

Citizens want fair taxation

ALAN INGRAM, Morning Journal Writer
06/19/2008

LORAIN -- Changing Lorain's income tax credit is not equitable, according to numerous residents who attended a public forum on the topic last night.

More than 40 people, including City Council members, department heads and other staff, listened to Mayor Anthony Krasienko's presentation of his "Investment Plan." The mayor explained what the various city departments do, how they're staffing numbers have decreased and what they need in the future.

Krasienko has proposed changing the income tax credit from 2 percent to 1 percent -- a move officials said would generate an additional \$3 million per year and wipe away the city's budget deficit by 2010. Reducing the credit would mean residents who work outside the city would have to pay more income tax to Lorain.

Some members of the community asked Krasienko if there were other options, if the matter could go directly on the ballot for voters to decide and if there is anything they could do to prevent it from happening.

Krasienko said the idea behind changing the tax credit is to make sure that everyone pays toward the operation of the city.

"Everybody needs to contribute to the operation of the city for the services they receive, because they receive the benefit of the services equally, but the payment for those services is unequal, currently," he said.

Russ Mayberry who has a maintenance job in Rocky River said it would cost him about \$500 extra per year if the mayor's plan passes. He doesn't have any idea where he would get the money.

"You're asking 20-some thousand people to pay for something that 70-some thousand people should be paying for," he said. "And it's not fair."

Increasing the sales tax would be a better alternative, he added.

"I don't care if it's 1 percent," he said. "It's still cheaper than Cuyahoga (County). I do all my shopping in Lorain. I buy the gas for my truck in Lorain. I buy all the groceries, the cigarettes, whatever else you want, I buy in Lorain. I don't buy nothing in Cuyahoga County except for lunch one day a week."

The mayor said he thinks the sales tax could be put on the ballot, but that it would probably take a large percentage increase in order to generate \$3 million. He said they will run the numbers, though.

Tax hike vote set next week Streetsboro council eyeing issue

By Miles Jung-Kilbreath Record-Courier staff writer

STREETSBORO " City Council plans to vote at its June 23 meeting whether to place a 1-percent income tax increase and a 2-percent income tax credit on the Nov. 4 ballot.

"I don't consider this a proposal for an income tax increase, but a proposal for income tax relief," Mayor Tom Wagner said Monday at a finance committee meeting.

The tax increase would provide the city about \$2.9 million a year and raise the city income tax to 2 percent, according to Finance Director Ted Gordon.

Wagner said he plans to present five-year plans for the police, fire and service departments to show how the money would be spent.

He said he does not plan to fund City Hall renovations with additional tax revenue.

The 2-percent income tax credit would be a charter amendment. If it is approved by voters, residents who work outside Streetsboro in a municipality where they pay 2 percent in income tax would not have to pay the additional 1 percent they currently pay to Streetsboro, said Gordon.

But residents who live and work in Streetsboro would experience a 1 percent income tax rate increase, he said.

Law Director David Benjamin said he plans to draft legislation for both issues as emergency legislation for the June 23 meeting, which means Council could pass them both that evening.

Benjamin said he is drafting the 2-percent income tax credit so that it would take effect only if the city has a 2-percent income tax rate.

"I believe that around 70 percent to 75 percent of the residents in the city would save money if both the income tax increase and the tax credit pass," Benjamin said.

The deadline for turning in ballot issues to the Portage County Board of Elections for the November ballot is Aug. 21, he said.

Whether the income tax credit charter amendment and the income tax increase can be a single issue on the Nov. 4 ballot is still unknown, according to Benjamin.

He said the income tax increase is a state codified ordinance issue, while the income tax credit is a city charter issue, which may make them incompatible as a single ballot issue. He said he is working with the Board of Elections to see whether they can be considered one issue.

Board President Pete Buczkowski said he is for the tax issues, because as one who lives in the city, but works in another city, he would pay less income tax with the 2-percent credit.

