

Moving Melrose Forward 2009

Melrose Chamber of Commerce Breakfast
February 24th 2009
Oak Grove Village



Administration Goals

- Support Businesses and Local Commercial Districts
- Protect Residential and Commercial Property Values
- Maintain A High Quality of Life For All Melrosians



How Is This Achieved?

■ **Fiscal Responsibility**

- Keep Melrose Affordable
- Reform Health Insurance / Pensions
- Responsible Debt Management
- Ability to Secure State & Federal Funding

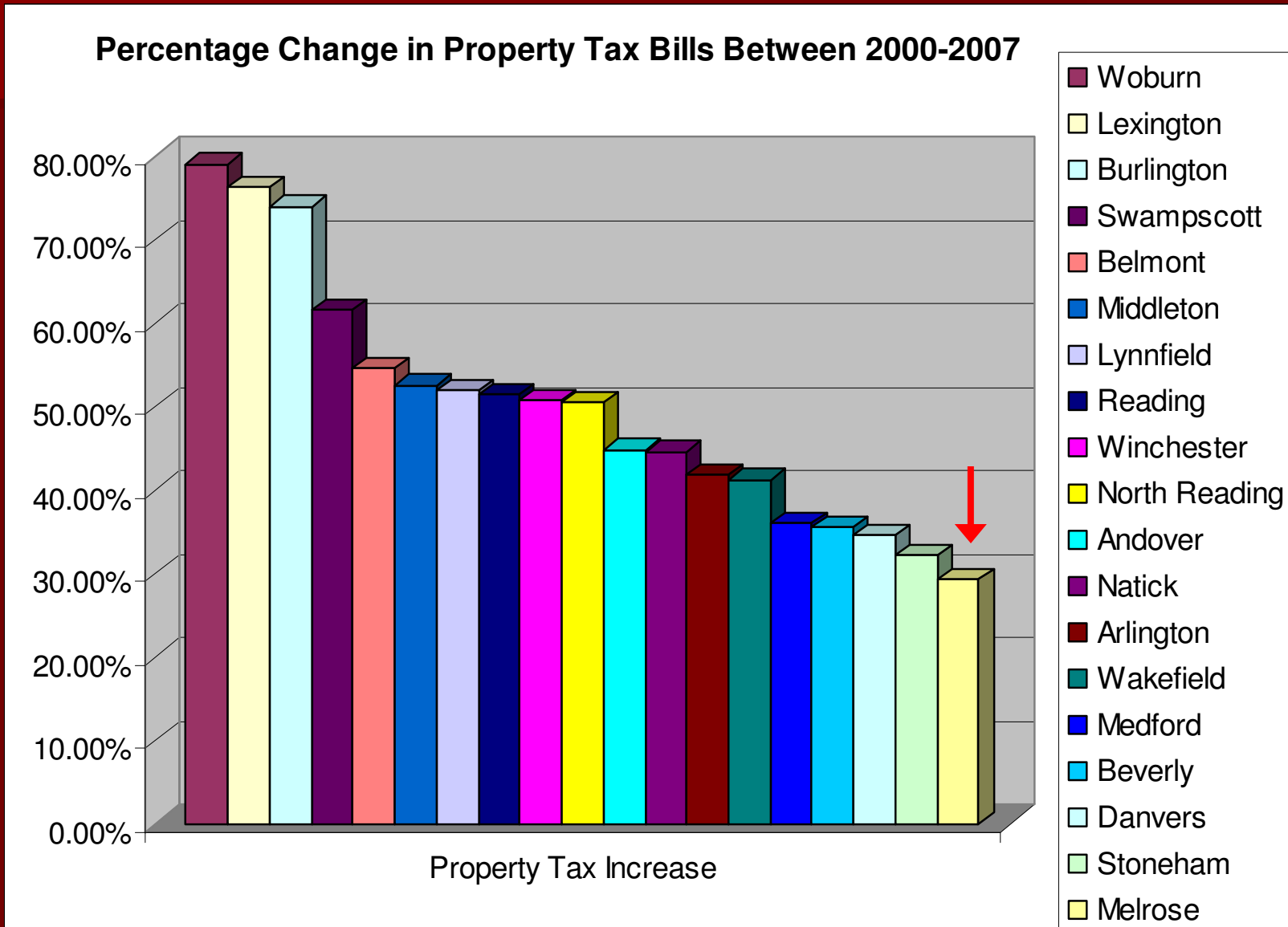
■ **Expand Business Opportunities**

■ **Significant investment in the City's:**

- Schools
- Business
- Infrastructure
- Planning & Development

Moderate Property Tax Increases

** Boston Globe 1/10/08*



Affordability

■ Expand Eligibility for Trash Fee Discount

- Single residents earning <\$22,000 and couples earning < \$25,500 will be exempt from trash fee
