

EPIC ▪ MRA City of East Lansing Survey
[FREQUENCY REPORT OF SURVEY RESPONSES – 300 SAMPLE – ERROR ±5.7%]
SSA [150 SAMPLE – ERROR ±8.0%] SSB [150 SAMPLE – ERROR ±8.0%]
Polling Dates: April 14, 2018 through April 18, 2018
(30% completed via cell phones)

SAMPLE: 1=Cell/2=Land SPLIT: 1=A / 2=B DATE: _____ / _____ / _____

PHONE #: _____

PRECINCT: _____ INTERVIEWER: _____

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Hello, this is (NAME) from EPIC ▪ MRA, a Lansing based survey research firm. We're conducting a random survey with voters in your area about your community and local issues. This is not a sales call, you will not be asked for a donation and you will not be called again because your household participated in a survey. This is strictly research and I'd like to take about 15 minutes to include the opinions of your household.

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We need to have a balance of men and women in this survey, and we also need to have young voters represented. May I please speak to the youngest [MALE/FEMALE, depending on quota specified on list] registered voter, age 18 or older, who is at home now?

IF YES: REPEAT INTRO FOR NEW RESPONDENT AND CONTINUE

IF NO, ASK: "Is there any other [MALE/FEMALE, as specified] registered voter, 18 years or older, who is at home right now?" IF NOT, TERMINATE INTERVIEW

POLLERS NOTE: IF ASKED WHO COMMISSIONED SURVEY, INFORM RESPONDENTS ONLY AFTER COMPLETING THE INTERVIEW THAT:

"This survey was commissioned by the City of East Lansing."

Are you currently registered to vote in the City of East Lansing?

If YES ----- CONTINUE

If NO ----- THANK AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW

__01. In August of even numbered years, primary elections are held to nominate candidates from each political party to have their names placed on the November general election. In August of this year, there will be contested primary elections for governor in both parties, and for US senate among Republicans. There will also be contested primary elections for congress, state senate, state representative, and there will also be one or more tax related proposals on the ballot. Many voters do not participate in August primary elections. How about you? How often do you vote in August primaries - all the time, most of the time, half of the time, seldom or never?

60%	All the time -----	CONTINUE INTERVIEW
25%	Most of the time -----	CONTINUE INTERVIEW
7%	Half of the time -----	CONTINUE INTERVIEW
7%	Seldom -----	CONTINUE INTERVIEW
1%	Too young to vote before/Not registered before	(VOLUNTEERED)
---	Never votes/Undecided/Refused -----	THANK AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW

__02. Thinking about the upcoming August 2018 primary election, what are the chances you will vote in that election - are you very certain to vote, fairly certain, are you likely to vote, are the chances only 50-50, or, will you not likely vote?

74%	Very certain	
13%	Fairly certain	
13%	Will likely vote	
---	50-50/Not likely to vote-----	THANK AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW
---	Undecided/Refused-----	THANK AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW

__03. When you vote in elections, do you always vote by absentee ballot, mostly vote absentee, mostly vote by going to the polls, always vote by going to the polls, or, do you participate pretty equally by going to the polls and voting by absentee ballot?

22%	Always votes by absentee ballot
6%	Mostly votes by absentee ballot
28%	TOTAL VOTE ABSENTEE
11%	Vote pretty equally at the polls and by absentee ballot
61%	TOTAL VOTE POLLS
15%	Mostly votes by going to the polls
46%	Always votes by going to the polls
---	Undecided/Refused

__04. Overall, do you think the City of East Lansing is headed in the right direction, or, do you think that things are pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

42%	Wrong track
31%	Right direction
27%	Undecided/Refused

__05. Overall, how would you rate the job the City of East Lansing does in providing basic city services to its residents -- would you give East Lansing a positive rating of excellent or pretty good, or a negative rating of only fair or poor?

