



Our Great Community Only Stays Our Great Community If We Are Safe

Our Great Community is not immune from the surge of crime we see all around us. As our population has grown almost 50% since the 1980s, Sheriff's Office patrol staffing minimums have held steady.

Change in Population and # of Households		
	Population Increase	Increase in #
	Since 1980	Households Since 1980
Total County	51,913 (61%)	31,595 (118%)
Sheriff Jurisdiction	10,583 (33%)	8,159 (87%)

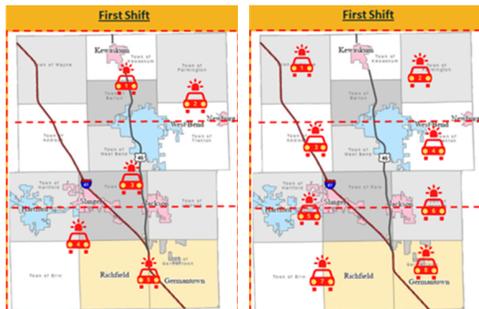
To address this, we propose a \$3.6 million referendum to fund the Washington County Anti-Crime Plan. A referendum gives the people of Washington County a choice whether to invest in safety or simply hope the crime plague stays on the other side of our borders.

Key Issues of the Anti-Crime Plan

Patrol Staffing – Each 140+ sq.mi. patrol sector would see more thorough coverage. Currently, deputies on 2nd shift are going non-stop from call-to-call. The minimum staffing is 5 on 1st shift, 6 on 2nd, and 5 on 3rd. The proposal calls for 8/8/7, specifically designed to address high call volume from noon to midnight.



Shift	Deputies Per Shift - Minimum		
	Late 1980's	2010	Anti-Crime Plan
Shift 1	5	5	8
Shift 2	5	6	8
Shift 3	5	5	7



Hospital duty and welfare checks each require two deputies, leaving fewer on patrol and limiting their time to serve process papers, temporary restraining orders, traffic requests, school checks, drug treatment checks and writing required reports.

Factor in shift relief for specialized teams (SWAT, Dive, Accident Reconstruction and Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement), training, court bailiff responsibilities, off-time, and prisoner transport, and it results in less proactive and more reactive policing.

Washington County Anti-Crime Plan Executive Summary

For complete details visit:
www.washcowisco.gov/whitepaper

Washington County has the lowest per capita staffing ratio of any department in the County at 1.5 officers per 1,000 residents. Among comparable counties, Washington County is near the bottom as well. The proposed changes under the plan increase the ratio to 1.8, putting the Washington County Sheriff's Office in the middle of the range.

# Sworn Law Enforcement Officers Per 1,000 People Served						
County	STATUS QUO		ANTI-CRIME PLAN		County	Sworn/1,000
	Sworn/1,000	Municipal PD	Sworn/1,000	Municipal PD		
Walworth	3.2	Slinger 2.1	3.2	Slinger 2.1	Walworth	3.2
Jefferson	2.2	Kewaskum 1.9	2.2	Kewaskum 1.9	Jefferson	2.2
Kenosha	2.0	West Bend 1.8	2.0	West Bend 1.8	Kenosha	2.0
Ozaukee	2.0	Hartford 1.7	2.0	Washington 1.8	Ozaukee	2.0
Waukesha	1.9	Jackson 1.7	1.9	Hartford 1.7	Waukesha	1.9
Dodge	1.7	Germantown 1.6	1.8	Jackson 1.7	Washington	1.8
Sheboygan	1.5	Washington 1.5	1.7	Germantown 1.6	Dodge	1.7
Washington	1.5		1.5	Sheboygan 1.5	Sheboygan	1.5
Fond du lac	1.4		1.4	Fond du lac 1.4	Fond du lac	1.4

*US Ratio 2.4
Source: Department survey of SE Wisconsin counties and municipalities.

Mental Health & Crisis Response - The plan adds three deputies and three social workers to form a Crisis Response Team to co-respond to mental health-related calls 7 days a week. This two-pronged approach to proactively build relationships, as well as more reactively help those in crisis can potentially keep them out of the criminal justice system.

Drug Crimes and Overdoses - In response to the alarming rise in overdose deaths in the county, (12-2019; 36-2021; 26 YTD - 2022) the additional Drug Task Force detectives will enhance anti-drug efforts by partnering with local and federal task forces with the goal to prevent and deter drug dealers.

Schools – We cannot wait to react to tragedy. Instead, we must proactively protect our children. The plan provides the opportunity for a daily presence of a deputy in schools under county jurisdiction. The visibility at the school, along with a squad parked nearby, will serve as a deterrent to crime and will mean regular check-ins with students and staff.

Outside Crime - Crime is spilling over from our southern borders, with a disturbing trend of 1/4 of our jail bookings from Milwaukee, and 1/2 of bookings non-county residents.

