



WASHINGTON COUNTY ANTI-CRIME PLAN



Version 1
9/21/22

Introduction:

County leaders have made it clear through the past decade of public policy decisions that providing a Safe and Secure Community is of the utmost importance. The Sheriff's Office (SO) and the safety of residents are the highest priority for the people of Washington County. Still, as the population has grown and demand for service has increased in various ways, staffing minimums have held steady since the mid-1980's. An observed increase in the frequency of key public safety incidents in Washington County, coupled with the out-of-control crime incidents just outside of our county, have led to conversations about where there is room for improvement in proactively fighting crime, and crisis response and management.

In response, the Sheriff's Office has developed an Anti-Crime Plan, which would enhance staffing in a targeted way and add emphasis in key areas. The sense of urgency on this matter was heightened after the report of a student with a gun at Slinger Middle School. That particular day the Sheriff and many of his deputies were at the Fair Grounds for training. When the call went out, 39 deputies responded in less than 15 minutes. This would never have happened under normal staffing circumstances and, while it is unrealistic to expect the level of response achieved that day – it raised some important questions and concerns.

As discussions around this Plan progressed, the County Board considered and ultimately passed a resolution directing a referendum to be placed on the ballot for the November 8th election. That referendum is intended to ask Washington County voters whether the County should increase the property tax levy by \$3.6 million to fund the Washington County Anti-Crime Plan. The money belongs to the taxpayers, you should decide. State Statute prescribes exactly how this type of referendum question must be written – and it can get confusing.

Referendum 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, include the increase of \$3,600,000 each fiscal year going forward?

Since you, the voter, are the decision-maker on this critical matter, this document was developed in an attempt to answer some of the questions being posed throughout the community about the referendum, the Washington County Anti-Crime Plan, and its impacts. What follows is a description of the plan and its intended impact in key areas.

Patrol Staffing Levels:

Status Quo:

The population of Washington County has increased by more than 50,000 since the 1980's – from 85,000 to over 135,000.

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%)

The number of households has more than doubled during that time. However, staffing minimums for patrol assignments at the Sheriff's Office have remained largely unchanged during that timeframe. Since at least the late 1980's staffing minimums for patrol has been five deputies assigned to patrol for each shift. Around 2010,



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the staffing minimums for second shift were increased to six deputies. Third shift remained at five deputies Sunday – Thursday and six deputies on Friday and Saturday. Simply stated, our investment in public safety, although large, has not kept up with the growth of the County.

The Anti-Crime plan offers a much more proactive approach by increasing staffing minimums across all shifts. The proposal is based on a combination of several methods for evaluating the size of law enforcement agencies. Below is more information on this analysis and the proposed changes to patrol staffing.

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

Staffing Analysis:

Public safety staffing models are generally determined by one or a combination of five different platforms: (1) crime trends, (2) per-capita staffing, (3) minimum staffing models, (4) authorized/budget model, and (5) workload-based models. The County has evaluated its staffing against several of these models over the years.

Workload-Based:

One important observation from the workload-based models is, once a certain level of call for service activity is reached, an officer's focus begins to shift from a proactive ("community policing") approach in which he or she looks for ways to deal with crime and quality-of-life conditions in the community, to a reactive mindset in which the deputy continually prepares for the next call for service. The International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) Center for Public Safety Management suggests that an officer reaches this threshold when they spend more than 60% of their available patrol time responding to calls for service. The remaining 40% is not "down time." Rather, it is discretionary time for officers to be available to address community-policing issues and be available for serious emergencies. The ICMA calls this the "saturation index." Washington County's saturation index is currently estimated at approximately 50% overall, with 2nd shift patrol workload often exceeding the 60% threshold.

Per Capita Staffing:

For benchmarking purposes, data has been collected on per capita staffing for surrounding and Southeastern Wisconsin counties (less Milwaukee County) and municipal police departments in the County. For all respondents in the table below, Washington County has the lowest per capita staffing ratio of any department in the County, at 1.5 sworn officers per 1,000 residents. Among other counties in the region, Washington County is near the bottom as well. The proposed changes under the Anti-Crime Plan increase the ratio to 1.8, which puts Washington County in the middle of the pack.

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

Source: Department survey of SE Wisconsin counties and municipalities.