28%	Excellent
53%	Pretty good
81%	TOTAL POSITIVE
17%	TOTAL NEGATIVE
14%	Only fair
3%	Poor
2%	Undecided/Refused

__06. Thinking about the amount of city services you receive from the City of East Lansing in return for the local taxes and fees you pay, do you think your city taxes and fees are too high, too low, or about right for what you get back in services? **[IF TOO HIGH, ASK: "Would that be much or just somewhat too high" AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]**

23%	Much too high
20%	Somewhat too high
43%	TOTAL TOO HIGH
47%	About right
5%	Too low
5%	Undecided/Refused

__07. Overall, how would you rate the job that the East Lansing City Council and Administration have done in managing the city's finances -- would you give the City a positive rating of excellent or pretty good, or a negative rating of just fair or poor?

4%	Excellent
31%	Pretty good
35%	TOTAL POSITIVE
56%	TOTAL NEGATIVE
32%	Only fair
24%	Poor
9%	Undecided/Refused

__08. The current city budget in East Lansing pays \$7.5 million in pension contributions, representing 22 percent of the current city budget. Five years ago, these obligations represented only 16 percent of the budget, but in five years they are projected to consume more than thirty percent of the budget. In addition, there is another \$2 million needed for infrastructure improvements, including road and sidewalk repair, and maintenance on aging City facilities. With this situation in mind, which of the following two statements comes closer to your view? **[READ AND ROTATE 1 AND 2 BELOW]**

58%	It is important to maintain existing city services and programs, and to keep our commitment to retired city employees to fund their pensions and health insurance costs, even if that it means having to pay higher taxes to generate more revenue.
29%	It is important to keep taxes as low as possible, even if it means reducing city services and programs, and changing the pension commitments made to retired city employees.
13%	Undecided/Refused

__09. Many East Lansing residents have suggested that the proposal to permanently establish a city income tax, which was defeated at the polls last November, should be placed on a future election ballot again for voters to consider. The proposal would establish a city income tax on city residents and non-residents working in East Lansing. Residents would pay a 1 percent rate, whether they work in East Lansing or another community, and non-residents would pay a one-half percent income tax. If the income tax proposal is approved, the proposal to cut property taxes by 4.6 mills approved in last November's election, would take effect. Based on what you may know or have heard or read about the income tax proposal that voters turned down, if the proposal were placed on a future election ballot again and the election were held today, would you vote YES in favor of the proposal, or NO to oppose it?

[IF UNDECIDED, ASK: "Well, if the election was being held today, and you had to decide right now, would you lean toward voting YES or voting NO?" AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]

51%	Vote YES
6%	Lean toward voting YES
57%	TOTAL VOTE YES
35%	TOTAL VOTE NO
33%	Vote No
2%	Lean toward voting NO
8%	Undecided/Refused

__10. Now I would like to read a more detailed description of the income tax proposal. If residents live in East Lansing but work in another community with an income tax, or work in East Lansing and live in another community with an income tax, they would not pay more than 1 percent of their income in city income taxes for both communities in total. Students and other residents earning \$5,000 or less would not have to pay any income tax, and the tax would not apply to pension or social security income.

Passage of the proposal would also put into effect the property tax cut approved by voters last November. The property tax cut will be at least 4.6 mills, which means homeowners would have property taxes reduced by \$230 for every \$50,000 in taxable value of their homes.

If approved, the income tax would raise about \$10 million per year, and the property tax cut would reduce city revenue by \$5 million, leaving approximately \$5 million per year in new revenue. This increase in revenue could be used to maintain public safety services, pay currently unfunded pension and health insurance costs for city retirees, and provide additional funding for infrastructure needs, primarily road and sidewalk improvements. After hearing this more detailed description of the income tax proposal, if the proposal were placed on a future election ballot and the election were held today, would you vote YES in favor of the proposal, or NO to oppose it?

