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Troy Library Survey

Community Survey On a possible Bond Proposal to Fund a New Troy Public Library and Other Issues

Executive Summary, Demographic Analysis and Recommendations

April, 2007

- Educational
- Political
- Industrial
- Consumer

- Market
- Research
- Analysis

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METHODOLOGY

EPIC ■ MRA administered interviews with 306 registered voters residing in the city of Troy, Michigan, on April 18th and 19th, 2008. Respondents were included in the sample if they were registered to vote and said they voted in either or both the 2006 election for governor and the 2004 election for president, or were too young to vote in either election. Respondents were chosen using an interval method to randomly select records of registered voter households with commercially listed phone numbers, in which one or more household member participated in one or more general elections in the past few years. The sample was stratified so every area of Troy is represented in the sample according to its contribution to an average general election.

The primary objective of the survey was to test voter support for a \$37 million bond proposal to fund the construction of a new library. At various points in the survey, all respondents were asked how they would vote on a \$37 million bond proposal to fund the construction of a new library if the election were held “today.” The first such “vote ‘today’” test was posed in an initial “cold” question, in which respondents were only told a \$37 million bond proposal would fund the construction of a new library, that property taxes would be increased by 1 mill to repay the bonds if the proposal was approved by voters, and what the tax consequence would be for average homeowners.

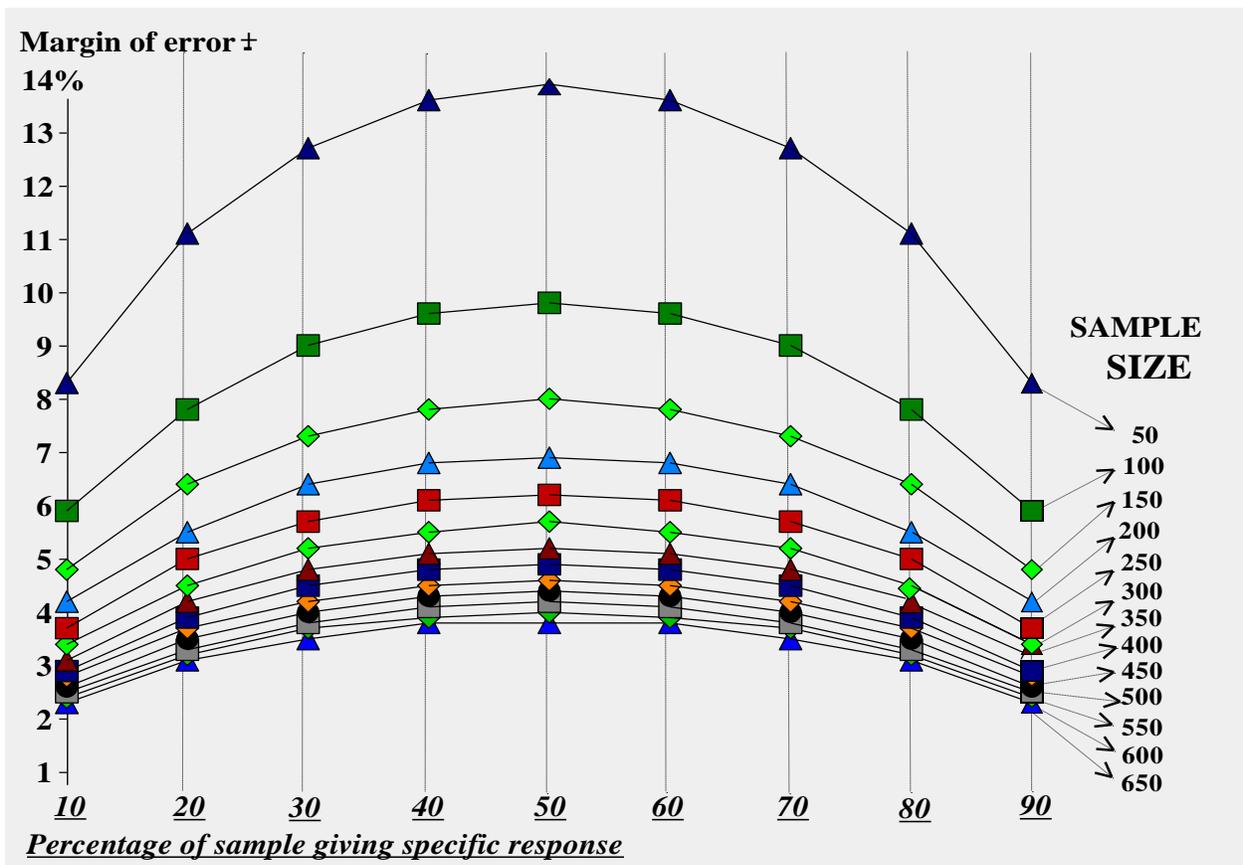
Respondents’ opinions were also solicited in several other questions, including: the civic issue that concerns them the most; their view about the direction of Troy; a rating for the job the city government does providing services; their perception of the level of local taxes; and a rating for the condition the Troy Public library. Respondents were also asked about their use of the Troy Public Library.

In interpreting survey results, all surveys are subject to error; that is, the results of the survey may differ from that which would have been obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends on the total number of respondents to a particular question. The table on the next page represents the estimated sampling error for different percentage distributions of responses based on sample size.