*U.S. Ratio = 2.4



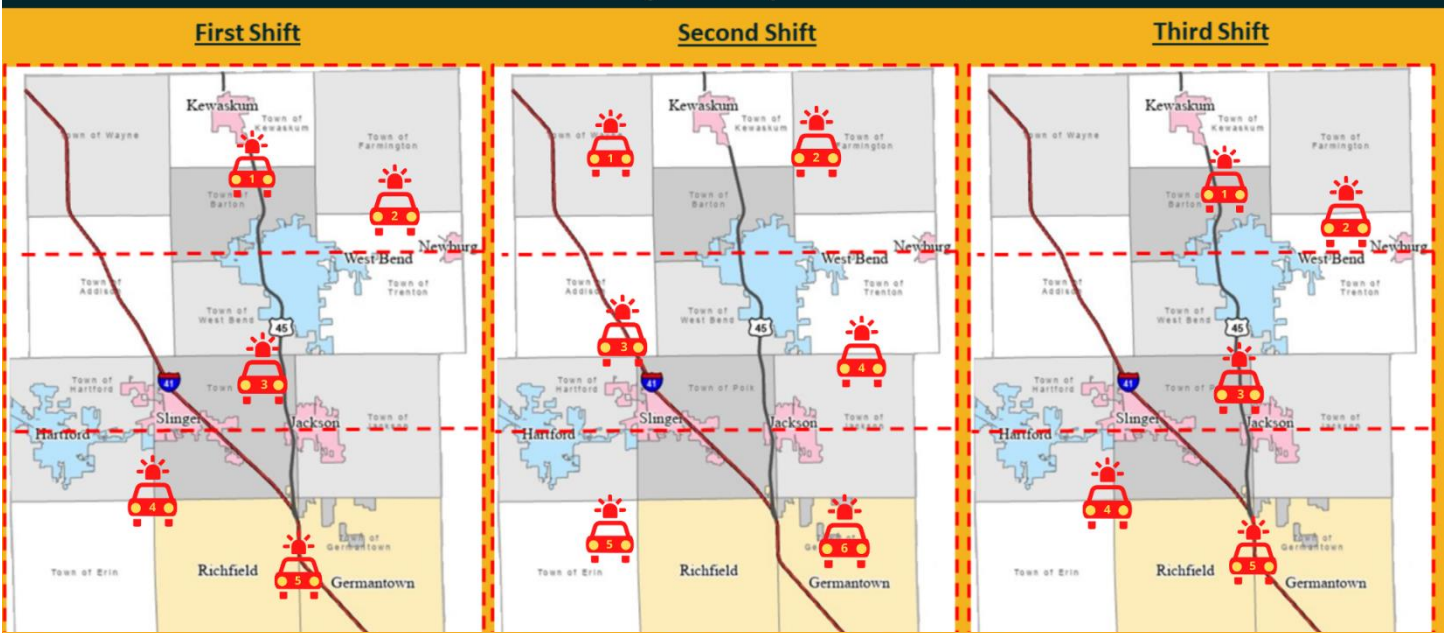
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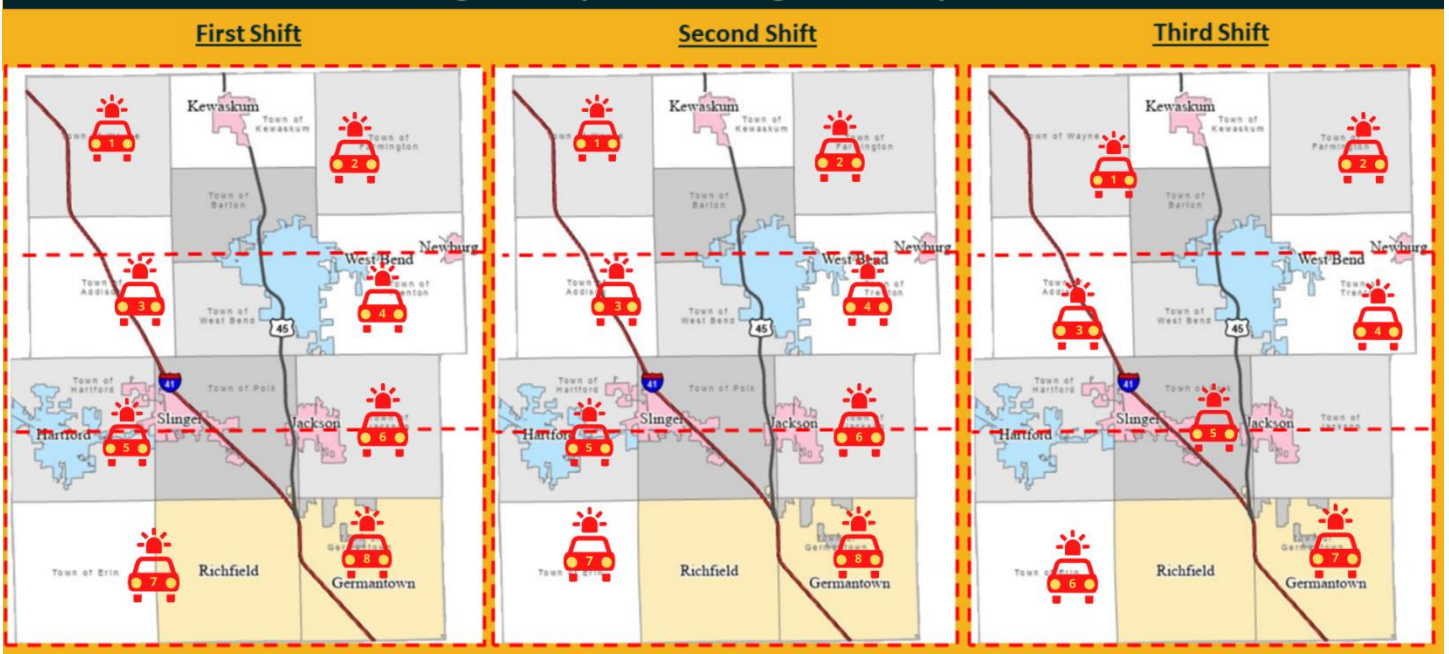
Minimum Staffing:

