



## Press Release

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# Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce and Toledo Area Small Business Association (TASBA) Announce 2021 Levy Positions

(Toledo, OH) The boards of the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Toledo Area Small Business Association (TASBA) recently voted to support the following levies that will appear on the November 2 ballot.

- Issue 1: Property tax renewal for the operation of Lucas County 9-1-1 and Public Safety Information System for a period of 5 years. These funds are directed to the support and maintenance of equipment and software which is vital to safeguarding our citizens through emergency response and disaster preparedness.
- Issue 2: Property tax increase for the operation and maintenance of Imagination Station for a period of 5 years. This funding will support and expand programs geared toward building Lucas County students' awareness, skills, knowledge, and literacy in STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine) disciplines. Increased awareness and engagement with students in these areas will help meet our region's future workforce demands.
- Issue 3: Property tax decrease for the operation and maintenance of the Toledo Zoological Park for a period of 5 years. The levy helps pay for day-to-day expenses such as animal care, utilities and maintenance and will allow the Zoo to continue to provide free educational programming to Lucas county children. The Zoo's diversification of revenue streams has allowed for a decreased dependence on levy support. As one of our region's top attractions, the Zoo helps position the Toledo region as preferred place to both visit and live.

- Issue 12: Adding Lucas County as a member of the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) and repealing the property tax currently collected by TARTA, which will be replaced with a 0.5% sales tax countywide, for a 10 year period. TARTA is the only one of the ten largest transit authorities in Ohio that relies on property tax for its local funding. Converting its funding model will allow TARTA to enhance its traditional and TARPS services to all of Lucas County in order to meet customer and workforce demands. That means TARTA will be able to expand its service to the areas of Lucas County that are seeing increased development and opportunities, replace aging busses, and improve facilities. A modern, efficient public transit system can help to remove barriers that often prevent employment opportunities for individuals.

“Safety, education, transportation and recreation are all factors that drive the decisions of where people choose to live and work, and we are in a global competition for that talent,” said Brian Dicken, VP of Advocacy and Strategic Initiatives at the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce. “As we continue to work toward making the region a preferred place for diverse talent and economic opportunity, the Lucas County levies on the November 2 ballot address many of the issues that help support our region’s ability to attract and retain employees, which is what our local employers tell us is their greatest challenge.”

These levies were reviewed by the Chamber’s Levy Review Subcommittee, which researches and studies levy requests and makes recommendations to other Chamber committees, culminating with the Chamber and TASBA boards. This process ensures that levy requests are examined by a broad cross-section of the Chamber’s membership and reflect the views of the business community. The Chamber’s comprehensive levy review process includes presentations by the agencies making the request, an examination of the impact of the levy request on both the agency and taxpayers, and a review of agency financials to better understand the need behind the request.

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