For example, in the first “vote ‘today’” test, 54 percent of all 306 current survey respondents said they would vote “no” on the bond proposal question (Q. 15). As shown on the chart on the next page, this percentage would have a sampling error of plus or minus 5.7 percent. That means that with repeated sampling, it is very likely (95 times out of every 100), the percentage for the entire population giving this answer would fall between 48.3 percent and 59.7 percent, hence 54 percent \pm 5.7 percent.

EPIC • MRA SAMPLING ERROR BY PERCENTAGE (AT 95 IN 100 CONFIDENCE LEVEL)
Percentage of sample giving specific response

	<u>10</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>90</u>
SAMPLE SIZE	% margin of error ±								
650	2.3	3.1	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.1	2.3
600	2.4	3.2	3.7	3.9	4	3.9	3.7	3.2	2.4
550	2.5	3.3	3.8	4.1	4.2	4.1	3.8	3.3	2.5
500	2.6	3.5	4	4.3	4.4	4.3	4	3.5	2.6
450	2.8	3.7	4.2	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.2	3.7	2.8
400	2.9	3.9	4.5	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.5	3.9	2.9
350	3.1	4.2	4.8	5.1	5.2	5.1	4.8	4.2	3.1
300	3.4	4.5	5.2	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.2	4.5	3.4
250	3.7	5	5.7	6.1	6.2	6.1	5.7	5	3.7
200	4.2	5.5	6.4	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.4	5.5	4.2
150	4.8	6.4	7.3	7.8	8	7.8	7.3	6.4	4.8
100	5.9	7.8	9	9.6	9.8	9.6	9	7.8	5.9
50	8.3	11.1	12.7	13.6	13.9	13.6	12.7	11.1	8.3



THE KEY FINDINGS

1. In none of the “vote ‘today’” tests of a \$37 million bond proposal did the total “yes” vote percentage exceed 37 percent, except when all respondents were asked how they would vote on the proposal if it were delayed by one or two years until the economy improves. In that test, a 56 percent majority said they would vote “yes” (35 percent “definitely” and 21 percent “probably”).
2. A 72 percent majority said things in the city of Troy are headed in the “right direction,” with only 13 percent saying things are “seriously off on the wrong track.”
3. When respondents were asked which of a list of local issues is their “main concern,” “keeping local taxes as low as possible” was cited by the leading percentage (23 percent), followed by “the economy and jobs” and “fixing the roads and potholes” (each cited by 19 percent).
4. More than 9-in-10 respondents (92 percent) offered a “positive” rating for the job Troy does providing basic city services.
5. When asked if the local taxes and fees they pay are “too high,” “too low” or “about right” for what they get back in city services, 40 percent said “too high” (19 percent said “much” too high); this is a relatively high percentage offering this response, compared to similar testing in other communities, but it is consistent with the top issue or problem cited. detailed above.
6. More than 8-in-10 respondents (81 percent) offered a “positive” rating for the quality of the Troy Public Library building and facility.
 The top reasons offered by those giving a “positive” rating were: “excellent services” (22 percent); “has what I need” (16 percent); “helpful staff” (10 percent); and “variety of services” (nine percent)
 The top reasons offered by the 12 percent who gave a negative rating included: “needs expansion” (38 percent); “needs improvement” (nine percent); “too far” and “parking” (each eight percent); and “too busy” (six percent)
 The fact that only 12 percent of respondents offered a “negative” rating for the quality of the library building and facility shows there is not the level of public awareness of the problems with the current facility that people who are closest to the library say exists. Clearly, there is a need to inform and educate the public about the problems with the Troy Public Library facility.
7. More than 8-in-10 respondents said one or more members of their household have used the services of the Troy Public Library over the past two to three years; 22 percent of these respondents said a household member used the library “a few times a week.”
 The top use of the library was “borrowing books” (cited by 30 percent of these respondents), followed by “borrowing DVDs” (nine percent), “using a computer for Internet access” (seven percent) and “using databases for research” (six percent).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EPIC ▪ MRA was commissioned by the Friends of the Troy Public Library to conduct a survey of voter opinion within the city of Troy. The primary focus of the inquiry was the measurement of public sentiment toward a possible \$37 million bond proposal to fund the construction of a new library. If approved by voters, property taxes would be increased by one mill, which would require a homeowner to pay an additional \$86.42 per year for every \$200,000 in market value of a home.

Based on the results of the various “vote ‘today’” tests conducted throughout the survey, the prospects of garnering enough support to earn Election Day approval of the proposed tax increase in the near future are far from promising, although a 56 percent majority did say they may be willing to support the proposal “in a year or two if the economy improves.” In the current survey, the “vote ‘yes’ today” support for the bond proposal starts out at only 29 percent; it increased to 33 percent on a re-test after respondents heard information about the proposal, and reached just 37 percent after respondents heard some of the key reasons people support the bond proposal.