As indicated above, the Sheriff's Office has historically used a minimum staffing model for coverage and staffing analysis. Staffing minimums do not always describe the exact number and location of deputies on any given shift. However, they can provide a good baseline for budgeting and projecting coverage. Currently the minimum is five deputies on first shift, six deputies on second shift, and five deputies on third shift – or 5/6/5. The proposal under the Anti-Crime Plan is 8/8/7 – and is specifically designed to address the high call volume during noon to midnight hours. Many calls for service require multiple deputies and this will also provide for adequate coverage during these calls. While there is no perfect way to depict this, the maps below show hypothetical examples of Sheriff's Office patrol coverage maps under the current model and the Anti-Crime Plan proposal.

Patrol Coverage Example - Status Quo



Patrol Coverage Example – Washington County Anti-Crime Plan





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Shift Relief Factor:

When considering staffing changes for 24/7 operations, one thing that is often forgotten is the number of bodies it actually takes to increase a shift minimum by one (let alone two or more). As a starting point, it requires at least three deputies just to fill each of the three shifts. However, those three deputies cannot work all 365 days in a year, so additional deputy hours are required for coverage. Likewise, deputies also have training and court responsibilities, sick/vacation time, and other responsibilities that can take them away from their primary patrol assignment. After all of these variables are factored in, between four and five deputies are required to increase the minimum staffing level by one across all shifts. The Anti-Crime Plan would add eight patrol deputies and one working patrol sergeant to increase minimum staffing levels by two to three (depending on the shift).

“After all of these variables are factored in, between four and five deputies are required to increase the minimum staffing level by one across all shifts.”

Other Priorities that Impact Primary Responsibilities:

The Sheriff's Office has four specialized teams, which include: SWAT, Dive, Accident Reconstruction and Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement. Each of these team members has a different primary assignment. These assignments include Patrol Officers, Corrections Staff, Communications Staff, Major Crimes Detectives and Drug Unit Detectives. Below is the total number of Sheriff's Office Members on each team and the total number of hours spent on training and assignment during 2021.

- SWAT Team- There are 14 Sheriff's Office Sworn Officers on Tactical Element of the SWAT Team. They accounted for 2,224 hours of training/ assignments that took them away from their primary assignment in 2021. The Negotiation Element is made up of four Sheriff's Sworn Officers and two Communications Officers. They accounted for 224 hours during training/ assignments. (There are members on the SWAT Team from Germantown and Hartford Police Departments who are not included in the training/ assignment hours.)
- Dive Team- There are eight Sworn Officers on Washington County Dive Team. They accounted for 915 hours of training/ assignments that took them away from their primary assignments during 2021.
- Accident Reconstruction Team- There are seven Sheriff's Office Sworn Officers on the Recon Team. They accounted for 964 hours of training/ assignments that took them away from their primary responsibilities during 2021.
- Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement- There are two Sheriff's Office Sworn Officers assigned the Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement Team. They accounted for 106 hours of training/ assignments that took them away from their primary responsibilities during 2021.
- A sergeant, three deputies and two special deputies are responsible for courtroom security, prisoner movement, security requests and general building security, while two special deputies staff the screening station at the secure entrance to the Justice Center. While this operation does not pull staff from Patrol, it is important to note - because this staff is included in the staffing ratio calculation above.

When members of these teams are training or on assignment, they are taken away from their primary responsibility, often causing shortages in their respective divisions. However, each of these items are a crucial part of the mutual assistance provided by the Sheriff's Office to local police departments. The Anti-Crime plan supports the Sheriff's ability to provide these important services.



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Mental Health and Crisis Response:

Impact on Patrol:

For the last several years, the Sheriff's Office has experienced a substantial increase in calls for service handled by Patrol that include Mental Health Emergency Detentions, Acute Care Services Transports and Hospital Guards for custodies and inmates. These increases can be attributed to the closure of St. Joseph Behavioral Health Unit and the hospital moving to County jurisdiction.

The table to the right shows the time spent in June 2022 on these types of calls. This represents a typical month for these calls for service. Total time spent in June of just over 273 hours represents the equivalent of 1.7 deputies that are taken off the road in a normal month to address these types of issues.