Wagner said he plans to host information sessions around the city and provide informational fliers to residents to help educate about both issues.

"When a pumper [fire] truck is at the age when it needs to be replaced, we want to just be able to replace it," he said.

Wagner said he wouldn't fund a new or renovated City Hall with the money. He still plans to ask voters to pass a bond issue, specifically for that project when plans are more concrete.

Wagner said City Council will actually have two items to consider as part of the proposal -- a hike in the income tax rate from 1 percent to 2 percent, and an increase in the credit given residents who pay income tax to other municipalities.

Law Director David Benjamin said Council would have to approve placing the income tax increase on the ballot and would have to choose how to proceed with the income tax credit.

Before placing the tax increase on the ballot, Council may pass a resolution, promising it will increase the credit residents receive from Streetsboro for paying taxes elsewhere from 50 percent to 100 percent, said Benjamin.

Or Council could place the credit increase on the ballot, stipulating that it would only take effect if the tax increase on the same ballot is approved by voters, he said.

Very few municipalities have income tax rates of 1 percent or lower, said Gordon, whose income tax would increase under the plan.

"We all benefit from the services that are provided," he said. "If I were to seriously consider moving or working somewhere else, I think I would be hard-pressed to find anywhere where the tax rate is less than 2 percent."

Wagner said he plans to host town hall style meetings in each ward to explain the spending plan and field questions on the possible tax issue.

2008 DOWNTOWN EVENTS



Kent RiverDay
Saturday, May 17th



Heritage Festival
Saturday, July 5th

Halloween Family Fun



PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST
Saturday, Oct. 25th

Downtown Trick-or-Treat & many more spooktacular activities



Kent Halloween
Saturday, Oct. 25th



After Work Party

June 20th
July 18th
August 1st & 15th

5 PM – 8 PM
in Home Savings Bank Plaza



OLD FASHIONED DAYS
And Ice Cream Social
Saturday, August 2

Starlights & Streetlights

(welcome KSU students)
August 22nd

Sidewalk Sale

August 21–23rd



Ghost Walk

Friday, Oct. 31st
& Saturday, Nov. 1st



Sidewalk Cinema

June 27th
July 25th
August 29th



Art & Wine Festival
Saturday & Sunday
Sept. 13th–14th

CiderFest & Star of the West Pie Contest

Saturday, Nov. 1st

KSU Folk Festival Around Town Night

Friday, Nov. 7th

KSU Adventure Center Cuyahoga River Kayak Trip

Saturday
July 12



Homecoming Parade
Saturday, Oct. 11th



Festival of Lights

December 6th
(1st Saturday in Dec.)

for additional information log on to www.mainstreetkent.org

Heritage Ohio Main Street Program Monthly Report

Report only those items completed in your project area.
Heritage Ohio 846-½ East Main Street Columbus, Ohio 43205

Month and Year	District/Municipality	Program Manager
January 2008	Main Street Kent	Mary Gilbert

DESIGN

Completed Façade Renovations *(include any work completed on building storefronts)*

Building Name or Address	Amount Invested	Source of Funds	Tax Credit
None			

Other Completed Building Rehabilitation Projects

(include completed work other than façade, on buildings)

Building Name or Address	Amount Invested	Source of Funds	Tax Credit
None			

Other Completed New Construction

(include completed new construction other than facade, on buildings)

Building Name or Address	Amount Invested	Source of Funds	Tax Credit
None			

Buildings Sold *(list any property transfers in your project area)*

Building Name or Address	Amount of Sale	Amount of Previous Sale
None		

Public Improvements Completed Affecting District *(list only permanent improvements)*

Project Description	Cost of Project	Source of \$
None		

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

New Businesses Opened in District *(FTE = Full Time Employee; PTE = Part Time Employee)*