Washington County Anti-Crime Plan Referendum Language

Question: Under state law, the increase in the levy of Washington County for the tax to be imposed for the next fiscal year (2023), is limited to 3.61%, based on Washington County's best estimate, which results in a levy of \$37,734,920. Shall Washington County be allowed to exceed this limit and increase the levy for the next fiscal year (2023), for the purpose of funding the Washington County Anti-Crime Plan by a total of 9.89%, which results in a levy of \$40,018,760, and on an ongoing basis, including the increase of \$3,600,000 each fiscal year going forward?

Fraud Complaints and Internet Crimes Against Children

- Fraud cases & child pornography cases have become increasingly complex, require significant research and many months for detectives to process, including hundreds of hours of staff time.

Jail Staffing & Inmate Health – Two-person staffing requirements pull one correction officer off security duties to do welfare checks. Wisconsin Department of Corrections recommends increased staffing to increase safety and security of both officers and inmates. The jail has had several unprovoked officer assaults, a homicide, and a suicide in the last two years. The plan would add six correctional officers and a supervisor to these critical safety areas in the jail.

Administration & Emergency Management - Newly added technology like body-worn cameras, have resulted in a spike in records requests. The Anti-Crime Plan would add a position to address these impacts, and ensure workload isn't added to deputies. Funding is also included for improvements to communications and coverage of the incident command post during and after a crisis.

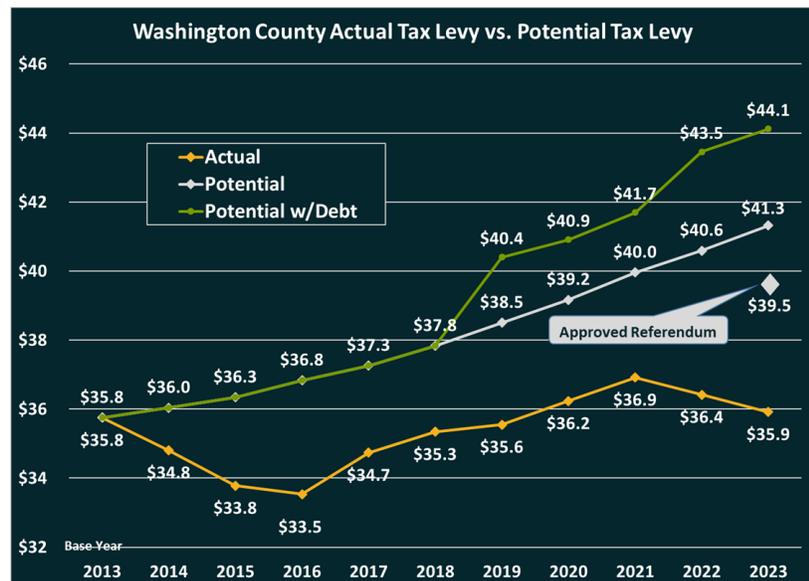
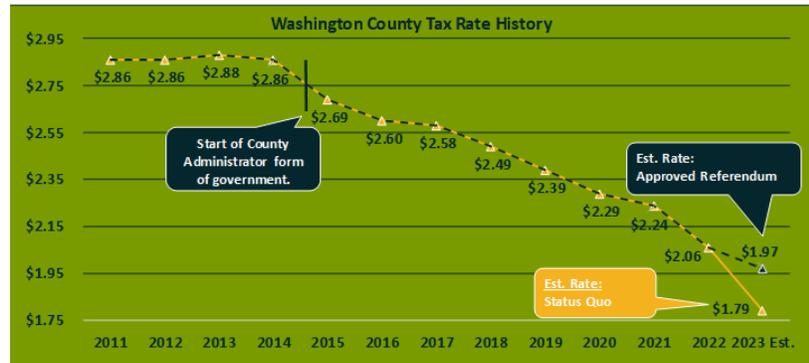
Tax Levy Impact - Most governments use their levy limits to tax to the max. Washington County does not. The chart at right shows what Washington County actually levied in comparison to what could have been levied under levy limit provisions. If the referendum is approved, the tax levy would still be \$4.6M lower than what could have levied under the limit.

For complete details visit:
www.washcowisco.gov/whitepaper

We have been frugal and cautious with taxpayer money, living within our means, because it's not the county's money, **it's your money**. That's why you have the choice to fund this proactive plan of protection.

The proposed referendum will be on the general election ballot on November 8, 2022. If approved, it would result in an estimated DECREASE of \$.09/\$1000 to the county Tax Rate for 2023.

What this means for a property owner for a home valued at \$300K is an estimated reduction of \$27 annually if the referendum passes, and an estimated decrease of \$81 annually if the referendum fails.





