

## Kalamazoo, Washington

Kalamazoo is at a crossroads. Health care and transportation costs have spiraled out of control over the last decade. At the same time, state revenues have dropped and city revenues are down because of a prolonged recession. In addition, state ballot measures have limited Kalamazoo's ability to collect revenues that help keep up with inflation.

The city's reserves have nearly been depleted. Within two years, there will not be enough funds to continue funding city services at their current level. The City has already made significant cuts over the past few years, including staff cuts. City Hall insiders understand the dilemma, but there really hasn't been much public discussion about this serious financial situation.

Tough decisions need to be made and soon. The options seem limited.

- Make severe additional cuts in basic city services. Options include public safety, transportation, libraries, and parks & recreation and administration.
- Consider a local ballot funding measure to raise additional city revenue for one of the community's priorities – public safety or transportation or libraries or parks and recreation – in order to free up city funds for other areas.
- Other? Is there another option that addresses this issue within the next two years?

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# Facts – Getting Everyone on the Same Page

What sorts of facts - information, finances, comparative data, background, history etc. -- would be helpful to present to citizens so everyone feels like they're on the same page? What would citizens like to know in order to have an informed conversation about the difficult choices ahead?

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# Listen & Learn

What questions need to be asked? What do elected officials need to know from citizens before making an informed, difficult decision about the future? Priorities? Levels of Service? Willingness to invest more?

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