

BALTIMORE CITY NOTICE OF PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The City Council of Baltimore City proposes to increase real property taxes.

1. For the tax year beginning July 1, 2020, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 2.99% from \$38,890,146,197 to \$40,051,659,846.
2. If Baltimore City maintains the current tax rate of \$2.248 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 2.99% resulting in \$26,110,827 of new real property tax revenues.
3. In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be reduced to \$2.1828, the constant yield tax rate.
4. The City is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The City proposes to adopt a real property tax rate of \$2.248 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 2.99% higher than the constant yield tax rate and will generate \$26,110,827 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held on Wednesday, May 27, 2020 at 5:00 P.M. The hearing will be held remotely via video and audio teleconference. For information on how to view the video conference or listen via audio, or to provide testimony into the conference, please visit the City Council's web page at www.baltimorecitycouncil.com or use the following link: <https://bit.ly/baltimoretaxpayers>. This page also contains information on registering for public comment.

Participants who join the video conference will be enabled to speak. Speakers will be allowed to address the Council for two (2) minutes. Public comment may also be made by emailing marguerite.currin@baltimorecity.gov. All electronic comments must be submitted by 1:00 PM on Wednesday, May 27, 2020. Comments received will be read by Baltimore City Council staff during the public comment portion of the meeting.

The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged.

Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call the Office of Council Services at 443-984-3485 or visit the Council's web page at www.baltimorecitycouncil.com, for further information.



KIM HAIRSTON/BALTIMORE SUN
Baltimore Mayor Bernard C. "Jack" Young seeks the Democratic nomination for mayor on June 2. Young is shown talking to Gov. Larry Hogan on April 24 in Baltimore.

MAYOR

From page 1

June 2 primary to hold onto his seat. He argues he's been the "steady hand" that Baltimore needs as it deals with crisis after crisis.

The mayor is asking voters to give him a shot at a full, four-year term so he can not only help the city recover from the pandemic, but carry out his vision for Baltimore.

Some are inclined to do so. There are residents loyal to him based on his two decades of work on the City Council, people who remember him going to great lengths to resolve their water billing issues and broken street lights — the kinds of small problems that made their lives harder.

But he's confronting an electorate seemingly fed up with the status quo and Baltimore's intractable problems, particularly the relentless number of shootings and homicides. Several challengers paint themselves as political outsiders with fresh ideas for how to disrupt the cycle of violence that has continued unabated during Young's time in office.

A Baltimore Sun/WYPR-FM/University of Baltimore poll conducted in late February showed him lagging, and his campaign consultants warned early on that Young can't count on incumbency for a boost in the crowded race. They also took note of some of his verbal gaffes, which have been under a harsher spotlight since he's become mayor.

Coronavirus-related shutdowns and social distancing guidelines hamper all candidates, drastically changing how to run for office. But while Young's opponents have found ways, and time, to campaign, Young says he can't. He seemed frustrated this week at a debate, after his ringing phone interrupted the video conference call.

"You know, I'm still running the city," he said, after being asked to mute his phone.

He has daily calls with the county executives of Maryland's largest jurisdictions and holds frequent news briefings, flanked by his health and police commissioners.

It is no longer possible for his campaign to hold \$4,000-a-head fundraisers, and definitely not possible to knock on voters' doors. Some of his signature mayoral initiatives have been put on hold, too.

At least for now, the coronavirus is all consuming and career-defining.

"I need four more years to continue moving the city forward," he says, "and do the good things that we need to do."

Young still sees himself as an underdog.

He grew up in East Baltimore, the fifth of 10 children, working a series of jobs throughout his teenage years before landing at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He started out washing pots and serving food, before moving over to the mailroom and then rising up in management.

He got involved in the Democratic Party scene, joining influential political organizations and waiting for a seat at the table.

That time came in 1996, when he was selected to fill a vacant 2nd District council seat. Young won the seat in his own right during the next election.

He moved up the ranks via yet another political shuffle. After then-Mayor Sheila Dixon resigned in 2010 as part of a plea deal in a corruption investigation, then-Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake ascended to her office and the council members unanimously selected Young to lead them. (Dixon is now one of the five major candidates challenging Young.)

As council president, he pushed for police officers to wear body cameras and led the creation of a dedicated fund to support grassroots youth organizations. The driving forces of his work, he says, are the needs of the city's poorest residents, its children and its elderly.

