



Why should I vote yes on Sept. 12?

On Sept. 12, Oklahoma City residents will have the opportunity to create a safer, better Oklahoma City by voting yes on the following bond and sales tax issues. By voting yes, you will:

- Invest \$847 million in rebuilding and improving Oklahoma City's streets – the top concern of residents. Repairs include replacing bridges, resurfacing streets, building sidewalks, improving drainage, adding bike lanes and more.
- Hire more police officers and firefighters to keep Oklahoma City residents safe.
- Improving life in Oklahoma City by investing in parks, police and fire stations, libraries, transit systems, community and economic development and more.

What will be on the ballot on Sept. 12?

The ballot will include:

- A 10-year, \$967 million general obligation bond package that will fund street repair, public safety, parks and other basic infrastructure needs of the city.
- A permanent quarter-cent sales tax that will increase the number of police officers and firefighters in Oklahoma City.
- A temporary penny sales tax extension that will invest Oklahoma City's streets repair and improvements

The proposals will be listed on the ballot separately – one for each of the proposed bond projects, one for the permanent quarter-cent sales tax and one for the temporary sales tax extension. In all, the ballot will list 15 line items.

When both sales tax proposals are approved by voters, Oklahoma City's total sales tax will be at the rate of 8.625 percent, lower than the state average of 8.86 percent¹. With the new permanent quarter-cent sales tax, spending \$100 in Oklahoma City will invest an additional twenty-five cents in public safety.

What is a general obligation bond?

General Obligation (GO) bonds are Oklahoma City's primary way of funding the important infrastructure needs that residents rely on daily. GO bonds are funded by property taxes. Currently, the City of Oklahoma City is finishing the voter-approved 2007 GO Bond package, which invested \$835.5 million into Oklahoma City's streets, sidewalks, parks, public safety and other important needs.

What exactly will the general obligation bonds fund?

The 2017 GO Bond package includes 13 items:

- Building and repairing streets, including sidewalks and street enhancement improvements
- Replacing and repairing bridges
- Improving traffic control systems
- Funding economic and community development job creation programs
- Funding park and recreational facilities
- Constructing a new library and the repair of existing libraries
- Repairing and renovating the Civic Center Complex
- Investing in our public transit system
- Improving the City's Central Maintenance Facilities Complex
- Improving the City's drainage control system
- Repairing and improving the Chesapeake Energy Arena
- Funding police department infrastructure by constructing a new Police-Fire Training Center, police aviation facility and renovating existing police departments across the city
- Funding fire department infrastructure by constructing a new Police-Fire Training Center, constructing new fire stations and renovating existing fire departments

How were the bond projects chosen?

The City of Oklahoma City used extensive feedback from Oklahoma City residents to create the list of GO bond projects, including a resident survey and in-person meetings within each ward. The City also used street and bridge ratings and the existing planning studies to prioritize the projects.

How much money will be generated from the bond?

The bond will generate \$967 million over 10 years.

Will the bond cause my property taxes to go up?

¹ As of Jan. 1, 2017, according to the Tax Foundation.

(<https://files.taxfoundation.org/20170131121743/TaxFoundation-FF539.pdf>)

No. The millage will remain the same, and property taxes will not go up. These bonds will only be issued as existing bonds are fulfilled, meaning the property tax rates will not increase to fund these projects.

How is the general obligation bond different from MAPS programs?

MAPS projects focused on improving the quality of life of residents and were funded through a temporary penny sales tax. GO bond projects focus more on infrastructure needs that are necessary for the safety and growth of Oklahoma City.

What will the sales tax be used for?

The Sept. 12 election includes two separate sales tax proposals: a temporary penny sales tax for improving Oklahoma City's streets and a permanent quarter-cent sales tax that will allow the City to hire more police officers and firefighters. The temporary penny sales tax will invest \$240 million of revenue over 27 months. The permanent quarter-cent sales tax will generate an estimated \$26 million annually for police and fire needs.

Why streets and safety? Why isn't this being used for large-scale projects?

Improving Oklahoma City's streets and continuing to invest in safety are consistently among the top concerns of residents, and both are investments that will improve every corner of the community. As Oklahoma City continues to grow and welcome new residents, it is important that the City continue invest in critical infrastructure improvements.

For this reason, of the majority of the bond funds (around \$607 million) are dedicated to repairing Oklahoma City's streets and bridges, building sidewalks, improving drainage and making other street enhancements. When combined with the temporary sales tax extension, an estimated \$847 million will be invested in street improvements. The permanent quarter-cent sales tax will allow more police officers and firefighters to keep the community safe.

What is the difference between the temporary sales tax extension and the permanent sales tax addition?

The temporary penny sales tax will replace an expiring penny sales tax, and it will last 27 months before expiring. The quarter-cent sales tax is permanent, and it is intended to fund additional police officer and firefighter positions. It would be unwise to use a temporary sales tax to fund the hiring of officers and firefighters because this will be an ongoing expense.

Why is the quarter-cent sales tax permanent?

As Oklahoma City continues to grow, it must increase its investment in public safety. The addition of police officers and firefighters will help create a better, safer Oklahoma City for all residents. This public safety funding also will allow the City to reverse recent budget cuts to other City services.