



Endorse the Local Housing Assistance Fund Millage!

On Tuesday, November 3, 2015, Kalamazoo County voters will have an opportunity to pass a millage to ensure all children have a place to call home. The millage will provide over \$800,000 per year for six years to provide stable housing opportunities for local homeless families with school-age children. If the millage is adopted, a homeowner with a home valued at \$100,000 will pay an extra \$5 per year if the millage in property taxes. The funds will provide a partial rent subsidy for up to one year for each family.

1,240 Kindergarten through 12th Grade students were identified as homeless in the last school year (2014–2015) by the schools in Kalamazoo County.

Your endorsement and YES vote will help pass this millage to give Kalamazoo County children more opportunities to succeed in life.

TWO ENDORSEMENT OPTIONS – to Support the Local Housing Assistance Fund Millage

1. Send email to Rick Stravers with a photo of your face plus a statement of why you support this millage (50 words or fewer). Send to rstravers@opendoorskalamazoo.org.
2. Sign the endorsement form on the next page and return to Rick Stravers at:
Open Doors, 1141 S. Rose Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49001 or
rstravers@opendoorskalamazoo.org.

My Organization Endorses the Local Housing Assistance Fund Millage

Endorsing Organization:

Contact Person:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Phone:

Email:

Organization logo:

I/We Endorse the Local Housing Assistance Fund Millage

Name(s) of Endorsing Individual(s):

Home address:

City/State/Zip:

School District:

Phone:

Email:

Photo of your face with plain background:

50 word statement of why you support the Local Housing Assistance Fund Millage:

☐ I/our organization endorses Vote YES for Kids! Use my/our name on publicity for events and outreach to media.

☐ I/our organization will participate in advocacy events (such as rallies and press conferences)

☐ I/our organization will distribute materials about Vote YES for Kids to friends, neighbors, clients, constituents, and others.

☐ I/we are interested in being core coalition members and can contribute time, staff, or other resources to this effort.

☐ I/we are interested in receiving information and news about Vote YES for Kids

☐ I/we will contribute funds for the Vote YES for Kids! campaign. Please contact me/us.

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS – Local Housing Assistance Fund Millage

The Need

- 1,240 schoolchildren in the county were homeless during the 2014–2015 academic year. Every school district in Kalamazoo County had children who became homeless during the school year.

The Proposal

- County-wide millage
- 0.1 mill for 6 years
- Cost for a home with a market value of \$100,000: \$5 per year, less than 2 cents/day
- Revenue estimate: approximately \$800,000 per year for six years

The Program

- For homeless families with school-age children
- Applications will be available in all school districts in Kalamazoo County
- Security deposit and rent subsidy for approximately one year
- Personal support for becoming self-sufficient by the end of the one-year subsidy

The Ballot Proposal on the November 3, 2015 ballot:

Kalamazoo County Local Housing Assistance Fund Millage

For the purpose of creating a local fund to provide housing to families with children of low income who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be imposed on taxable property in Kalamazoo County be increased by 0.10 mills, being 10 cents (\$0.10) per thousand dollars (\$1,000) of taxable value on all taxable property in Kalamazoo County for a period of six (6) years, being 2015 to 2020, inclusive? It is estimated that 0.10 mills would raise approximately \$817,100 when first levied in 2015.

EVERY CHILD DESERVES A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Homelessness is an issue of national concern and it is no different here in Kalamazoo County. With our local focus on, and commitment to, education as a key component to both our County-wide quality of life as well as our opportunities for economic success, it is critical that we support families with school-age children. No current Federal or State program provides resources that are specifically targeted to serving this population. We have an opportunity to create a local program that is flexible enough to address local needs and adaptable enough to always seek the best pathways for positive housing stability and at the same time serve as a model for how a community commits to each other.

This proposal is respectfully submitted by the members of the Kalamazoo County Public Housing Commission and all the individuals and nonprofit partners that participated in its formation.

What will the millage do for Kalamazoo County?

Provide temporary financial housing assistance and support services that lay the groundwork for ongoing housing stability for homeless families with school-age children throughout Kalamazoo County. The millage will provide assistance for an estimated 100 families annually.

How will it work?

Through contracts with County non-profit entities selected through an RFP process under the oversight of the Kalamazoo County Public Housing Commission.

1. The referral process for qualifying families will be primarily through the existing infrastructure of Homeless Liaisons present in every school district.
2. Families to be served will have an income that does not exceed 60% of the area median income (AMI). The 2015 Kalamazoo County 60% AMI for a family of four is \$36,120. The goal will be to serve those with incomes well below the 60% AMI limit.
3. Families will be expected to contribute a percentage of their own income toward rent, in most cases, between 30 and 50% of their monthly gross income.
4. Each family will participate with a support specialist to create a housing self-sufficiency plan that will be monitored, time-sensitive, and adaptable.
5. Family self-sufficiency planning will include a focus on income, budgeting, long-range goal setting and connections to other appropriate mainstream resources.
6. The average length of assistance will not exceed one year. The goal is increased housing stability.
7. As much as possible, families will be assisted to stay in the school district where their children attend school.

The Millage

1. It is calculated that county-wide 0.1 millage would raise over \$800,000 annually.
2. The cost to a homeowner with a house that has a market value of \$100,000 would be \$5 annually.
3. The proportional geographic distribution of assistance will insured through contract.
4. The length of the millage request is for six years.

Oversight, management, and infrastructure

1. The Kalamazoo County Public Housing Commission will contract for one staff person to oversee the management of budget, the contracts for service, and the outcomes. The intent is to keep overhead to a minimum.
2. The direct services of family identification, qualification, rental assistance and the provision of supports will be provided by a qualified, local non-profit agency (or agencies) selected through an Request for Proposals process.
3. Outcome measures will be built into the contracts for service and there will be regular reporting to the Kalamazoo County Public Housing Commission and the Kalamazoo County Commission.
4. This initiative will always seek to collaborate and cooperate with existing housing assistance activities, never replacing programs, but flexibly leveraging and augmenting resources to increase the opportunity for further system-wide, positive housing outcomes.
5. County landlords will be an important partner in this endeavor. Landlords who agree to accept tenants through this program and keep their rents consistent with affordability standards will receive the subsidy portion of the rent on a monthly basis on occupied units.

Questions?

Check out the campaign website at **VoteYesforKids.net** or contact Rick Stravers at: Open Doors, 269-343-6064 or rstravers@opendoorskalamazoo.org