Barriers to passage: perception of high local taxes, positive view of existing facility

In terms of public perception, two overriding problems will make passage of a bond proposal very difficult. First, 4-in-10 respondents said they taxes and fees they pay for services from the city of Troy are “too high”; this total includes 19 percent who said their taxes are “much” too high. Moreover, when respondents were asked to indicate which of a list of civic issues they are most concerned about, the leading issue, cited by 23 percent, was “keeping local taxes as low as possible.” This result further demonstrates that concern about taxes is pervasive, especially since it is more of a concern than “the condition of the economy and jobs” or “fixing the roads and potholes” (each cited by 19 percent). In other surveys, conducted nationally, statewide and in other Michigan communities, “the economy and jobs” generally leads as the top concern cited by respondents.

If a case can be made that local property taxes and fees in Troy are not as high as they are in other surrounding communities, it may be possible to diminish the perception of Troy as a “high tax community.” However, among the 40 percent of survey respondents who said their local taxes are “too high,” an overwhelming 81 percent said they would vote “no” on the library

proposal in the first “vote ‘today’” test, and a 53 percent majority of those who said taxes are “about right” also said they would vote “no” in this test.

The second public perception problem working against passage of the library proposal is found in the survey finding that a solid 81 percent majority offered a “positive” rating for the “quality of the Troy Public Library building and facility.” This total includes 40 percent who offered an “excellent” rating (41 percent good). Only 12 percent offered a “negative” rating. If 4-in-5 voter/respondents give the facility a “positive” rating, the community clearly does not see the need to replace it with a new facility, and voters would probably not be any more supportive of a bond proposal to renovate the existing library, if that were proposed. If the public does not see a need for a new library, they are unlikely to feel compelled to vote in favor of raising their own property taxes to pay for something they view as unnecessary, especially since they feel that local taxes and fees are already too high in their community.

Respondents who offered either a “negative” or a “positive” rating were asked to state the reasons they did so. Among those offering a “positive” rating, the top reasons were: “excellent services” (cited by 22 percent); “has what I need” (16 percent); “helpful staff” (10 percent); “variety of services” (nine percent); “use often” (eight percent); and “good facilities” (eight percent). Among those offering a “negative” rating, the top reasons were: “needs expansion” (cited by 38 percent); “needs improvement” (nine percent); “too far” (eight percent); “parking” (eight percent); and “too busy” (six percent).

Most have positive view of Troy

Notwithstanding the widespread concern about the level of local taxes, survey respondents were extremely positive about their community of Troy. An impressive 72 percent majority said “things in Troy” are “headed in the right direction,” with only 13 percent saying things are “seriously off on the wrong track.” Given that both Michigan and national polls show voters are overwhelmingly negative about the direction of the country and the state, it is rather remarkable for Troy voter/respondents to say the opposite is true of their community. Moreover, when asked to rate the job the Troy city government does in providing basic city services, an impressive 92 percent offered a “positive” rating, including 35 percent who said “excellent,” with only seven percent offering a negative rating.

Testing of library proposal

When all respondents were asked to name the one or two things that are most needed to improve the Troy Public Library facility, 19 percent said it “needs to expand,” 16 percent said “nothing, it is good as is,” six percent cited “parking,” four percent cited “customer service” and three percent each cited “more computers” and “needs improvement.”

On the first cold, uninformed “vote ‘today’” tests of the \$37 million bond proposal, a 63 percent majority said they would vote “no.” This total includes 56 percent who directly said they would vote “no” and seven percent who initially were undecided, but, when pressed, said they lean toward voting “no.” In this tests, only 29 percent said they would vote “yes” on the bond proposal (27 percent “direct” and two percent “lean” toward “yes.”

Respondents said they would vote either “yes” or “no” were asked to state the reasons they would do so. Among those offering a “yes” vote, the top reasons were: “it’s needed” (cited by 38 percent); “it’s an investment in the community” (17 percent); “library is important” (12 percent); “more space” (seven percent); “for the youth” (seven percent); and “use it often” (six percent). Top reasons for voting “no” included: “not needed” (46 percent); “against a tax increase” (25 percent); “cost of the proposal” (seven percent); and “poor economy” (seven percent).

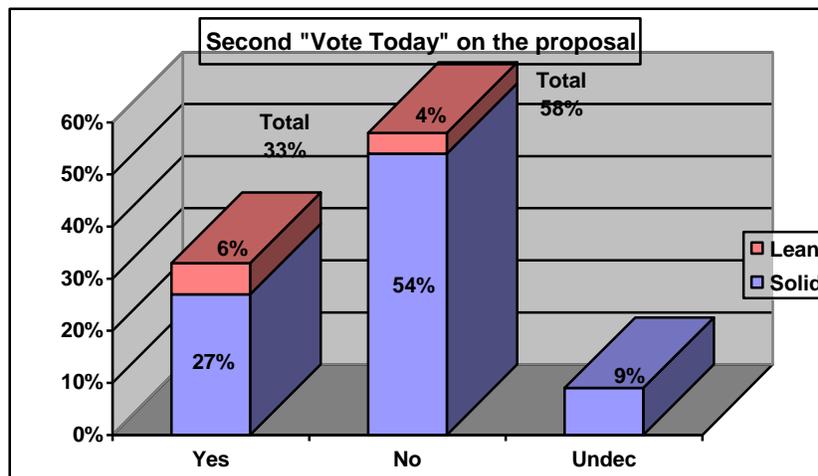
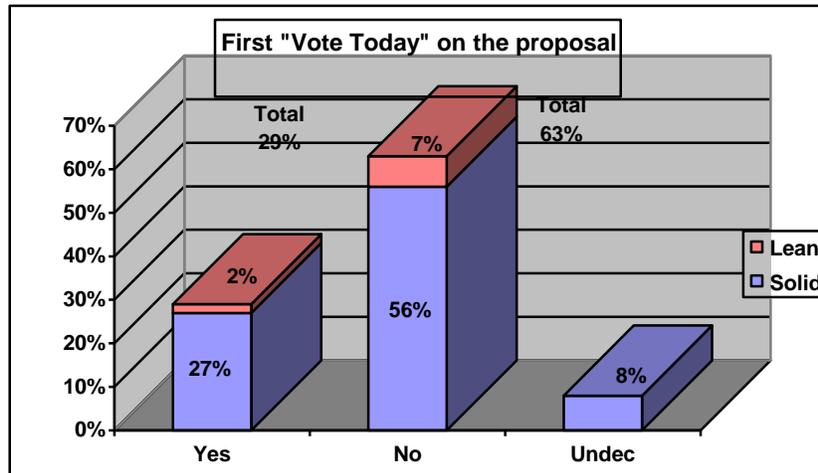
In the follow-up “vote ‘today’” test, respondents were read a more detailed statement about the proposal:

