



City of Lawrence

Special Issue: Police Facility Sales Tax

The Flame | October 2014



The City of Lawrence has placed a sales tax proposal on the November 4 General Election ballot for voters to consider funding a new facility for the Lawrence Police Department.

The Ballot Question:

0.2% citywide retailers' sales tax for the financing, construction and equipping of a new facility for the Lawrence Police Department

A dedicated revenue source for the construction of a new police facility will allow the Lawrence Police Department to function in a single location and maximize the department's operational ability to serve the public safety needs of our community.

How Will the Sales Tax Funds be Spent?

The proposed special sales tax can only be used to finance the construction and equipment needs for a new facility, which includes parking and infrastructure improvements related to the project, and will allow the city to pay the cost of construction plus the financing costs for the project.

The construction cost of the facility will be \$25.7 million. Of that amount, \$24.2 million, plus financing costs, will be paid with proceeds of the proposed sales tax. The remaining \$1.5 million will be paid with existing city resources. The collection of the sales tax would commence on April 1, 2015, or as soon thereafter as permitted by law, and will terminate upon payment of all principal, interest, and other fees and expenses associated with the financing, constructing, and equipping of the project or after 9 years from the date the tax is first collected, whichever shall occur first. The proposal for a police department facility is designed to provide the space and facility needs for the Lawrence Police Department for the next 20 years.

Why One Location?

The department has 151 sworn officers and 33 support staff who are separated between two main office locations. The Judicial-Law Enforcement Center in downtown houses patrol, evidence and records. The Investigations and Training Center on Bob Billings Parkway is for detectives, training and administration. The department is currently utilizing a total of six different locations throughout the city for various requirements, and another south of the city for specialty training. Multiple facilities mean that personnel, equipment, evidence and found property are further dispersed throughout the community. Multiple facilities has created challenges affecting information sharing critical to solving crimes, increased travel time between locations for job-related tasks, and results in redundant operational costs.



Sales Tax Proposal At-a- Glance

- **0.2% sales tax**
- **Collected for a maximum of 9 years and \$24.2 million, plus financing costs**
- **Dedicated to financing, constructing, and equipping a new police facility**

Sales Tax Proposal for a New Police Facility

Current Police Locations and Operational Centers

Proposed New Police Facility

The proposed sales tax would allow for all department services to be housed in one location to provide:

- Improved community accessibility and service delivery of citizen needs such as filing and obtaining copies of reports, turn-in and retrieval of found property and evidence, and employment-required finger printing services;
- Real-time information sharing among officers, department staff and citizens;
- Creation of a "purpose-built facility" specific to the needs of law enforcement and the local community's expectations of the department;
- Provide specifically designed facilities for department and professional training and specialized firearm training;
- Reduction of redundant costs associated with the operation of multiple facilities;
- Reduction of travel time between locations and allow for centralized housing of all police department divisions;
- Storage of police department equipment in a facility built to provide immediate access and a secure environment; and
- Expanded evidence storage in a climate-controlled area which provides immediate access for police department personnel.



Sales Tax Facts:

\$24.2 million sales tax

- The planned facility will cost approximately \$25.7 million, plus financing costs. The difference of \$1.5 million will be paid from other city resources. Additionally, the land acquisition costs for the police facility site will be paid from other city resources and the city will sell unneeded portions of the site.
- The 0.2% sales tax is capped at \$24.2 million, plus financing costs, and would only be effective for a period of 9 years or less.
- This sales tax is solely dedicated to pay for the financing, construction and equipping of a new facility for the Lawrence Police Department. This revenue cannot be used for anything else.



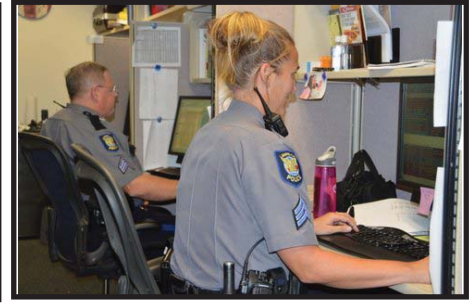
For every \$10 spent in Lawrence, 2-cents would be dedicated to the Police Facility Sales Tax.



The Site & Facility

- After an extensive public process, the City Commission has selected a centrally located site east of the Hallmark plant facility, south of the Kansas Turnpike entrance.
- The location provides access to all points in the community and provides expansion space for future needs.
- The new facility is designed to provide 63,000 sq. ft. of functional space for the department (total sq. ft. including garage parking is 86,031 sq. ft.). The department currently operates out of 37,489 sq. ft. in multiple locations.





Crowded Evidence Storage & Processing | Multiple Storage Locations | Work Space for Officers & Staff

How Would a New Facility Improve Efficiency?

A new facility specifically designed for public safety will allow for numerous improvements in safety, security, confidentiality and productivity for the community and the department. None of the current locations housing the department and their core operations were designed for today's law enforcement needs, equipment and technology.

The department utilizes their facilities 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. In 2013, the department completed 121,599 calls for service.

New construction, versus remodeling of multiple existing facilities, is preferred in order to capitalize on functional and efficiency advantages. Additionally, the cost of remodeling existing structures would likely meet or exceed new construction costs and would not resolve many of the deficiencies which are inherent to housing staff and equipment in multiple locations.

What is the Consequence if the Sales Tax Proposal Does Not Pass?

The city does not have the resources to fund a \$25.7-million capital project for a police facility at this time. Without additional resources, the department will continue operations in their current facilities and the city will have to evaluate whether service reductions are needed until a time when another revenue source can be found for a police facility.

According to the recent facility study conducted by Treanor Architects & Wilson-Estes Architects, the following findings were made:

- *The current facilities are inadequate to efficiently conduct the routine law enforcement operations.*
- *The inadequacies of the existing facilities compromise confidentiality, safety, security and personnel productivity. (See full report online at www.lawrenceks.org/police-facility.)*

Why a Sales Tax?

Sales taxes are collected whenever a purchase or service is provided in the Lawrence community. The city estimates that 30% of every sales tax dollar collected in Lawrence is generated from non-residents. This includes visitors, students, and companies outside of the community. If the Police Facility Sales Tax is approved, the sales tax rate in Lawrence will be 8.9%.



Who to Contact

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Voting Information



Advance voting for Douglas County residents is available from October 15 to November 3. You must register to vote by October 14.

The General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 4 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Find your polling location online at www.douglas-county.org. Voting information can be found under the County Clerk's section of the website.