- Singles earning <\$35,000 and Couples earning <\$40,000 will be eligible for 50% exemption

■ Expand Eligibility for Senior Water Discount

- 20% Discount for most seniors on water bill (Based on usage, not income)

■ Senior Tax Deferral Program

- Residents 65 or older who make up to \$40,000 can defer their property tax payments at a lowered interest rate of 4.5%, previously 8% interest

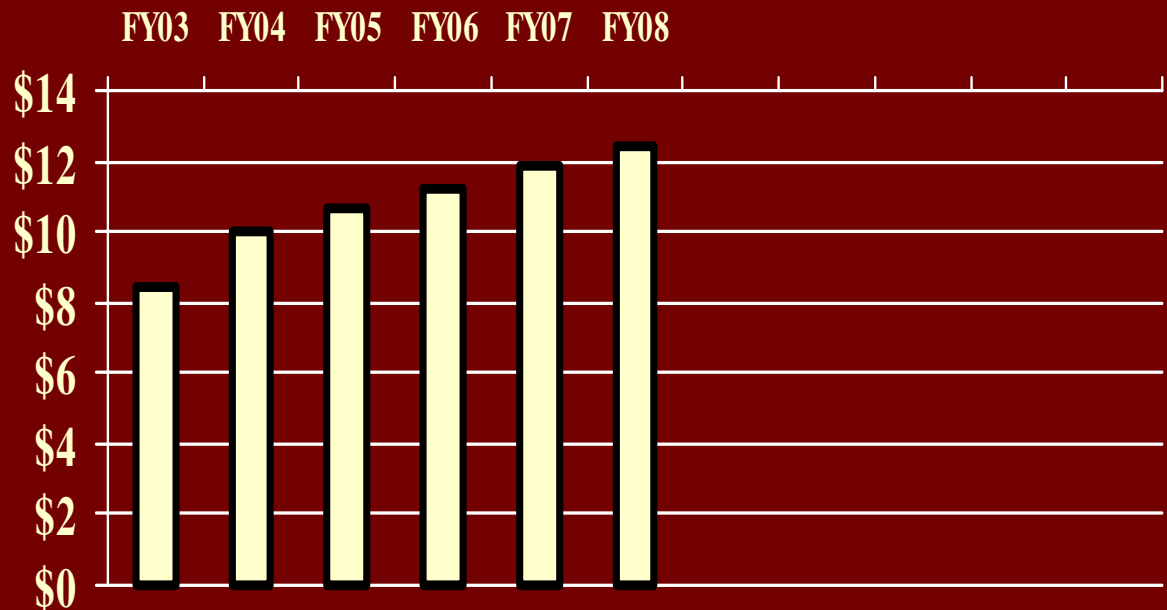
Controlling Costs

Health Insurance

- The City had previously attempted to control costs by agreeing to higher co-pays and by negotiating an increase in employee contributions for coverage
- Despite those efforts, Health Insurance had averaged a combined 9.36% increase from FY'00-FY'08
- For FY'09, Health Insurance costs are expected to increase by as much as 15%, and in the out years, the City was forecasting increases of at least 10% annually

City Health Insurance Costs

Amounts in Millions



Group Insurance Commission (GIC)