“A new library is slightly less expensive than the cost of renovating the existing library because it can be designed with about 5 percent less space while meeting the same needs as a renovated library. The existing library would remain in operation until the new building is completed, and then used for other city purposes. A new facility would reduce any parking problems that would exist at the city complex. Again, it would require a property tax increase of 1 mill, meaning that for every \$200,000 in market value, the homeowner would pay an additional \$86.42 per year, or 7.20 per month in property taxes.”

After hearing this more detailed information, “yes” vote support did increase, but only to 33 percent; the “direct ‘yes’” vote remained at 27 percent and the “lean ‘yes’” vote increased from two to six percent. The “no” vote dropped from 63 to 58 percent (54 percent “direct” and four percent “lean” toward “no.”

Respondents said they would vote either “yes” or “no” were asked what stood out from the more detailed statement to influence their vote. Among those offering a “yes” vote, the top

reasons were: “reasonable cost” (19 percent); “more space” (17 percent); “parking” (14 percent); “no service interruption” (nine percent); “continued use of old building” (seven percent); “improve the community” (six percent); and “it’s needed” (five percent). Top reasons for voting “no” included: “against a tax increase” (26 percent); “not needed” (24 percent); “cost of the proposal” (eight percent); “nothing stood out, just against it” (six percent); “wrong priorities” (six percent); “poor economy” (five percent); and “waste of a building” (four percent).



In the subsequent “vote ‘today’” test, survey respondents heard several reasons why some people support the bond proposal to fund a new library. After each statement, respondents were asked if the reason described was a “very convincing” reason to vote for the library bond proposal, a “somewhat” convincing reason, or “not a convincing reason at all.” None of the reasons tested were rated as “convincing” by percentages high enough to significantly increase voter support for the bond proposal.

Indeed, the reason rated “convincing” by the highest percentage was so rated by a bare 50 percent majority, with only 29 percent calling it “very” convincing. This was “the current library has a severe shortage of parking, especially on Sundays, and the walking distance is much too far for many library users, particularly senior citizens, young children and people with physical limitations. A new library would resolve those problems.”

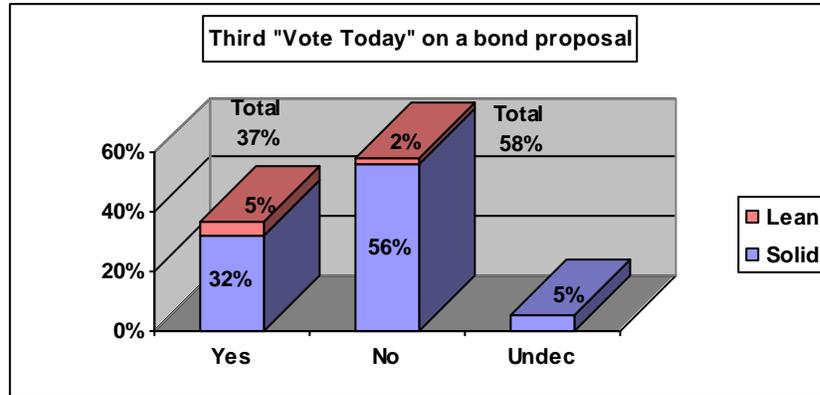
The second rated “convincing” reason, so rated by just 45 percent (26 percent “very” convincing), was “adults need an enhanced and enlarged collection of books and other materials, more publicly available computers to use, and more study rooms.”

The third rated reason (only 41 percent “convincing,” 22 percent “very” convincing) was “the current library is causing a financial burden on the city, due to the escalating cost of maintenance.”

The fourth rated reason (39 percent “convincing,” 21 percent “very” convincing), was “the youth area of the library lacks an engaging environment, is too noisy and needs more quiet study space and study rooms.”

Finally, the reason rated “convincing by just 30 percent (18 percent “very” convincing) was “the current library does not have a drive-up book return, and the existing library configuration does not permit the design and construction of such a feature. A new library would be able to include this important feature.” Obviously, voters in Troy do not view a drive-up book return as being desirable enough to increase their taxes at this time for a new library that could include this feature.