[IF UNDECIDED, ASK: “Well, if the election was being held today, and you had to decide right now, would you lean toward voting YES or voting NO?” AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]

58%	Vote YES -----	GO TO SPLIT SAMPLE
7%	Lean toward voting YES -----	GO TO SPLIT SAMPLE
65%	TOTAL VOTE YES	
30%	TOTAL VOTE NO	
28%	Vote No	
2%	Lean toward voting NO	
5%	Undecided/Refused -----	GO TO SPLIT SAMPLE

__11. What stands out from the more detailed statement, or any other reason, as the main reason why you would vote “NO” on the proposal to establish a city income tax? **[WRITE COMMENT AS STATED]**

N=91

1%	None; No Reason
29%	Wasteful Spending-Ineffective Budget-Distrust City Government Management of Funds
12%	Tax Increase-Taxes are Too High
9%	Change the Pension/Benefit System
6%	Drive Out Businesses-Families
5%	Already Voted NO
5%	Could Increase It at Any Time
5%	No Specific Spending Distribution Plan Laid Out
3%	Hurts Renters-Students
3%	It's Wealth Redistribution
3%	Not Needed
2%	Developers Get Giveaways from the City
2%	MSU Offered Money that was Turned Down
2%	Poorly Structured
2%	Property Tax Proposal has a Time Limit/Income Tax Does Not
1%	Other Priorities/Roads Funding
1%	Other Ways to Fund It-Make City Program Cuts
1%	Recent School Millages
1%	Regressive Tax
1%	Will Not Cover the Amount of Money Needed
2%	Other (<i>less than 1% each</i>)
4%	Undecided/Refused

SPLIT SAMPLE A: SUPPORTING ASKED FIRST, THEN OPPOSING ARGUMENTS
SPLIT SAMPLE B: OPPOSING ASKED FIRST, THEN SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

Now I would like to read some of the arguments people have made to **SUPPORT** the income tax proposal. You will hear arguments in **OPPOSITION** to the proposal later in the survey. Putting aside how you voted before, please tell me after each statement if it is a very convincing reason, somewhat convincing reason, or not a convincing reason at all to vote YES on the proposal. If you are undecided or neutral about any statement, please say so and we'll move on.

[ROTATE Q.12 TO Q.16]		Very Cnvc	Total Cnvc	Not Cnvc	DK/ REF
__12.	The new revenue from an income tax could all be dedicated to making additional payments to the City's underfunded pension. If that were the case, this would substantially resolve the city's pension problem over the next decade and a half. As compared to making only the required payments, after five years this would begin to lower the city's pension payment and free revenue for other purposes.	22%	64%	31%	5%
	SSA:	21%	61%	33%	6%
	SSB:	24%	67%	29%	4%
__13.	Property taxes are already very high in East Lansing, but the City also has a legal obligation to pay the benefit costs of retired city employees, as well as an obligation to maintain roads, sidewalks and other city services. An income tax is the fairest way to spread the cost of paying for these needs, rather than placing the entire burden on homeowners.	40%	75%	23%	2%
	SSA:	27%	73%	25%	2%
	SSB:	43%	77%	21%	2%
__14.	Between the property tax cut that was already approved, and the proposal to establish a city income tax, all taxes in East Lansing will be based on people's ability to pay. Those earning less than \$5,000, and senior citizens who live on retirement income, will not have to pay any income taxes, and if retirees own a home, they will benefit from a significant property tax cut.	43%	71%	26%	3%
	SSA:	43%	68%	29%	3%
	SSB:	43%	74%	23%	3%

SPLIT SAMPLE A: SUPPORTING ASKED FIRST, THEN OPPOSING ARGUMENTS
SPLIT SAMPLE B: OPPOSING ASKED FIRST, THEN SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

[ROTATE Q.12 TO Q.16]		Very Cnvc	Total Cnvc	Not Cnvc	DK/ REF
__15.	Assisting Michigan State University with extra fire and police protection, along with other city services, is a significant cost to the City of East Lansing. Having increased revenue from university employees will better enable the City to cover those costs without reducing funding for other basic city services for all residents.	42%	75%	23%	2%
	SSA:	37%	70%	27%	3%
	SSB:	47%	79%	19%	2%
__16.	Over the past 15 years, the City has done all it could to absorb massive cuts in state revenue sharing by cutting 25 percent of its full-time work force - about 120 employees - and cut programs. If there is NOT a sufficient increase in revenue, East Lansing will be forced to close the Hannah Center, several parks, reduce police and fire protection and reduce or eliminate other services.	49%	73%	25%	2%
	SSA:	47%	67%	30%	3%
	SSB:	51%	79%	20%	1%

__17. After hearing reasons to support the proposal to establish a city income tax - let me ask you again – if the election were held today, would you vote **YES** in favor of the proposal or **NO** to oppose it?

