout Toledo, I have decided to ask Toledo City Council to place two issues on the ballot for the November election.

Today, I am introducing both ordinances to City Council, which will need to approve them both by August 4th in order to place the issues before the voters.

The first issue is a simple renewal of the temporary 3/4% income tax that has helped fund city operations for nearly 40 years.

The 3/4% income tax was first passed in June 1982 and has never failed to earn the support of Toledo voters. It is the engine that operates city government, and all Toledoans understand that it must be renewed in November in order for the city to provide even the most basic of essential services.

The 3/4% renewal generates \$56.8 million to help the city provide police and fire protection, snow removal, clean water, park maintenance, and other basic services.

The defeat of the 3/4% renewal would truly be catastrophic for our city. To understand the impact of removing \$56.8 million from the city budget, consider that salaries and benefits for the roughly 500 Toledo Police patrol officers also total \$56.8 million. In other words, filling the hole in the city budget caused by the defeat of the 3/4% renewal could be accomplished by laying off literally every single patrol officer on the police department.

Clearly, this would be an unacceptable future for our city. Toledoans understand this, which is why they have voted to renew the 3/4% income tax consistently since 1982. I know they will do so again this November.

The second issue is a temporary 4-year 1/4% income tax increase to be used, exclusively, to fund road repair. The passage of this issue would raise \$18.9 million per year to fix the roads of Toledo, which as we all know, are badly in need of repair.

The most effective public officials are the ones who truly listen to their constituents, and since the defeat of Issue 1 in the spring, I have sought input from stakeholders from all parts of our city. The feedback I received was crystal clear: a separate, stand-alone, smaller tax increase levy, to be used solely and exclusively to fix our roads, would enjoy the support of



Wade Kapszukiewicz
Mayor

mayor@toledo.oh.gov

phone 419-245-1001

fax 419-245-1370

One Government Center

Suite 2200

Toledo, Ohio 43604

→ toledo.oh.gov

citizens who want to see Toledo succeed. That is what this approach does.

Issue 1 was criticized for being too bold — for seeking to do too many things at once. While Toledoans wanted the youth programming, park improvements, pre-K, road repair and additional police that Issue 1 would have provided, I can understand that asking for all of those things at once was perhaps overly ambitious. This certainly became true after the COVID-19 crisis ushered in a time of great economic uncertainty.

Time and again, I heard voters express three very clear opinions: they didn't want the tax increase to be so large; they wanted the new revenue to fix roads much more so than any other program; and they wanted the request for new revenue to be separated out from the primary means of funding city operations, the 3/4% renewal.

I listened to the citizens of Toledo, but more importantly, I **heard** them. That is why the approach I am requesting does each of the three things voters demanded: the levy requests are two totally separate issues; the size of the tax increase has been cut in half (from 1/2% to 1/4%); and every penny of the additional revenue will be spent fixing our roads.

As much as I continue to believe that Toledo also needs more programming for youth, more police, universal pre-K and stronger parks, the revenue from this new levy will go to only one thing: road repair.

Toledo has faced a year of unprecedented challenges, but the passage of these two issues in November will chart the course for a stronger and brighter future. I am asking City Council to place these two issues on the ballot so we can build on our momentum and invest in our city.

Sincerely,

Wade Kapszukiewicz

Mayor, City of Toledo