In the “vote ‘today’” test after respondents heard and rated these reasons to support the bond proposal, the “vote ‘yes’” support did increase somewhat, but not nearly enough to make Election Day approval of the proposal likely. Here, support for the bond proposal neared just 40 percent. A solid 58 percent majority continued to say they would vote “no,” including 56 percent who directly said they would vote “no” and two percent who were “leaning” toward voting “no.” In the 37 percent “yes” vote total, including 32 percent directly said they would vote “yes” and five percent were “leaning” toward a “yes” vote.



Direction of the City of Troy

All survey respondents were asked, “Overall, do you think that things in the city of Troy are headed in the right direction, or, would you say that things are seriously off on the wrong track?” A solid majority, of more than 7-in-10, said Troy is headed in the “right direction”:

72%	Headed in the right direction
13%	Seriously off on the wrong track
15%	Undecided/Don’t know

In demographic breakouts of the overall responses, there were no significant differences on this question that warrant noting.

Top problems and issue concerns of Troy residents

Respondents were read a list of problems and issue area residents say they are concerned about, and asked which one problem or issue concerned them the most. The responses were:

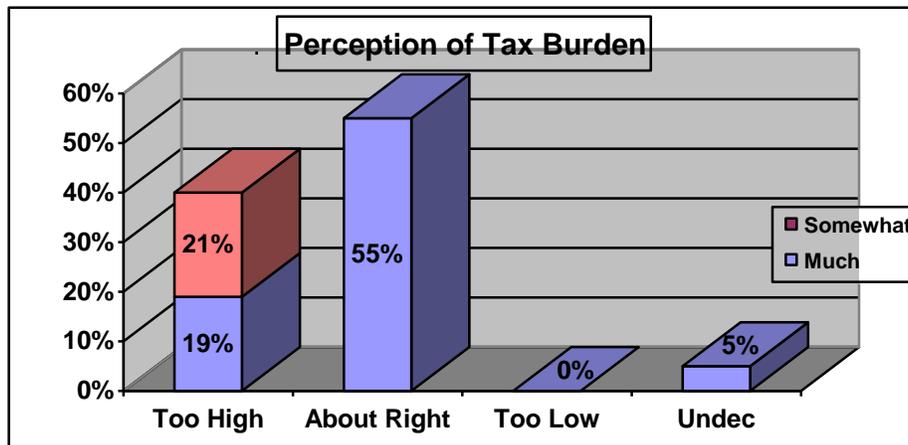
Keeping local taxes as low as possible	23%
The condition of the economy and jobs	19%
Fixing the roads and potholes	19%
More than one	10%
The quality of local schools	8%
Expanding and improving the Troy Public Library	6%
Controlling crime and drugs	6%
Addressing uncontrolled growth	5%
The quality of city services	1%
Undecided/don’t know/refused	3%

These results are unique, in that Troy is the only community polled recently by EPIC ▪ MRA during the current economic downturn in which “concern about taxes” ranks as a more important problem (offered by 23 percent) than does “the economy” (19 percent). While this finding may be unique, it is fairly consistent with responses to other questions in the current survey relating to the perceived level of taxes in the community.

High numbers say Troy local taxes are “too high”

Specifically, respondents were asked, “Thinking about the quality of the local city services you receive from the city of Troy in return for the local property taxes and fees you pay to fund those services, do you think your local taxes are too high, too low, or about right for what you get back in city services?” The responses were:

- 19% much too high
- 21% somewhat too high
- 40% Total TOO HIGH**
- 55% About right
- % Too low
- 5% Undecided/don’t know/refused



Past EPIC • MRA survey experience shows that, as a predictor of Election Day approval of a tax related proposal, the ideal range of survey respondents saying their taxes are “too high” should be in percentages up to the high teens or low 20s. When the percentage offering this response exceeds 30 percent, the electorate is usually significantly less receptive to tax increase proposals; when the “too high” response to this key question about the perceived level of taxes and fees reaches or exceeds 40 percent, it becomes exceedingly difficult, and often prohibitive, to convince voters to increase their property taxes, regardless of the value they see in the proposed use of the higher taxes.

Key demographic groups in which respondents said taxes are “too high” by the highest percentages included:

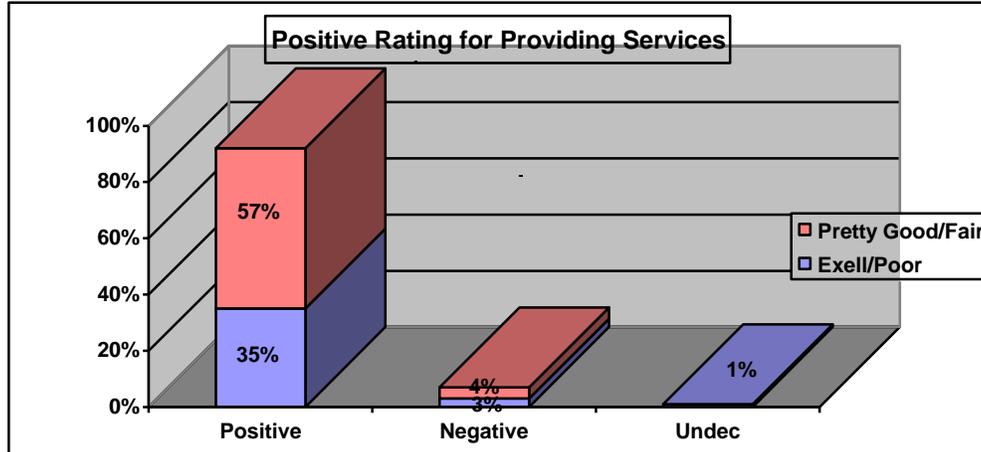
- 55 percent: “half the time” city voters
 - someone else in household uses library services
 - older without college
 - age 36 to 40