Name and Address	Type of Business	# FTE	# PTE
None			

Businesses Closed/Moved Out of District

Name and Address	Type of Business	FTE lost	PTE lost
None			

Businesses Expanded in District

Name and Address	Type of Business	New FTE	New PTE
None			

New Housing Completed in District

Address	# Of Units Created	Completion Cost	Monthly Rent
None			

PROMOTION

District Promotions Completed *(please indicate type of promotion {R = retail; SE = special event; I = image})*

Event	Sponsors	Type	Total Cost
None			

ORGANIZATION

Training Sessions Attended

Total Number of Trainings Attended	MS Manager (X)	Volunteer (X)
None		

Volunteer Hours

Donated Hours	
Total Volunteer Hours Donated	88 Volunteer Hours
Total Hours Volunteered to Heritage Ohio	0

Fundraising Efforts

Event/Project	Source and Amount
None	

Membership Efforts

Total New Members	Total Membership Amount Collected/Pledged
2 Corporate, 1 Family	\$470.00

Commentary

Commentary by Committee

<p>Design: The Design Committee met to discuss plans for 2008.</p>	<p>Promotion: The Promotion Committee worked on the revised work plans and calendar of events for 2008</p>
<p>Organization: The Organization Committee has focused on researching an internal/external communications policy and recruiting volunteers</p>	<p>Economic Restructuring: The Economic Restructuring Committee worked on a master plan for the river, a draft of the business survey, the whitewater plans and assisting the city in choosing a developer for a downtown development project.</p>

Program Commentary *(list critical issues, challenges, and successes of the past month)*

<p>The Main Street Kent organization received national certification at the annual evaluation at the end of January. The Executive Director gave an update to Kent City Council with a report of 2007 accomplishments and plans for 2008.</p>

Suggestions for Heritage Ohio Staff *(list suggestions on services or training topics; new resources; questions)*

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Heritage Ohio Main Street Program Monthly Report

Report only those items completed in your project area.
Heritage Ohio 846-½ East Main Street Columbus, Ohio 43205

Month and Year	District/Municipality	Program Manager
February 2008	Main Street Kent	Mary Gilbert

DESIGN

Completed Façade Renovations *(include any work completed on building storefronts)*

Building Name or Address	Amount Invested	Source of Funds	Tax Credit
None			

Other Completed Building Rehabilitation Projects

(include completed work other than façade, on buildings)

Building Name or Address	Amount Invested	Source of Funds	Tax Credit
Student Rental – 312 East Main Street – general repairs and electrical updates	\$1,500	Private	

Other Completed New Construction

(include completed new construction other than facade, on buildings)

Building Name or Address	Amount Invested	Source of Funds	Tax Credit
None			

Buildings Sold *(list any property transfers in your project area)*

Building Name or Address	Amount of Sale	Amount of Previous Sale
None		

Public Improvements Completed Affecting District *(list only permanent improvements)*

Project Description	Cost of Project	Source of \$
None		

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

New Businesses Opened in District *(FTE = Full Time Employee; PTE = Part Time Employee)*

Name and Address	Type of Business	# FTE	# PTE
The Backerei, 120 South Water Street	Bakery	3	1

Businesses Closed/Moved Out of District

Name and Address	Type of Business	FTE lost	PTE lost
None			

Businesses Expanded in District

Name and Address	Type of Business	New FTE	New PTE
None			

New Housing Completed in District

Address	# Of Units Created	Completion Cost	Monthly Rent
None			

PROMOTION

District Promotions Completed *(please indicate type of promotion {R = retail; SE = special event; I = image})*

Event	Sponsors	Type	Total Cost
The Mentalist at the Kent Stage	Main Street		\$1000
Ice Carving Event	Standing Rock Cultural Arts		N/A

ORGANIZATION

Training Sessions Attended

Total Number of Trainings Attended	MS Manager (X)	Volunteer (X)
Main Street Institute		2

Volunteer Hours

Donated Hours	
Total Volunteer Hours Donated	255 Hours

Total Hours Volunteered to Heritage Ohio	0
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Fundraising Efforts