- In 2007, Mass Legislature created a new *local option* for municipalities to purchase health insurance through the GIC for *all* its insured
- Annual Premiums are 15% - 20% less expensive than BCBS and annual rate increases are lower because of benefit design and buying power of the GIC
- A decision to join the GIC was made collectively between labor, management and retirees through coalition bargaining, and required approval by a 70% "weighted" vote of labor and retirees
- GIC Board of Commissioners anticipate **less than 4%** increase for FY10. Blue Cross / Blue Shield projection is more than 10%
- Melrose was the 1st community in Massachusetts to voluntarily join GIC

Expanding Business Opportunities

- Beer / Wine Ballot Initiatives
- Commercial Recycling Pilot Program
- Cedar Park & Wyoming Neighborhood Improvement Grants
- Washington Street Re-Zoning
- Phase 2 Oak Grove Village



\$700K Neighborhood Improvement Grant

Cedar Park

- Installation of Victorian Lighting & Flower Baskets
- Concrete Sidewalks
- Benches & Barrels
- Increase Parking
- Improve Adopt-a-Sites
- Create Theme: "Historic Melrose"
(Symphony, Victorian Era, Ell Pond)



West Wyoming Square

- Concrete Sidewalks
- Tree Screening along Berwick Street
- New Crosswalks
- Nature Themed Barrels and Benches
- Create Neighborhood Theme: "Gateway to the Fells"



City Tree Planting Program

- City has committed to planting 120 street trees in 2009 and an additional 120 trees in 2010 throughout local neighborhoods and business districts



Smart & Responsible Growth

Washington Street Rezoning



Reinvestment & Commitment to the Historic District





Creating Partnerships And Business Opportunities

- City utilizes Memorial Hall, Mt. Hood, and Recreation Programs to create new partnerships with families & create business opportunities
- In 2008, Memorial Hall welcomed over 11,000 patrons through its doors, with over 60 upcoming events already booked
- The Melrose Recreation Department had over 4,900 users of various seasonal programming
- Mt. Hood saw an increase of over 200 rounds of golf in 2008, totaling 43,354 rounds



Community Involvement

- Create Ell Pond "Memory Walk"
- Improve Melrose Common Tot Lot
- Replace Melrose High School Football Field Lights
- Open New Lebanon Park



Helping Those in Need

- Mayors Emergency Fund
 - *\$40K in Donations in 2008-2009*
- Tuesday Community Dinner
- Friday Night Teen Center
- New Senior Van



Infrastructure Improvements

- Ell Pond Drain Project
- Ward 2 Drain Improvements
- Upham Street Force Main Sewer Upgrade
- Converse Lane Flood Area
- MWRA Sewer Improvements



Mother's Day Storm 2006



Utilization of State & Federal Funds

- Melrose has aggressively pursued alternative funding sources to complete projects
- **Ell Pond Second Outlet Flood Control Project:** \$1,745,700 FEMA Grant
- **Converse Lane Flood Project:** \$1,079,925 FEMA Grant
- **Lynnfield Colonial Development** - \$1.25 Million from developer to fund MWRA Sewer improvements in Melrose.
- **MWRA (LPAP) Local Pipeline Assistance Program** \$658,000 each year for 10-years, payback over 10 years 0% interest loans



Roadway Upgrades

- Over 20 Melrose roads have been reconstructed and re-paved since the beginning of 2007
- Conclusion of Ward 2 Drainage Project will include re-surfacing of additional 8 roadways
- West Wyoming Ave and Bellevue Ave scheduled for improvements in 2009
- Otis, Charles, Leeds, Nelson, Clifford, and Ruggles will also see final paving in 2009

Building Upon Educational Successes



Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School



Melrose High School Renovations

- Improvements to be phased in over 5 year plan
- Smart Boards in every classroom. No technology drop off from Middle to High School
- New energy efficient roof. Solar Panels and possible roof garden
- Painting of the interior walls
- Bathroom and locker room improvements

Future Challenges

- Maintaining Financial Stability
 - Creating new revenue
- Downtown Parking
- New Police Station
- Winthrop School