- 54 percent: men without college
- 52 percent: initial “no” voters on a bond proposal
“no” voters after information
post high school technical education
incomes of \$50,000 to \$75,000
- 49 percent: respondents without college
- 45 percent: less frequent city voters
more than one household member uses library
women without college
parents of 7th and 8th grade students
high school or less education
age 41 to 49
age 50 to 55
- 44 percent: visits library monthly
younger men
- 43 percent: older women
- 42 percent: “absentee” voters
parents of K-6th grade students

More than 9-in-10 offer positive rating for city services

Although there is clearly concern among survey respondents about the level of taxes, the area economy and the need to fix the roads and potholes, and despite the rather negative reaction to a proposed bond proposal to build a new library, survey respondents overwhelmingly offered a “positive” rating for the job Troy does in providing basic city services. A 92 percent majority offered a positive job rating; this includes 35 percent who gave an “excellent” rating and 57 percent offering a rating of “pretty good.” Only seven percent offered a negative rating, including only three percent “poor.”

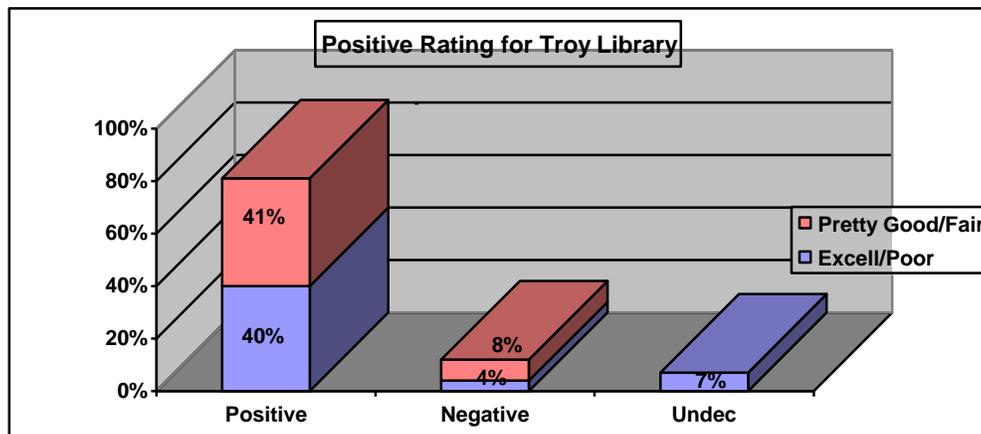
excellent	35%
pretty good	57%
Total POSITIVE	92%
just fair	4%
poor	3%
Total NEGATIVE	7%
Undecided/don’t know/refused	1%



8-in-10 give “positive” rating Troy Public Library building and facility

Another reason why Troy residents are less than supportive of a bond proposal to build a new library is that they think the current library is in “excellent” or “pretty good” condition, and also meets the needs of the community. Specifically, when respondents were asked how they would rate the quality of the Troy Public Library building and facility, the results were:

excellent	40%
pretty good	41%
Total POSITIVE	81%
just fair	8%
poor	4%
Total NEGATIVE	12%
Undecided/don’t know/refused	7%



Those who offered either “positive” or “negative” ratings were asked to state their reason for doing so:

<u>REASONS FOR POSITIVE RATINGS</u>		<u>REASONS FOR NEGATIVE RATINGS</u>	
Excellent services	22%	Needs expansion	38%
Has what I need	16%	Needs improvement	9%
Helpful staff	10%	Too far	8%
Variety of services	9%	Parking	8%
Use often	8%	Too busy	6%
Good facilities	8%	Need new library	3%
Book selection	4%	More large print books	3%
Kids section	4%	More services	3%
Undecided/don't know/refused	19%	Undecided/don't know/refused	22%

Few can identify areas of library improvement

All respondents were asked to identify “one or two things needed to improve the library”:

<u>FIRST RESPONSE</u>		<u>SECOND RESPONSE</u>	
Need to expand	19%	Parking	5%
Nothing – good as is	16%	Book selection	3%
Parking	6%	Need to expand	2%
Customer service	4%	More quiet study areas	2%
More computers	3%	Needs improvement	2%
Needs improvement	3%	More computers	1%
Book selection	2%	Other/unsure	85%
More quiet study areas	2%		
Undecided/don't know/refused	45%		

As noted earlier in this report, when such an overwhelming majority of the community offers a positive rating for the quality of the library facility, voters are not likely to see a need to raise taxes to improve a facility a relatively low percentage of voters say needs improvement.

