

Poll shows voters impressed by Lucas

Continued from Page 1

gone. "Business climate in Michigan is not as good as Gov. Blanchard claims."

A Southfield resident whose support of Blanchard was strengthened, nevertheless credited Lucas with the better speech "when he commented on his accomplishments since humble beginnings as an orphan in Harlem."

A Rochester Hills Blanchard supporter liked the governor more than ever, but thought Lucas made the

most telling point: "Crisis emergency of crime evoked a campaign of fear" in Detroit.

Two Detroit residents started as Blanchard supporters but came out for Lucas at the end. "Crime is the worst in nation — must be stopped," said one. "Crime is unchecked in the state," said the other.

LUCAS BACKERS were impressed by Lucas' attacks on crime and on the close relationship between Blanchard and Detroit Mayor

Coleman Young.

"Detroit in fear of crime. Blanchard in fear of Coleman Young," wrote a Birmingham resident.

"Crime is a major problem in Detroit," said a Plymouth resident.

"If crime in Detroit continues, he (Lucas) will declare emergency and combine State Police with Detroit police and work on worst rape, robbery, arson record in U.S.A. It doesn't take courage to spend somebody else's money," a Birmingham resident remembered Lucas as say-

ing.

"Blanchard is afraid of Coleman Young," a Farmington Hills Lucas backer remembered.

"Total crime that engulfs the city of Detroit and Wayne County," said a West Bloomfield Township resident.

against taking of human life. He is against murder — abortion."

THE UNDECIDED voters remember what Lucas said on a variety of points.

A Dearborn Heights resident said Lucas "is for the right to life. He should have expanded on it by stating citizens should not have to pay taxes for abortion."

That person, who was converted to the Lucas cause, added, "Blanchard played too much on people's emo-

tions. The 'togetherness' is a lot of bunk." (Blanchard used the word "togetherness" about a dozen times.)

A Mt. Clemens resident who converted from undecided to the Lucas column said, "On hand guns, Lucas made a point that National Rifle Association opposed handguns."

School board won't sue city over TIFA issue

Continued from Page 1

the property values, and I don't see it."

WHEN IT appeared that most board members opposed suing Farmington, Rolnick said: "I don't understand how you can be philosophically opposed to these issues yesterday and not today."

Joining Rolnick in opposition to the TIFA, Ditzky suggested using a lawsuit as a stalling method until the first of the new year when it's

expected that changes in state law will allow school districts to have veto power over municipalities' TIFA plans.

Farmington DDA's proposed \$1.2-million tax increment financing plan is only part of a total plan for rejuvenating downtown. A \$400,000 loan from the city's general budget and \$150,000 from a 2-mill levy on taxable property in the DDA district would be used for improvements as well.

The DDA district is bounded

roughly by Liberty on the west, Thomas on the north, Mayfield on the east and Slocum on the south. It contains 135 businesses, including 60 that are retail or recreational, 32 that are service-oriented, 31 professional offices and four financial institutions.

Under TIFA, property values in the DDA district would be frozen. Tax increment revenue is derived from the increase in assessed valuation on property in the development district over the initial valuation at the time the TIFA plan is implemented. Farmington's proposed TIFA would begin Jan. 1, 1987, running through Dec. 31, 1993. It would capture 100 percent of the levied tax increases in the DDA district.

WHETHER THE TIFA will be adopted is still unknown. A public hearing is scheduled for 8 p.m. Monday, Nov. 3, in council chambers, 23600 Liberty.

Though school officials can offer their opinion, they have no vote in the final decision to establish a TIFA district.

"They (Farmington officials) arbitrarily can do this without a vote of this board," Superintendent Graham Lewis said. "We have no vote. We can't say no to it. We would have to go to court."

Most school board members disagreed with Rolnick's assessment that Farmington Hills' TIFA plan is similar to Farmington's plan. "There are a number of individual properties within the DDA that are

boarded up, condemned or they have had quite a lot of vacancies," said trustee James Abernethy, also a Farmington planning commissioner.

A state attorney general's report — requested by the school board when Farmington Hills planned a TIFA — says individual parcels, rather than an entire district, could be declining in value and qualify for tax increment financing. And it's not difficult to designate such parcels in the DDA district, Abernethy said.

"There is a real concern that that small-type of decrease is there. If it's not turned around and grabbed by the horns, it will grow," he said.

THE FARMINGTON Public Schools suit maintained that the Farmington Hills TIFA was illegal, based on a January opinion given by the attorney general.

The suit maintained that there was no decline in property values along 12 Mile, that the operating millage could not legally be captured for purposes other than school-related items, and that allowing a TIFA would breach the district's contract with bondholders to levy all taxable property in the district.

All school board members expressed concern about tax dollars specifically designated for education going to help rejuvenate the city. Specifically, school officials are concerned about the continuation of state Public Act 197, which allows municipalities to form TIFAs.

"Our philosophical argument is

not with any community who uses the law," trustee Susan Rennels said. "Concern is with state legislators 'who are holding it in place.'"

Rennels told board members that while philosophical concerns about TIFA remain, the downtown Farmington issue is different. The major differences are in the magnitude of the downtown problem and the amount of tax dollars that would be captured over the seven-year period. "I think they fit," Rennels said about TIFA requirements and the downtown's problems.

THE FARMINGTON Hills' proposed 12-year TIFA would have been used to finance \$9.5 million of a \$16.4 million road improvement project.

The Farmington DDA plans to generate \$1.2 million in tax increment financing over a seven-year

period. Unlike the Hills plan to capture less than 50 percent of the assessed value of property in the 12 Mile corridor, Farmington plans to capture 100 percent of the value. Under the plan, Farmington schools would be unable to use the estimated \$749,000 in revenue from the captured value.

Abernethy reminded board members that unlike the Hills' plan, Farmington's include taxing property owners within the DDA district. As a Farmington planning commissioner, Abernethy said he has witnessed that much of the new development occurring downtown wouldn't be taking place if the city had not committed itself to improvements.

"There was clearly the commitment on the part of the city they were going to do something," Abernethy said.

TIFA hearing set

A Monday, Nov. 3 public hearing scheduled for a \$1.2 million tax increment financing plan will include a proposed 2-mill tax levy for Farmington's downtown development district.

The Farmington City Council voted unanimously Oct. 20 to include the tax proposal recommended by the city's Downtown Development Authority early this month. Councilwoman Shirley Richardson was absent for the vote.

Notices were sent Oct. 19 announcing the public hearing and including information about the 2-mill

tax, according to Robert Schultz, administrative assistant for the city.

One property owner in the DDA district — a residential landlord — voiced opposition to the 2-mill tax. Schultz said, but there has been "no negative feedback" from commercial business and property owners. Several commercial property owners serve on the DDA board of directors, which approved both the TIFA and 2-mill proposal unanimously.

The district contains 135 businesses and is bounded roughly by Liberty on the west, Thomas on the north, Mayfield on the east and Slocum on the south.

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