[IF UNDECIDED, ASK: “Well, if the election was being held today, and you had to decide right now, would you lean toward voting YES or voting NO?” AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]

TOT	SSA	SSB	
53%	49%	56%	Vote YES
7%	6%	8%	Lean toward voting YES
60%	55%	64%	TOTAL VOTE YES
35%	37%	32%	TOTAL VOTE NO
34%	36%	31%	Vote No
1%	1%	1%	Lean toward voting NO
5%	8%	4%	Undecided/Refused

SPLIT SAMPLE A: SUPPORTING ASKED FIRST, THEN OPPOSING ARGUMENTS
SPLIT SAMPLE B: OPPOSING ASKED FIRST, THEN SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

Now I would like to read some of the reasons people have given to **OPPOSE** the city income tax proposal. Again, putting aside how you voted before, after each statement, please tell me if the statement is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not a convincing reason at all to vote NO on the proposal. If you are undecided or neutral, please say so.

[ROTATE Q.18 TO Q.21]		Very Cnvc	Total Cnvc	Not Cnvc	DK/ REF
__18.	The city has already amended its retirement and health benefit policies for many current city employees to reduce costs. The same hard decisions must be made for benefits of current retirees before we consider raising taxes.	14%	46%	44%	10%
	SSA:	16%	49%	39%	12%
	SSB:	12%	43%	48%	9%
__19.	Higher taxes resulting from the adoption of a city income tax will force businesses to leave East Lansing, along with the jobs they provide, and also discourage businesses from locating here.	20%	49%	48%	3%
	SSA:	24%	57%	42%	1%
	SSB:	15%	41%	54%	5%
__20.	When a city income tax proposal was on the ballot in November of last year, the Chamber of Commerce and Michigan State University opposed the proposal, and are likely to oppose it again.	17%	34%	59%	7%
	SSA:	21%	35%	57%	8%
	SSB:	14%	33%	61%	6%
__21.	East Lansing residents were already asked to vote on this proposal just a few months ago, and it was soundly defeated. No means no! The city will just have to find another way to balance its budget, just as the rest of us do.	27%	51%	45%	4%
	SSA:	29%	55%	41%	4%
	SSB:	27%	48%	49%	3%

__22. After hearing arguments both for and against the city income tax proposal, let me ask you again; if the proposal to establish a city income tax were placed on a future election ballot and the election were held today, would you vote YES in favor of the proposal, or NO to oppose it?

[IF UNDECIDED, ASK: “Well, if the election was being held today, and you had to decide right now, would you lean toward voting YES or voting NO?” AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]

TOT	SSA	SSB	
57%	49%	65%	Vote YES
3%	2%	3%	Lean toward voting YES
60%	51%	68%	TOTAL VOTE YES
34%	41%	28%	TOTAL VOTE NO
32%	39%	25%	Vote No
2%	2%	3%	Lean toward voting NO
6%	8%	4%	Undecided/Refused

__23. If there does not appear to be enough voter support for a proposal to establish a city income tax in East Lansing, there may be an alternative proposal placed on the ballot to permanently increase property taxes by a total of 5.4 mills. This amount would represent 2.4 mills to restore a millage rate reduced by the Headlee Amendment to its original voter-approved amount, as well as an additional 3 mill increase. For homeowners, taxes would increase by \$270 for every \$50,000 in taxable value of their home. Thinking about a proposal for a permanent property tax increase instead of a proposal to establish a city income tax, if the proposal to increase property taxes were placed on a future election ballot and the election were held today, would you vote YES in favor of the proposal, or NO to oppose it?