Patrol Deputy Time Spent on Mental Health Related Incidents - June 2022	
Incident Type	Hours
Chapter 51	40
Guard (Child Birth)	158
Mental	2
Mental Transport/ Med Clearance	18.5
Prisoner Transport to Hospital	54.75
Total Time	273.25

Crisis Response Teams:

The Anti-Crime Plan adds three deputies and three social workers to form a Crisis Response Team (CRT) that would co-respond to any mental health related calls 16 hours a day, 7 days a week. This model is based on a pilot program that has already been conducted at the County, with significant success. The goals of this program include:

- Create a proactive police-mental health community response that stabilizes residents in the community, links them to needed resources and provides supportive follow up.
- Decrease the time non-Behavioral Health Officers spend on mental health calls.
- Connect individuals with mental health and/or substance use disorder (SUD) services in real time and complete follow up contacts to determine engagement.

The Sheriff's Office and Human Services intend to work with interested municipalities to utilize the Crisis Team for their benefit as well. One immediate benefit to the municipality and the community as a whole will be a more rapid response for in person evaluations. The proactive component of the program will also benefit our municipal partners, as routine contact with individuals with known mental health issues in our communities has been shown to mitigate the likelihood that the individual goes into any type of crisis mode, so they do not become involved in the criminal justice system to begin with.

Crime and Calls for Service Trends:

The following is a description of some of the major workload drivers for the Sheriff's Office. As noted earlier, these items are responsive to incidents and crimes happening in the community. While this is an important role of the Sheriff's Office, cases like these take away from other important efforts around proactive community policing.

Drug Crimes and Overdoses:

In response to the alarming rise in overdose deaths in the County, the Washington County Drug Task Force has taken on a more significant role in assisting the Major Crimes Division and other partner agencies in investigating drug overdoses, with the goal of identifying and arresting the drug dealers who supply the drugs that resulted in the overdose.

Another new priority of the Drug Task Force is related to drug endangered children, and a partnership between multiple public and private stakeholders is currently in the works. While this was not an area of focus in the



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past, recent need has dictated the change – and in the past two months, the drug task force has removed children from two households who tested positive for cocaine and methamphetamine.

Although the task force’s role has expanded in the past year, the priority remains the same. Targeting high-level drug dealers remains the top priority and Fentanyl remains the deadliest drug threat in the County. In 2019, there were 12 drug overdoses in the County. By 2021, that number increased to 36 suspected ODs and 2022 is expected to exceed that (26 suspected ODs thru July). The vast majority of the overdose case investigations have revealed a Milwaukee-based source of supply.

Drug Overdoses	
Year	ODs
2015	12
2016	18
2017	24
2018	21
2019	12
2020	19
2021	36
2022 July	26

Overdose death investigations can take 6-12 months and hundreds of hours. Overdose death cases start out in the Major Crimes Unit as a death investigation. The case is initially assigned to two detectives who will respond to process the scene, interview those present, make death notification, and interview family. In cases where there is an obvious drug nexus, 1-2 members of the Drug Unit will also respond to assist. In some cases detectives have to prepare a search warrant to process the scene, which can take several hours itself. The actual processing of the scene usually takes several hours to photograph, search, collect evidence, etc. Then, there are usually several hours of interviews and follow up that follow. The initial response with (4) investigators involved can easily take up 50-60 hours, with an additional 5-7 hours if the detective attends the autopsy. One detective reports having spent well over 1,000 hours on a successful Len Bias arrest and conviction. (Under the Len Bias law, drug dealers can be charged with reckless homicide in connection to overdose deaths of people they provided drugs to.)

The best source of information about a drug related death often times comes from cell phones. Law enforcement is required to obtain a search warrant to extract data from some of these phones, which usually takes 4-6 hours. The process of extracting data can take a detective several hours, particularly if there are multiple phones. Once the extractions are complete, data review begins. This typically takes days to fully complete. At this point, a decision is made as to whether or not to pursue arrest. If so, the detectives continue their investigation and work with the Drug Unit to make an arrest. If an arrest is not pursued, the information is turned over to the Drug Unit, for them to continue to pursue suspected dealers.

The Anti-Crime Plan would add three sworn detectives and one civilian position. The three detectives would be split up between the Major Crimes Unit and the Drug Task Force, which are areas that have seen a spike in workload. These positions would open opportunities to be involved in local federal task force investigations that build important contacts in the law enforcement community, increase access to enhanced intelligence/investigative resources, and increase opportunities to share revenue from federal operations. The civilian position is a Criminal Analyst, which would free up investigators to conduct criminal investigations.

“It will specifically target the high level dealers that are bringing this poison to our communities. Law enforcement can’t just settle to be reactive anymore, we need to be proactive.”