As mayor, he set his priorities as "crime and grime." He launched a data-driven campaign to clean up the city, making significant progress toward a goal of clearing a steep backlog of 311 requests and filling 5,000 potholes. He stood beside Police Commissioner Michael Harrison to roll out ideas for boosting public safety adapted from cities like Chicago and New Orleans.

Young is paid \$189,000 a year.

He has faced questions over his living arrangements, both as council president and mayor. He previously collected a homestead tax credit of about \$1,000 on a rowhouse in East Baltimore he doesn't live in, and in December said he would return

Bernard C. "Jack" Young

Age: 65

Experience: Mayor of Baltimore (May 2019-present), City Council president (2010-2019), City Councilman (1996-2010).

Education: Northern High School, Community College of Baltimore.

Family: Wife of 39 years, Darlene. Two adult children.

the money.

This was 10 years after he led reporters on a tour of his home, even showing them a drawer full of underwear, to answer questions about his residency.

Young, always blunt, still catches heat for off-the-cuff comments. When asked last winter about the city approaching 300 homicides in 2019, he bristled. "I'm not committing the murders," he said, "and that's what people need to understand." Shortly after, he warned — without evidence — of white vans used to kidnap girls.

For some voters, these kinds of comments represent a dearth of leadership and are a sign he's not up to the job. Others believe he's unfairly targeted by the media, and say they appreciate that he has remained authentic, despite over two decades steeped in politics.

"He speaks directly to the people," said supporter Paulette Barrett, 52.

Young complains that coverage of such comments overshadows his accomplishments, pointing to the role he played in keeping the historic Preakness Stakes at Pimlico Race Course. When the city and the Stronach Group, which owns the track, were tied up in a lawsuit, the new mayor approached the company's president at the 2019 Preakness. He asked about a fresh start, which led to the successful negotiations.

Also, he reminds voters, he's the mayor who finally opened recreation centers on Saturdays.

What may be freshest in voters' minds, however, is how he responded as the coronavirus upended their lives. Other candidates are campaigning on what they say they would do when faced with a crisis; Young gets to act.

Young's early efforts — including teaming up with Baltimore's world-renowned hospitals, instituting a hiring freeze and opening a testing site in the city's hardest-hit ZIP code — earned him praise. Dr. Deborah Birx of the White House Coronavirus Task Force commended him publicly, along with the mayors of Philadelphia and Washington, for working with their communities to "really change the curves in those areas."

Still, some city voters have said that when they think of the most visible leadership during this crisis, they think of Republican Gov. Larry Hogan rather than Young.

Then, in a decisive moment Thursday, Young became one of three local executives to reject Hogan's decision to lift the state's stay-at-home order. The mayor slammed the governor for not doing more to get jurisdictions the testing kits they need.

No matter what other counties decide to do about reopening, Young called the city his responsibility: "I don't want no deaths to be on my hands."

Sheryl Goldstein, his deputy chief of staff for operations, credits the mayor with surrounding himself with a good team. "He listens to sound advice and makes decisions based on data," she said. "That's leadership in a time like this."

But Young's also come in for criticism during the pandemic from advocates for the city's homeless population. They've protested at his briefings, and even outside his house, to demand he take swifter action to protect the people who don't have shelter during a statewide stay-at-home order.

Young's administration is currently sheltering about 400 homeless people in hotels.

The mayor had to rewrite his 2021 budget proposal to account for the coronavirus' economic blow, angering unions because loss of revenue may lead to pay freezes, furloughs or layoffs.

And gone from the budget is Young's plan to open five additional district-level, crime-fighting centers for a total of nine; just two more will have to do. He had to eliminate a graffiti-removal squad helping his mission to clean up the city.

If he gets these next four years in City Hall, perhaps he can turn back to his plans.

Coming Monday: Mary Miller

Client Name: / PO# Real Property Ta

Advertiser: Baltimore City Council

Section/Page/Zone: BSE11/A010/Generic

Description: Balti City Council - Real Property

Ad Number: 6673578-1

Insertion Number: 3 x 20.45

Size: B&W

Color Type:

THE BALTIMORE SUN MEDIA GROUP

Publication Date: 05/16/2020

This Electronic Tearsheet serves as confirmation that the ad appeared in a Baltimore Sun Media Group Publication on the date and page indicated. Exploiting or repurposing any content displayed or contained is prohibited.