[IF UNDECIDED, ASK: “Well, if the election was being held today, and you had to decide right now, would you lean toward voting YES or voting NO?” AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]

17%	Vote YES
8%	Lean toward voting YES
25%	TOTAL VOTE YES
68%	TOTAL VOTE NO
64%	Vote NO
4%	Lean toward voting NO
7%	Undecided/Refused

Many city residents have said they would be more likely to support a tax increase – either from an income tax or an increase in property taxes - if the extra revenue was dedicated for a specific purpose. Now I am going to read a short description of several purposes that a tax increase could be dedicated to fund. For each one, please tell me if dedicating a tax increase to the purpose described would make you more likely to support the tax increase, less likely to support it, or, if it really wouldn't influence you one way or the other to have a tax increase dedicated to that purpose. **[IF MORE/LESS LIKELY, ASK: “Would that be much or somewhat (more/less) likely?” AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]** The first one is –

[ROTATE Q.24 THROUGH Q.28]		<u>Much More</u>	<u>TOT More</u>	<u>DK/No Influen</u>	<u>TOT Less</u>	<u>Much Less</u>
_27.	Infrastructure improvements, including; city facilities, maintaining and improving streets and sidewalks, and water and sewer systems.	37%	68%	20%	12%	5%
_28.	Funding exclusively for road and street repair.	26%	58%	24%	18%	8%
_24.	Police and fire protection.	23%	55%	32%	13%	6%
_26.	Unfunded liabilities for retired city employees.	20%	47%	29%	24%	9%
_25.	Parks and recreation facilities and programs.	17%	47%	28%	25%	11%

__29. Thinking again about the proposal to establish a city income tax in East Lansing, as it has been described earlier in the survey, if the funding from the income tax was dedicated to the one or more purposes that you most support, and if the proposal were placed on a future election ballot and the election were held today, would you vote YES in favor of the proposal, or NO to oppose it?

[IF UNDECIDED, ASK: “Well, if the election was being held today, and you had to decide right now, would you lean toward voting YES or voting NO?” AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]

61%	Vote YES -----	GO TO Q.31
7%	Lean toward voting YES -----	GO TO Q.31
68%	TOTAL VOTE YES	
28%	TOTAL VOTE NO	
27%	Vote NO	
1%	Lean toward voting NO	
4%	Undecided/Refused	

Q.30 COMBINED WITH Q.29

__30. If the income tax proposal was limited to a period of no longer than 12 years, when it would expire unless reauthorized by voters, let me ask you again -- if the proposal were placed on a future election ballot and the election were held today, would you vote YES in favor of the income tax proposal or would you vote NO to oppose it?

[IF UNDECIDED, ASK: “Well, if the election was being held today, and you had to decide right now, would you lean toward voting YES or voting NO?” AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]

62%	Vote YES
9%	Lean toward voting YES
71%	TOTAL VOTE YES
25%	TOTAL VOTE NO
24%	Vote NO
1%	Lean toward voting NO
4%	Undecided/Refused

__31. Thinking again about the proposal to establish a 5.4 mill property tax increase in East Lansing, as it has been described earlier in the survey, if the funding from the property tax was dedicated to the one or more purposes that you most support, and if the proposal were placed on a future election ballot and the election were held today, would you vote YES in favor of the proposal, or NO to oppose it?

[IF UNDECIDED, ASK: “Well, if the election was being held today, and you had to decide right now, would you lean toward voting YES or voting NO?” AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]

35%	Vote YES -----	GO TO Q.33
8%	Lean toward voting YES ----	GO TO Q.33
43%	TOTAL VOTE YES	
53%	TOTAL VOTE NO	
51%	Vote NO	
2%	Lean toward voting NO	
4%	Undecided/Refused	

Q.32 COMBINED WITH Q.31

__32. If the 5.4 mill property tax increase proposal was limited to a period of 12 years, when the property tax increase would expire unless reauthorized by voters, if this proposal were placed on a future election ballot and the election were held today, would you vote YES in favor of a property tax increase, or NO to oppose it?