Fraud Complaints:

Fraud cases have become increasingly complex, and typically require significant research and legal requests of software and social media companies. These fraud cases can take 3-6 months and more than 200 hours to process. Detectives need to research the involved parties and companies - often requiring significant research to determine who the “parent company(s)” are. In order to access certain online information, detectives must determine the process and information needed from the respective companies so they can obtain all necessary account information. Sometimes, this requires follow-up from the initial contact with the parties involved, and can require significant research to determine who the “parent company(s)” are for web-based platforms.



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Once the detective has this information, they have to draft the subpoena(s) and/or search warrant(s). This process typically takes 4-6 hours, depending on the complexity of the case and the type of records that are being requested. Google, Facebook, Twitter, and most cell phone providers now require a 50+ page legal demand to release records. When the information comes back from the subpoena(s) and/or search warrant(s), the detective then has to review and decipher it. This varies significantly – from a couple hours, to weeks.

One detective reports having once received a response from Facebook that contained a PDF over 9,300 pages long and a folder with over 1,400 photos, videos, and audio files. That took 8 hours a day for several weeks to review. If there are multiple companies that were issued legal demand or information from one company leads to the pursuit of additional information from another entity, this process is repeated.

“In the 1980’s we were dealing with bad checks and bar fights. Today we are dealing with internet scams, CSAM, and armed criminals.”

Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC):

Another significant driver of workload is technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation and internet crimes against children. These crimes can take several forms, and they all require significant resources. One example is child sexual abuse material (CSAM, formerly called child pornography) cases. On average, these cases take 4-5 months and more than 250 hours to resolve.

Detectives assigned to these cases will review the information reported by the National Center for Missing and Endangered Children (NCMEC) and often have to piece together multiple pieces of information to determine if they meet the WI statutory definition of CSAM, which can take several hours depending on how long the report is and the number of files reported. The detective then usually prepares a search warrant for any additional information or files, often requiring a subpoena or search warrant to be drafted for records from an email service provider or a cell phone company in order to locate a suspect. Surveillance will also be conducted during this initial phase, which sometimes involves hours of work from multiple detectives and/or the Task Force.

The service of the search warrant is a full day event – between briefing, serving the warrant, processing the scene, and packaging and entering evidence back to the Sheriff’s Office. This typically involves all 10 members of the Major Crimes Unit and the 2 Task Force deputies – and occasionally Drug Unit staff. The following days typically involve follow-up, evidence management, and reporting to be completed. Any digital evidence that was seized needs to be transported to the Digital Forensic Unit in Madison for full analysis. This can take weeks, if not months. Once the data is processed, it is given to the detective for further review and analysis.

Outside Crime:

It is no secret that Milwaukee County is struggling with urban crime, and the County’s public safety partners in that area are facing unprecedented challenges. The disturbing trend of Milwaukee County residents being booked into our jail has been trending upward since 2014. However, make no mistake, this is not just a Milwaukee issue. Just over ½ of total County Jail bookings last year were non-County residents.

Washington County Jail Bookings - County of Residence (Shown as % of Total Bookings)					
Year	Out of State	Milwaukee County	Washington County	Other WI Counties	Total Bookings
2014	1.4%	16.7%	63.6%	18.3%	4,213
2015	1.6%	18.2%	60.2%	20.0%	4,188
2016	1.3%	19.2%	60.1%	19.5%	4,241
2017	1.6%	22.8%	55.6%	20.0%	4,514
2018	1.9%	23.0%	55.1%	19.9%	4,250
2019	2.1%	25.5%	49.8%	22.7%	4,219
2020	1.4%	22.2%	53.4%	23.1%	2,976
2021	2.6%	23.4%	48.9%	25.2%	3,340



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Other Service Demands:

Jail Staffing and Inmate Mental Health:

The Washington County Jail is utilized by all municipalities in the County. Over the past 20 years, Jail operations have become more complex with mental health, AODA and medical issues. Jail Operations are based upon a minimum standard model to maintain the safety and security of everyone in the jail. After action reviews of recent events indicated a need for increased staffing in certain areas of the jail. Specifically:

- The Adult Pod, which can house up to 94 straight time inmates on two floors, is a large area for only two officers to observe and often (at least every hour) the “floating” rover position is pulled off its regular safety and security duties to assist with regular welfare checks. This area of the Jail should have 3 officers assigned so the rover position can be more efficient in covering the rest of the Jail. Increased staffing has also been recommended by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections during annual inspections.
- The Special Management area houses the Jail’s highest needs inmates and has only one staff officer dedicated exclusively to it. Again, the rover is relied on for the hourly welfare checks and constant observation of maximum-security inmates and administrative segregation populations. This control area does not have direct access to a staff bathroom so the rover is also relied on to provide any breaks for the one officer who is assigned to this area. Staffing this area would increase the safety and security of the facility and improve the rover’s efficiency.

These two areas (Adult Pod & Special Management) have experienced several unprovoked officer assaults, a homicide, and a completed suicide in the last two years. The Washington County Anti-Crime Plan would add six correctional officers and one supervisor to add staff to these critical safety areas in the jail.