“Vote ‘today’” tests of bond proposal:

– 1st test — solid majority votes “no”

Respondents were told:

The City of Troy may place a \$37 million bond proposal on November’s election ballot to fund the construction of a new library facility. To repay the bonds, property taxes would be increased by 1 mill, meaning that for every \$200,000 in market value the homeowner would pay \$86.42 per year, or 7.20 per month, in property taxes. Knowing this, if the election were held today, would you vote “YES” in favor of the proposal or “NO” to oppose it?

\$37 Million Bond

1ST TEST

Yes	27%
lean toward Yes	2%
Total YES	29%
No	56%
lean toward No	7%
Total NO	63%
Undecided/don’t know/refused	8%

Those who said they would vote either “yes” or “no” were asked to state the main reason they would do so:

<u>REASONS FOR “YES” VOTE</u>		<u>REASONS FOR “NO” VOTE</u>	
It’s needed	38%	Not needed	46%
Investment in the community	17%	Against a tax increase	25%
Library is important	12%	Cost of proposal	7%
More space	7%	Poor economy	7%
For the youth	7%	On a fixed income	3%
Use it often	6%	Wrong priorities	3%
Reasonable cost	4%	Do not trust city administration	2%
Increase library usage	3%	Never use it	1%
Other/Unsure	6%	Other/Unsure	6%

Respondents in the following key groups said they would vote “yes” in percentages higher than the survey average of 29 percent:

- 46 percent: visits library weekly
incomes of \$75,000 to \$100,000
- 41 percent: young college educated
- 40 percent: taxes “about right”
- 38 percent: respondent uses library
younger men
- 37 percent: college educated women
age 41 to 49
- 36 percent: “all the time” city voter
college educated
- 35 percent: college educated men
- 34 percent: incomes over \$100,000

- 33 percent: older college educated
- 32 percent: parents of 7th and 8th graders
incomes of \$50,000 to \$75,000

Respondents in the following key groups said they would vote “no” in percentages higher than the survey average of 63 percent:

- 85 percent: no one in household uses library
- 83 percent: someone else in the household uses library
- 81 percent: taxes “too high”
younger without college
incomes under \$25,000
- 75 percent: age 36 to 40
- 74 percent: high school or less education
- 73 percent: without college
men without college
women without college
- 71 percent: post high school technical education
- 70 percent: older men
- 69 percent: visits library yearly
- 68 percent: least frequent city voters
parents of 9th to 12th graders
incomes of \$25,000 to \$50,000
age 50 to 55
- 67 percent: “half the time” city voters
older without college
- 66 percent: “most of the time” city voters
- 65 percent: younger women

– **2nd test** — **some movement toward “yes” after limited information**

Survey respondents were then read a more detailed statement about this bond proposal:

A new library is slightly less expensive than the cost of renovating the existing library because it can be designed with about 5 percent less space while meeting the same needs as a renovated library. The existing library would remain in operation until the new building is completed, and then used for other city purposes. A new facility would reduce any parking problems that would exist at the city complex. Again, it would require a property tax increase of 1 mill, meaning that for every \$200,000 in market value, the homeowner would pay an additional \$86.42 per year, or 7.20 per month in property taxes.

They were then asked again how they would vote on this proposal if the election were held “today”:

<u>\$37 million bond</u>			<i>Change from previous “vote”</i>
<u>2ND TEST</u>			
Yes	27%		----
lean toward Yes	6%		+ 4 pts
Total YES	33%		+4 pts
No	54%		- 2 pts
lean toward No	4%		- 3 pts
Total NO	58%		- 5 pts
Undecided/don't know/refused	3%		+ 1 pt

Between this “vote ‘today’” test and the previous one, 56 percent of the respondents were “solid ‘no’” voters, 27 percent were “solid ‘yes’” and five percent were “solid ‘undecided’”. Two percent moved toward voting “no,” six percent moved toward voting “yes” and five percent moved toward “undecided.”

Respondents in the following key groups moved toward voting “yes” in percentages higher than the survey average of six percent:

- 27 percent: undecided on first vote
- 11 percent: high school or less education
- 10 percent: parents of 9th to 12th graders
 - age 36 to 40
 - age 56 to 64
- 9 percent: “half the time” voters
 - someone else in household used library
 - more than one in household used library
 - college educated women
 - older women
 - over \$100,000 income
- 8 percent: “most of the time” voters
 - households with children
 - all women
 - men without college
 - visits library weekly
 - visits library monthly
 - younger men
 - under \$25,000 income
 - age 41 to 49
- 7 percent: absentee voters
 - taxes “about right”
 - without college
 - younger without college
 - young college educated

older without college
 younger women

Those who said they would vote either “yes” or no were asked if anything from the more detailed statement stood out as an important reason for their vote:

<u>REASONS FOR “YES” VOTE</u>		<u>REASONS FOR “NO” VOTE</u>	
Reasonable cost	19%	Against a tax increase	26%
More space	17%	Not needed	24%
Parking	14%	Cost of proposal	8%
No service interruption	9%	Nothing stood out -- against	6%
Continued use of old building	7%	Wrong priorities	6%
Improve the community	6%	Poor economy	5%
It’s needed	5%	Waste of a building	4%
A good plan	4%	Do not trust city administration	3%
No real reason	4%	Never use it	3%
More services	3%	On a fixed income	1%
Other/Unsure	12%	Other/Unsure	14%

– 3rd test — still majority “no”

As described above, respondents heard and rated as “convincing” a series of arguments in favor of passage of the bond proposal. They were then asked again how they would vote on the proposal if the election were held “today”:

<u>\$37 million bond</u>		<i>Change from previous “vote”</i>
<u>3RD TEST</u>		
Yes	32%	+ 5 pts
lean toward Yes	5%	- 1 pt
Total YES	37%	+ 4 pts
No	56%	+ 2 pts
lean toward No	2%	- 2 pts
Total NO	58%	----
Undecided/don’t know/refused	5%	- 4 pts

Between this “vote ‘today’” test and the previous test, 54 percent were “solid ‘no’” voters, 32 percent were “solid ‘yes’” and four percent were “solid ‘undecided’”. Three percent moved toward voting “no,” five percent moved toward voting “yes” and two percent moved toward “undecided.”