Event/Project	Source and Amount
None	

Membership Efforts

Total New Members	Total Membership Amount Collected/Pledged
None	

Commentary

Commentary by Committee

Design: Nothing to report	Promotion: The Promotion Committee continued to work on the revised work plans and calendar of events for 2008
Organization: The Organization Committee continued to work on internal/external communications policy and recruiting volunteers	Economic Restructuring: The Economic Restructuring Committee continued to work on a master plan for the river, the whitewater plans and assisting the city in choosing a developer for a downtown development project. In addition, surveys were distributed to all downtown businesses.

Program Commentary *(list critical issues, challenges, and successes of the past month)*

Suggestions for Heritage Ohio Staff *(list suggestions on services or training topics; new resources; questions)*

Heritage Ohio Main Street Program Monthly Report

Report only those items completed in your project area.
 Heritage Ohio 846-½ East Main Street Columbus, Ohio 43205

Month and Year	District/Municipality	Program Manager
March 2008	Main Street Kent	Mary Gilbert

DESIGN

Completed Façade Renovations *(include any work completed on building storefronts)*

Building Name or Address	Amount Invested	Source of Funds	Tax Credit
None			

Other Completed Building Rehabilitation Projects

(include completed work other than façade, on buildings)

Building Name or Address	Amount Invested	Source of Funds	Tax Credit
Wright Heating – 418 North Water Street – replace existing sanitary lateral	\$1,500	Private	

Other Completed New Construction

(include completed new construction other than facade, on buildings)

Building Name or Address	Amount Invested	Source of Funds	Tax Credit
None			

Buildings Sold *(list any property transfers in your project area)*

Building Name or Address	Amount of Sale	Amount of Previous Sale
Office Building and Vacant Land at the corner of Franklin and College	\$250,000	N/A

Public Improvements Completed Affecting District *(list only permanent improvements)*

Project Description	Cost of Project	Source of \$
None		

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

New Businesses Opened in District *(FTE = Full Time Employee; PTE = Part Time Employee)*

Name and Address	Type of Business	# FTE	# PTE
None			

Businesses Closed/Moved Out of District

Name and Address	Type of Business	FTE lost	PTE lost
None			

Businesses Expanded in District

Name and Address	Type of Business	New FTE	New PTE
None			

New Housing Completed in District

Address	# Of Units Created	Completion Cost	Monthly Rent
None			

PROMOTION

District Promotions Completed *(please indicate type of promotion {R = retail; SE = special event; I = image})*

Event	Sponsors	Type	Total Cost
Bass Ale Bagpipers in Downtown	Anheuser Busch		None
March Madness on Big Screen – Kent State Flashes	Kent Stage/WNIR		None

ORGANIZATION

Training Sessions Attended

Total Number of Trainings Attended	MS Manager (X)	Volunteer (X)
National Main Street Conference in Philadelphia	1	

Volunteer Hours

Donated Hours	
Total Volunteer Hours Donated	142 Hours
Total Hours Volunteered to Heritage Ohio	0

Fundraising Efforts

Event/Project	Source and Amount
Trash Receptacle Sponsorships	\$660

Membership Efforts

Total New Members	Total Membership Amount Collected/Pledged
None	

Commentary

Commentary by Committee

<p>Design: Nothing to report</p>	<p>Promotion: The Promotion Committee continued to work on the revised work plans and calendar of events for 2008</p>
<p>Organization: The Organization Committee continued to work on internal/external communications policy and recruiting volunteers</p>	<p>Economic Restructuring: The Economic Restructuring Committee continued to work on a master plan for the river, the whitewater plans and assisting the city in choosing a developer for a downtown development project and distribution of surveys to all downtown businesses.</p>

Program Commentary *(list critical issues, challenges, and successes of the past month)*

Suggestions for Heritage Ohio Staff *(list suggestions on services or training topics; new resources; questions)*