The proposal also includes \$100K to enhance mental health programs by increasing the partnership with the Human Services Department to provide mental health services in addition to the services it already provides in the Jail. This innovative approach will keep these services all under the Washington County umbrella and provide a better continuum of care for the inmate population.

Administration:

Over the past 15 years, the Sheriff’s Office has reduced several administrative staff, typically related to efficiencies gained through technology enhancements. However, newly added technology (body worn cameras), the related records, and other legal compliance issues has actually required the department to re-evaluate staffing needs. The chart on the right represents the increase in discovery requests in recent years. In addition to this spike in workload, the impact of the open records and data management demands related to body worn cameras are anticipated to be significant – with several local agencies indicating they dedicate at least 1.0 FTE (and often more) positions for this purpose. The Anti-Crime Plan would add one new Records Assistant to address these impacts.

Discovery Requests for Select Years	
Year	Requests
2006	15
2010	101
2014	278
2018	378
2021	593
2022 Est.	600

Emergency Management:

Having the ability to assist other police agencies with more assets in their emergency response is important to all citizens. The Anti-Crime Plan includes funding for future improvements related to the operations of the Emergency Management Department during and after a disaster, specifically:

- Communications Function (shared between the Sheriff & Emergency Management) during a disaster.
- Coverage (24 hours/day) of the Incident Command Post during the period of the disaster.
- Coverage of the Incident Commander Post (12 hours/day) during the period following a disaster.



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Schools:

We cannot wait to react to tragedy, but instead must be ready to protect our children. The Anti-Crime Plan calls 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.

Other Information About the Plan:

Full Plan:

The table below shows all the components of the plan, and an estimate of the staffing and costs required. Most of the components have been discussed in the information above and in the various conversations that have been happening throughout the community.

Washington County Anti-Crime Plan - Cost Estimates		
Cost Areas	FTE	2023 Cost
<u>Patrol</u>		
Deputy	8.0	\$848,000
<u>Sergeant</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>\$124,000</u>
Subtotal-Patrol	9.0	\$972,000
<u>Crisis Team</u>		
Deputy	3.0	\$318,000
<u>Social Worker</u>	<u>3.0</u>	<u>\$322,000</u>
Subtotal-Crisis Team	6.0	\$640,000
<u>Detective Bureau</u>		
Detective	3.0	\$362,000
<u>Criminal Analyst</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>\$111,000</u>
Subtotal-Detective Bureau	4.0	\$473,000
<u>Jail Operations</u>		
Corrections Officer	6.0	\$518,000
Sergeant	1.0	\$109,000
Program Specialist	1.0	\$75,000
<u>Jail Mental Health</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>\$100,000</u>
Subtotal-Jail Operations	8.0	\$802,000
<u>Comms Center</u>		
Comms Officers	1.5	\$134,000
<u>Comms Corpral</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>\$10,000</u>
Subtotal-Comms Center	1.5	\$144,000
<u>Emergency Management</u>	1.0	\$150,000
<u>Administration & Records</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>\$75,000</u>
<u>Sheriff's Office Attraction and Retention</u>		\$344,000
Total	30.5	\$3,600,000



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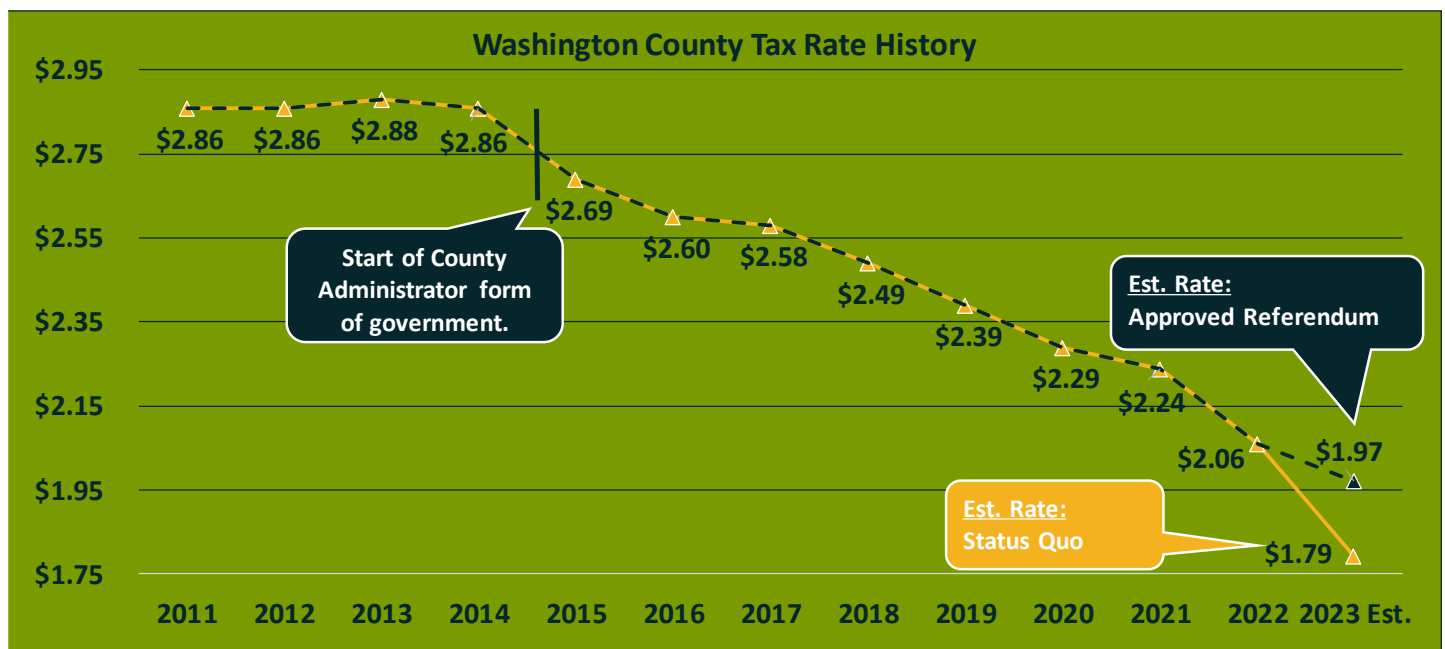