Respondents in the following key groups moved toward voting “yes” in percentages higher than the survey average of five percent:

- 31 percent: “undecided” on second asking
- 10 percent: “undecided” voters on first asking
 age 41 to 49

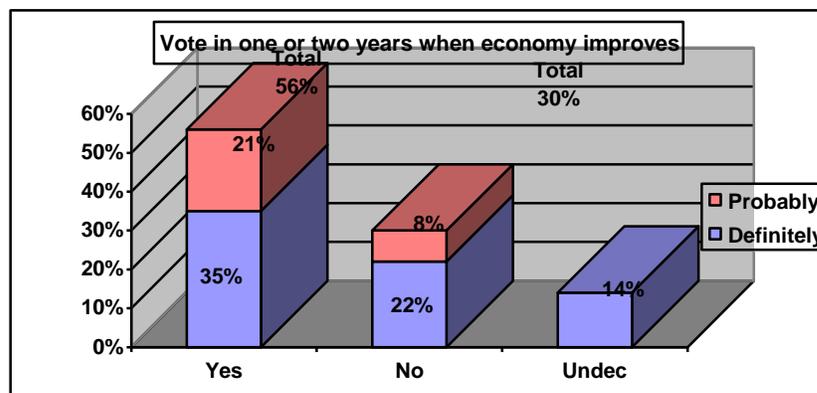
- 9 percent: women without college
post high school technical education
incomes of \$75,000 to \$100,000
- 7 percent: “most of the time” voters
more than one in household used library
- 6 percent: “all the time” voters
“yes” voters on first asking
without college
no one used library
college educated men
visits library yearly
younger without college
older without college
younger men
older women
age 65 and over

– 4th test of “delayed” proposal — majority would vote “yes”

Respondents were asked, “If the proposal was delayed for one or two years until the economy improves, would you definitely (or probably) vote ‘yes’ on the proposal, (or) definitely (or probably) vote ‘no’ if it were placed on a future election ballot?”:

\$37 million bond
4TH TEST

Definitely vote Yes	35%
Probably vote Yes	21%
Total YES	56%
Definitely vote “no”	22%
Probably vote “no”	8%
Total NO	30%
Undecided/don’t know/refused	14%



Clearly, the prospects for passing a \$37 million bond proposal will be better in the future if the economy improves. However, it should be noted that only 35 percent said they would “definitely” vote “yes” with another 21 percent only saying that they would “probably” vote “yes.” This means the “yes” vote support is really somewhat soft and the proposal could end up having less support than respondents indicated in this survey. After the Friends of the Troy Public Library have spent some time engaging the community and providing information that explains why improvements are needed, it may make sense to survey the community again to determine if the level of support has increased to make voter approval significantly more likely.

As indicated earlier, to the extent that Troy property taxes and fees are not as high as surrounding communities, an educational effort demonstrating that fact could be helpful in reducing the percentage of residents who feel that their taxes are too high at this time. That could do as much toward influencing the community to support higher taxes for a new library as learning of the need for a new library.

More than 8-in-10 say they recently have used the Troy Public Library

All respondents were asked, “Over the past two or three years, have you or has anyone else in your household used the services of the Troy Public Library?” A solid majority (83 percent) reported household usage of the library, which is consistent with other estimates of use and activity at the library:

Use of Troy Public Library

Respondent uses library	46%
Someone else uses it	6%
More than one uses it	31%
Total community use	83%
No one uses library	16%
Undecided/don’t know/refused	1%

– more than 1-in-5 say report weekly library usage

Respondents who reported household useage of the library were asked, “How often do you or someone else in your household use the Troy Public Library ... ?”:

How often is the Troy Public Library used?

Every day	—%
A few times a week	22%
A few times a month	39%
Total per month or more	61%
A few times a year	31%

Seldom 8%
 Undecided/don't know/refused —%

– top uses: borrowing books and DVDs

These respondents were asked, “What library services have you used?”:

Top uses of library

Borrowing books	30%
Borrowing DVD's	9%
Use computer for internet access	7%
Using databases for research	6%
Borrowing fiction best seller books	5%
Borrowing children's books	5%
Borrowing non-fiction homework or research books	4%
Borrowing books on tape/compact disc	4%
Borrowing videocassettes	4%
Borrowing non-fiction best sellers	3%
Attending programs for adults	3%
Attending classes on how to use the internet	3%
Getting research assistance from librarians	3%
Attending programs for children	2%
Buying books/other materials at Friends Bookshop	2%
Other /unsure	10%

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