



Half-cent sales tax renewal

Frequently asked questions

VOTE AUG. 2, 2022

Is this going to raise the sales tax?

No. Currently there are two half-cent sales taxes in place. This vote is whether or not to renew the second one. This tax was implemented in 2013 and sunsets in 2023. The vote is whether or not it will continue after that.

What percentage of current sales tax goes towards streets?

100% of the first half-cent sales tax funds the street department and street related projects, and of the current second half-cent sales tax (2013 to 2023), approximately 50 percent paid for the reconstruction of First Street and the Northview Trail phase 1 project.

Why did the City take out my street and leave it as dirt?

You are probably referring to one of the streets that are constructed internally by the Street Department. It is not actually dirt. It is asphalt millings.

Internal street construction process:

Step 1— Existing street is removed and cut to acceptable grade, new curb and guttering is added where needed, and six inches of crushed concrete is added and compacted (this is made of mostly recycled materials). The road is closed 8 to 10 weeks during this process.

Step 2— This is longest part of the process. Materials need to settle to ensure a solid foundation. Traffic on the street aids in this process for several months. Depending on the weather dust and rutting may occur during this process.

Step 3— The millings are shaved to a smooth surface and a hot asphalt overlay is applied by McPherson County. This final step is usually completed in Fall following construction season (example: Summer 2022 to Fall 2023)

How much money does the City save by doing internal street reconstructions?

The total savings range from \$100,000 to \$150,000 per block.

Google says McPherson sales tax is 11%. Is that true?

The current city sales tax rate is 9%. There are 2 Community Improvement Districts (CID) within the city that raise sale tax an additional 2% within the CID. One CID sales tax constructed Plaza E. Place from Champlin St. to the Cul-De-Sac. The other CID funded the extension of Champlin St. from N. Front St. to the Best Western Plus Hotel. Patrons of the Fieldhouse, Fairfield Inn, McPherson Inn, and Holiday Inn Express do pay a total of 11% sales tax.

All of the first half-cent sales tax is already dedicated to street and street-related projects. Why do we need to dedicate more to streets and drainage?

Although great progress has been made with the first half-cent sales tax and its the renewal, streets were under-funded for many years, and it is going to take additional funds to get all streets in acceptable conditions.

Why would we vote for this sales tax the when the City has not finished the streets promised in the last renewal?

The City already has improved six of the eight projects selected in the first half-cent sales tax renewal after two years into the 10 year renewal cycle.

Why doesn't property tax cover the budget needed for road improvements?

A small portion of property tax does; however, prior to the implementation of the first half-cent sales tax, there were not enough resources to cover large street projects. Only preventative maintenance was performed.

Are any mill levy funds applied to City street improvements?

Yes, currently \$550,000 is transferred from the General Fund and applied to the Street Department budget. The Commission has been raising this amount by \$50,000 per year.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Why do potholes not always get repaired?

While the City works hard to fill all potholes, this step is just a temporary fix. The filled hole will deteriorate over time. If you observe a pothole in need of repair, contact the Public Works Department.

How does out sales tax rate compare with like size and neighboring communities?

City	Population	Tax Rate
Salina	46,481	9.250%
Hutchinson	39,712	8.600%
Newton	18,602	8.500%
Great Bend	14,733	8.250%
McPherson	14,082	9.000%
El Dorado	12,870	7.500%
Ottawa	12,625	9.600%

Two years into the first half-cent sales tax renewal, six out of eight streets selected by the public have been completed. The remaining two streets — Hickory (Lincoln to Hayes) and Skancke (Chestnut to RR Crossing) — will be completed whether the Second Half-Cent Sales tax is renewed or not. Funds from the second half-cent sales tax will not be used to improve these streets previously planned for repairs.

Two projects were selected from each quadrant of the City when the First Half-Cent Sales Tax was renewed in 2017. Will projects be selected from each quadrant if the Second Half-Cent Sales Tax is renewed?

Project candidates from each quadrant have been selected and the City Commission will make the final decision on which project will be funded.

I thought the City received a grant to build the Northview 10-foot sidewalk (Phase I) and didn't pay for it with the city sales tax?

The city received a Transportation Alternative Grant for the construction of the Northview Trail 10-foot sidewalk (Phase I) project. The total cost of the project was over \$900,000. The City's cost share was just more than \$300,000 which was paid for out of the current Second Half-Cent Sales Tax. Had the city not applied for and received this grant, that grant money would have gone to another community. TA Grants can not be used for projects for which they are not designated.

What will be the efforts on expanding the police department if the half-cent sales tax is passed?