Tax Levy Impact:

If approved, the referendum would increase the property tax levy in the 2023 Budget by \$3.6M and would fund the full Washington County Anti-Crime Plan. While the increase would be one-time, the \$3.6M will remain in the property tax base in future budgets and would be subject to the same percentage increase in future years as all other property tax levy (generally, the percentage of property value growth attributed to net new construction).

No matter what happens with the referendum, the property tax rate will drop (using information provided by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue) due to unprecedented property value growth.

- The County has already adopted a \$500,000 property tax levy reduction for the 2023 fiscal year. The impact on the tax rate if the referendum fails is a reduction of approximately \$0.27.
- If the referendum passes, \$3.6M is added onto the property tax levy already adopted for 2023, meaning a net tax increase of \$3.1 million in 2023. The impact on the tax rate if the referendum passes is a reduction of approximately \$0.09.



What this means for property owning voters is a decision between saving money (an estimated \$28 annually for a home valued at \$300K) and enhancing public safety, or doing nothing and saving even more money (an estimated \$80 annually for a home valued at \$300K).

Historical Spending and Tax Levy:

The beginning of this document mentioned the fact that County leaders have a documented history of public policy decisions that demonstrate how providing a Safe and Secure Community is a top priority. Perhaps even more impressive is that these decisions were made while simultaneously achieving another priority: small government and low taxes.

Under property tax levy limits, municipal and county governments can increase the property tax amount levied in the prior year by the percentage increase in equalized value due to net new construction. In recent years, that percentage is typically 1% to 2% for

Est. County Tax Bill Impact (\$300K Home)*			
Referendum Passes		Referendum Fails	
2022 Bill	\$618	2022 Bill	\$618
2023 Est.	\$591	2023 Est.	\$538
Change	(\$27)	Change	(\$80)