Washington County Anti-Crime Plan Frequently Asked Questions



Why is the referendum language so confusing?

The language on a binding referendum is statutory language that can't be revised, so the plan is spelled out in a two-page Executive Summary and a detailed white paper.

How will this impact my property taxes? Does a 10 percent increase in the budget mean my taxes go up 10% as well?

While it is nearly a 10 percent increase in the tax levy, passing the referendum would result in less than a 2% increase in total spending. If your property assessment did not go up, the county portion of your taxes will go down whether the referendum passes or not. If it passes, the county tax rate will decrease \$0.09/\$1000. If it does not pass, the rate will decrease to \$0.27/\$1000. The total value of all property in the county grew by more than 13%. When the value (13.3%) grows faster than the tax levy (9.9% if the referendum passes), the result is a reduced tax rate. So, many people will see a decrease in their county portion of the tax bill, even as spending increases, if approved.

Is this a permanent tax increase?

Yes, the \$3.6M will be added to the tax levy in the 2023 budget and included in every budget thereafter. The referendum will not add an additional \$3.6M each year, but the \$3.6M is eligible to grow incrementally in future years under current levy limit laws (and pending adoption by the County Board as part of the budget process).

There has been a reduction in county government in every metric thinkable: property tax levy collections lower than a decade ago, lowest tax rate since WWI, 8% cut in staff, fewer county-owned buildings and acres, \$1M cut in levy of parks operating budget to zero, and since the county switched to county executive leadership in 2020, the tax rate has dropped 23 cents – over 10%, and the tax levy has been cut by a net \$317,799 over three years.

Why can't you use ARPA funds?

One-time ARPA funding cannot sustain the \$3.6 million increase each fiscal year going forward. This referendum is almost 100% on new staffing in the Sheriff's Office, which is ongoing spending.

What about using the county sales tax to pay for this?

Just like your budgets at home, the county budget plans how to spend all projected revenues, including sales tax. While some will help fund new squad cars and the new radio system, there will not be enough new sales tax to fund this comprehensive plan. Furthermore, the county has used over 50% of annual sales tax to avoid borrowing costs. To shift these capital costs to annual principal and interest payments would create a debt cycle that is contrary to a fiscally conservative management style.



Washington County Anti-Crime Plan Frequently Asked Questions



There are reports in the media that the county is dealing with the future of long-term care at Samaritan Campus. Why is the county proposing an anti-crime referendum, but nothing for Samaritan?

These are separate issues, each requiring the county's attention. The Future of Samaritan talks and negotiations are still in progress and the issue will be taken up by the full County Board. County nursing home services are not state-mandated, and for nearly a quarter century have not used local tax revenues. In contrast, services provided by the Sheriff's Office are state-mandated and staffing levels need to meet those required services in courts, on patrol, and in the jail operations.

Does this mean the Sheriff's Office is saying we are currently unsafe?

While crime is not yet running rampant across all of Washington County, there are very concerning trends. The ultimate goal is that Washington County remains the best place to work and raise a family. Simply stated, the investment in public safety, although large, has not kept up with the growth of the county and this is a much more proactive approach to maintain public safety. While the population has grown by over 50% since the 1980s, the minimum staffing on patrol has remained largely the same.

Why isn't the County Board just taking this up by increasing the tax levy instead of going to a referendum?

Just like other local governments, the amount the county can increase the tax levy is limited by statute. Unlike many local governments, Washington County has chosen not to exercise this ability to tax to the max. While this has provided additional flexibility for modifying the tax levy, the amount needed to fund the Plan is still more than what could be achieved in one year. Therefore, the alternative would be a multi-year approach, done in conjunction with shifting tax levy out of other areas and into the Sheriff's Office budget. If this sounds familiar, it's because that is what the county has been doing for the last 10 years. In that timeframe, the tax levy in the Sheriff's budget went from 42% of the total levy to 55% of the total levy. Still, this enhanced investment in public safety has not kept up with the growth of the population of the county or the growing complexities of its public safety challenges. The referendum gives the Sheriff's Office the boost it needs to enhance and improve the public safety in the fastest way possible. The only other alternative would be for the county to use debt to fund things like vehicles (which the county can tax to pay back without referendum) and free up current cash to pay salaries.

Can the funds be shifted to other areas other than the Washington County Sheriff's Office after the fact, if passed?

If the referendum passes, the Board of Supervisors is working to require an annual examination of the effects of the referendum. If changes are recommended, money can be moved around, but must be used in support of the Sheriff's Office.

How can you hire 30 people with current staffing issues everywhere?

There are no staff openings currently. In fact, the Sheriff's Office is a desirable workplace and often can attract transfers from other law enforcement agencies. If approved, it will likely take 12-18 months to fully staff the new positions.