We will either: 1.) work with the County to expand the current LEC or 2.) construct a new building within the City. The money from the half-cent sales tax will cover design fees and help with some of the costs of new equipment and/or building costs.

If the sales tax is not spent just on the police department building what else could it be spent on?

The facility is a priority for the Police Department as much as it is for the McPherson County Sheriff's Office.

The citizens of the City of McPherson should be extremely proud to have a fully staffed Police Department. We need to invest in our officers and in the future of our Police Department.

As technology advances there are always tools and equipment we would like to have as a resource.

In 2017 when the first half-cent sales tax was renewed, what percentage of the voters voted yes?

In 2017 when the First Half-Cent Sales tax was renewed, 70 percent of the voters voted yes and 30 percent voted no.

If the second half-cent sales tax is renewed, are you proposing we build a new swimming pool?

The City of McPherson maintains the facility and has experienced difficulty with its operation in recent years. The pool was originally constructed in 2003, and has been operated as constructed over the past 20 years or so. The pool staff has indicated that the water park has experienced difficulties throughout the years, much of which includes water leaking from the structures and piping.

Water's Edge Aquatic Design, performed a review of the facility in the fall of 2015. In addition, a leak detection company also completed tests on piping systems over several days — identifying locations of potential leaks from the swimming pool systems. The inspections involved site visit walk-throughs, observations and discussions with the pool staff.

Field notes, measurements, existing plans, and photographs were utilized to prepare the assessment and preliminary recommendations.

What follows is a report that focuses on sugges-

If the second half-cent sales tax is renewed, will the funds be used to complete the two streets Skancke and Hickory that was promised in the 2017 first half-cent sales tax renewal?

tions and recommendations for improving the facility. As such, the general tone of the report will appear to focus only on negative issues. However, the purpose of this report was not to fully describe the positive, well-maintained, aspects of the pool, but to assist the City with identifying improvements needs and for future planning purposes.

What is the cost of streetlights?

Currently \$300,000 is budgeted for streetlighting.

What can we do to improve our street repairs?

The City takes pride in our high-quality street repairs, however from time-to-time imperfections do occur.

How are we investing in city maintenance now?

The City performs many maintenance tasks continually. The street department fills potholes, seals cracks, replaces broken curb and gutter, changes out faded and broken signs, sweep streets, clean inlets, repaints and replaces faded pavement markings, and hires outside contractors to Mill and overlay and chip and fog seal

Why did the City build a sidewalk to nowhere? (Meadowlark trail to Main)

The City recently completed the third walking, jogging, biking trail from Meadowlark Trail to Main on Northview. The master sidewalk plan shows a 10-foot sidewalk from Meadowlark Trail west to Centennial south to Kansas Avenue, where it will hook up to the first two walking, jogging, biking trail projects. The master sidewalk plan has to be completed in phases due to the high cost of these projects. Many people enjoy these walking, jogging, biking trails and the City has received many compliments regarding their construction.

Why spend money on construction of sidewalks when we need to fix the roads?

The City received three separate TA grants to construct walking, jogging, biking trails, and those funds have to be used specifically for the sidewalk construction. The commission has many areas of concern and does an excellent job of juggling these needs and funds are simply not available immediately address every issue.

How often to do evaluate the pavement and how has it changed over several years?

Our goal is to evaluate each section of pavement every four years. Since the inception of the first half-cent sales tax, overall our pavement conditions have improved, however streets were underfunded for many years and we still have many sections that need attention.

Are there any plans to dredge the two lakes while they are drained?

No, since the ponds were constructed, they have silted in, however dredging the silt out does not increase the water capacity of the pond. Dredging the lake will enrich aquatic life.

Can you explain why the parks flood?

The parks were designed flood control devices. Parks flood to alleviate flooding of properties down stream.

Are we building a new police station or building on to the existing station?

The Police Department portion will fund preliminary design whether it be for a new station or to add on to the existing station. These funds will go toward addressing the issues.

Will there be any advantage to put the police department on the east side of town?

There are probably advantages and disadvantage at any and every location.

Will the second half-cent sales tax have any impact on property taxes?

No. The sales tax is only on cost of goods sold by retailers.

Will the second half-cent sales tax be used towards the school bond?

No, there was a previous proposal for the school to use a half-cent sales tax, but that proposal did not pass.

What method of street reconstruction are we using with the half cent sales tax?

The first half-cent sales tax as well as 70 percent of the second half-cent sales tax if renewed will be used for everything from pavement maintenance to total reconstructions. Total reconstructions may be by performed street department or by outside contractor.