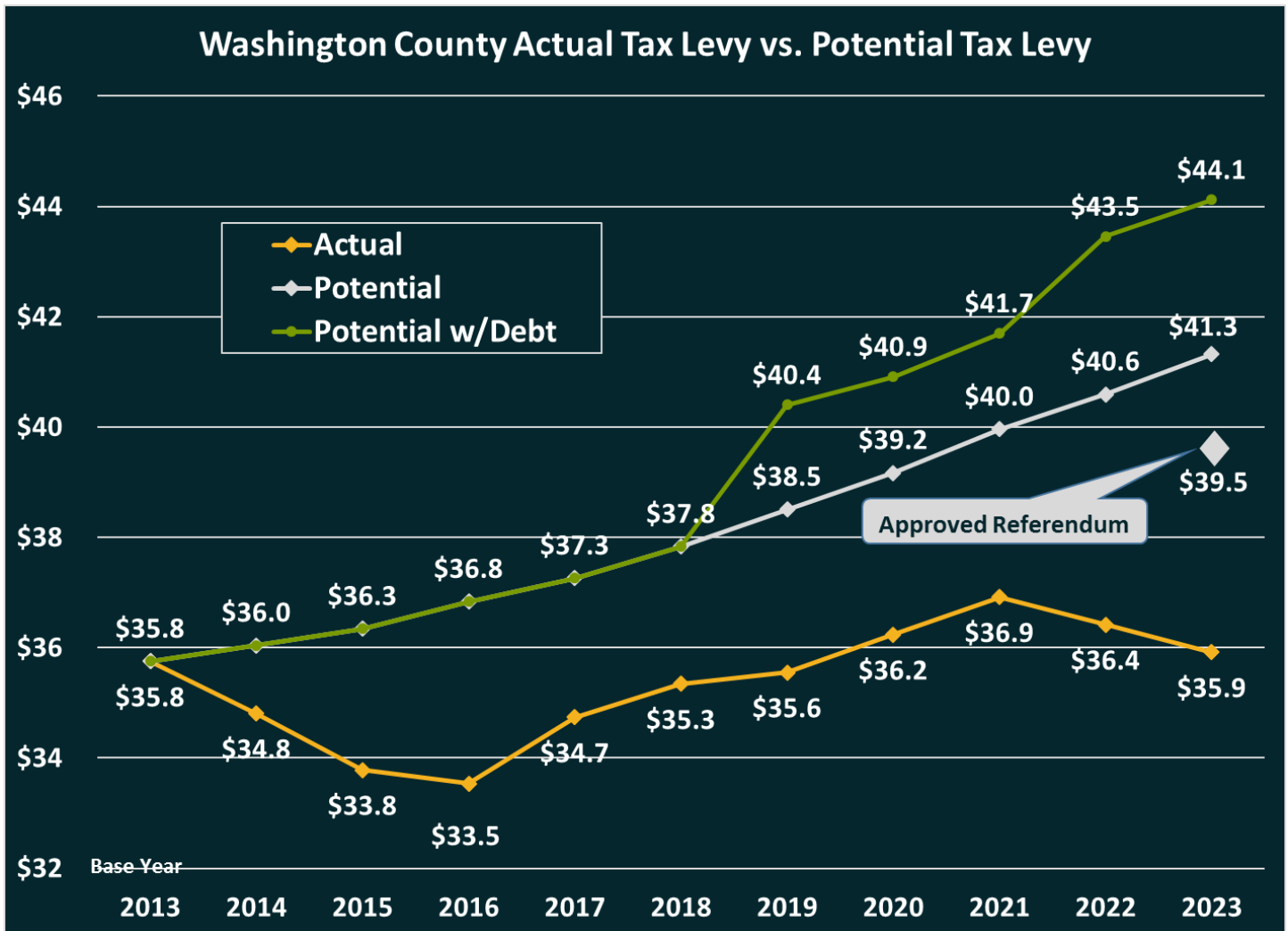
*Exact number may change due to apportionment or updates to tax assessment of individual properties.



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Washington County. Levy limit laws also include an exception that allows governments to increase levy to fund debt service payments. On an annual basis, most local governments choose to exercise both of these (and other) exceptions to tax to the max. Washington County does not. The chart below shows what Washington County actually levied in comparison to what could have been levied under the levy limit provisions outlined above. For 2023, if the referendum is approved, the tax levy would still be \$4.6M lower than what could have been levied under the levy limit. This demonstrates the consistent approach taken at budget time: it begins with the simple premise that this is your money, not the government's. Washington County always puts you first by only requesting what is necessary to provide quality services.



Budgeting is about priorities, and the trends noted here are indicative of County leaders making decisions that represent those priorities. In the era of property tax levy limits, this often means reducing levy in one budget area in order to direct levy into another – which is what the County has done for public safety. In the 10 years from 2013 to 2022, the County portion of the property tax levy increased by just under 2%, or \$668K. In that same timeframe, the property tax levy in the Sheriff’s budget increased by about \$5M or 33%. The pie charts on the following page demonstrate how this shift has impacted the percentage of the total County property tax levy directed to the Sheriff’s Office over the last 10 years.



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Nonetheless, 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. \$3.6M is a significant ask, but the targeted spending in the Washington County Anti-Crime Plan will address the issues described in this document in a holistic way that will enhance and improve the public safety.

Closing:

While life in Washington County has been thriving with much safety, prosperity and tranquility - a place where families flock in search of quality neighborhoods and schools

- we know life just outside of our county's borders has taken a sad turn and many of our friends in neighboring counties no longer feel settled in their communities. They do not feel safe. And rightly so.

In the past five years, two sheriffs, three county board chairmen, four different county boards and a new county executive all identified the need to analyze minimum staffing requirements in the four areas of the Sheriff's Office: administrative, patrol, communications, and jail. This spring, Sheriff Schulteis and his team completed the staffing needs analysis and developed the Washington County Anti-Crime Plan, a proposal to increase minimum staff patrol, strengthen mental health support, and enhance our jail protocols.

The Sheriff, the County Executive, and the Washington County Board of Supervisors ultimately concluded the only way to execute the proposal quickly and fully was by asking the people of Washington County via a referendum with the Washington County Anti-Crime Plan. We cannot simply, quickly, or responsibly divert \$3.6 million of the \$42.6 million of your property and sales tax without significantly altering your county government. The citizens must have a voice.

The question falls to you, the people of Washington County. It's your money. It's your community. How shall we proceed?