[IF UNDECIDED, ASK: “Well, if the election was being held today, and you had to decide right now, would you lean toward voting YES or voting NO?” AND CODE BEST RESPONSE]

38%	Vote YES
10%	Lean toward voting YES
48%	TOTAL VOTE YES
47%	TOTAL VOTE NO
46%	Vote NO
1%	Lean toward voting NO
5%	Undecided/Refused

__33A-C. Where would you say you get most of your information about East Lansing City government? [**DO NOT READ – PROBE FOR UP TO THREE RESPONSES**]

24%	Lansing State Journal
16%	Comments from friends/word of mouth
12%	Television news coverage about the city
9%	East Lansing Dialogue (Printed Version)
9%	East Lansing Info website: www.eastlansinginfo.org
5%	City council meetings
4%	City website: www.cityofeastlansing.com
4%	East Lansing Dialogue (Web Version)
4%	Radio news coverage of the city
2%	Mlive
2%	Neighborhood Association/Meetings
2%	Social Media
2%	Town Courier
1%	City Pulse
1%	Direct Mail
2%	Other (<i>less than 1% each</i>)
1%	Undecided/Refused

Finally, I would like to ask you a few questions about yourself for statistical purposes.

__34. Do you own your home, are you buying it, or do you rent or lease your home?

94%	Own/buying home
6%	Rent/lease
---	Undecided/Refused

__35. Do you, or does any member of your household, belong to a labor union or a teachers association? [**PROBE FOR BEST RESPONSE**]

9%	Respondent belongs
5%	Other household member belongs
4%	More than one household member belongs
18%	TOTAL UNION MEMBERS
82%	No members in household
---	Undecided/Refused

__36. Are you, or is any member of your household, currently employed by Michigan State University? [**PROBE FOR BEST RESPONSE**]

7%	Respondent employed by MSU
8%	Other household member employed by MSU
3%	More than one household member employed by MSU
18%	TOTAL MSU EMPLOYEES
81%	No members in household employed by MSU
1%	Undecided/Refused

__37. Could you please tell me in what year you were born? [**IF REFUSED, ASK: 'Would you please tell me into which of the following categories your age would fall? Please stop me when I get to a category that applies to you.'** AND READ 1 TO 4]

[RECORD YEAR HERE _____ AND THEN CODE BELOW]

5%	18 to 34 years --- (1984 to 2000)
14%	35 to 49 ----- (1969 to 1983)
26%	50 to 64 ----- (1954 to 1968)
53%	65 and over ----- (1953 or before)
2%	Undecided/Refused

__38. What is the last grade or level of schooling you completed? [**DO NOT READ – CODE BEST RESPONSE**]

---	1st to 11th Grade
4%	High School Graduate
1%	Non-college post high school (technical training)
12%	Some college
34%	College graduate
49%	Post graduate school
---	Undecided/Refused

__39. Which of the following racial or ethnic groups best describes you -- White, African American or Black, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, Native American, of mixed-race or some other group or race?

87%	White
5%	African American/Black
2%	Asian
2%	Mixed race
1%	Hispanic or Latino (Puerto Rican, Mexican-American etc.)
---	Native American
1%	Other
2%	Undecided/Refused

__40. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself a Republican or a Democrat?

(IF DEM) Do you consider yourself a strong Democrat or a not very strong Democrat?

(IF INDEP) Do you consider yourself closer to the Republican or Democratic Party?

(IF REP) Do you consider yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

42%	Strong Democrat
6%	Not Strong Democrat
11%	Independent-Lean Democrat
59%	TOTAL DEMOCRAT
11%	Independent
24%	TOTAL REPUBLICAN
6%	Independent-Lean Republican
5%	Not Strong Republican
13%	Strong Republican
1%	Other
5%	Undecided/Refused

__41. Would you please tell me into which of the following categories your total yearly household income falls --- including everyone in the household? Please stop me when I get to the category that applies to you? **[READ 1 TO 6]**

5%	Under \$25,000
7%	\$25,000 to \$50,000
15%	\$50,000 to \$75,000
13%	\$75,000 to \$100,000
18%	\$100,000 to \$150,000
24%	Over \$150,000
---	Retired (VOLUNTEERED - ASK: "But is there an income category I read that would apply to your household?" AND CODE BEST RESPONSE)
18%	Undecided/Refused

__42. Sex of respondent (**BY OBSERVATION ONLY**)

54%	Female
46%	Male

THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW