



## 2025 COMMUNITY REPORT



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## Our town. Our future.

The first thing I recognized when I moved to Ottawa was the sincerity of everyone I met. Whether you were born here or have adopted Ottawa as your home, there is genuine pride in “our town.” There is also a genuine interest in making sure Ottawa is a great place to live, work, and raise our families. Recently, we asked you what you value most about our community, what needs to be improved, and what you’d like to see the city prioritize over the next few years.

We asked because our community has an important decision to make. The one-cent sales tax that Ottawa residents approved 10 years ago is up for renewal. On November 4, you will have the opportunity to decide whether our community continues the one-cent initiative, or takes a different path for funding key priorities. In this report, we’ve outlined how the one-cent sales tax has been utilized, and the plan you helped us build for continued improvement and growth if the one cent is renewed.

Thank you for making Ottawa your home, and thank you for your continued engagement so we can map out Ottawa’s future together.

*Brian*

# Here's what our community has done with the one-cent sales tax:

The community approved a sales tax initiative in 2005 to help reduce the burden on property taxes. In 2015, the community voted to continue the sales tax in order to continue offsetting property taxes, move forward on a second industrial park, fund street improvements, and help fund community services like police and fire. Here is a report on how the sales tax has been utilized over the past 10 years:



## Reduced City Property Taxes by \$30.06 million

The one-cent sales tax has been used to hold down property taxes for homeowners and business owners by \$30.063 million over the last 10 years. This is roughly a 30% reduction (13.87 mill reduction) for city property owners each year, and has kept Ottawa residents from bearing all of the costs for services. The one-cent sales tax allows the city to spread the cost of services across more people – like visitors and neighbors who live outside the city limits and do not pay city property taxes, but who utilize city streets, parks, police and first responder services.



## Established a Second Industrial Park for More New Jobs

With Ottawa's first industrial park at capacity (which created 2,401 new local jobs), employers told us we needed more shovel-ready ground in order to compete for new development and jobs with Gardner, Edgerton and other communities. To that end, the one-cent sales tax helped establish Proximity Park, our community's second industrial park, as well as build out the needed infrastructure (streets, curbs, gutters and utilities) to make the park shovel-ready. This initiative has opened up 1,600 acres for future employers, which will allow us to double the job base. The first development is already underway with the sale of 300 acres in Proximity Park to Lightfield Energy. Lightfield is slated to build a new data center facility at the park, which will create 200 to 300 new Ottawa jobs at full build-out. Lightfield is also estimated to pay \$7 to \$8 million per year in property taxes at full build-out, which will reduce the property tax burden on all other taxpayers. The remaining 1,300 acres are now available for our economic development leaders to promote and secure additional new employers.



## Funded Police, Fire, Streets & Parks

General fund services, such as police, fire and street services, funded by the one cent include:

- Funded 6.58 firefighter positions to keep our fire crews fully staffed
- Upgraded communication equipment in fire trucks so dispatch can provide up-to-date, real-time information while trucks are en route to an emergency
- Fire equipment upgrades, including hoses, tools and self-contained breathing apparatuses
- Added police department Crisis Responder and Community Police Officer program to respond to mental health crisis needs and homelessness issues
- Added two police K9 programs to increase capabilities for drug identification, missing person searches, and search & apprehension of violent felons
- Added Crime Mapping program to provide daily updates to the community on reported crimes
- 27,000 potholes patched and 23,250 feet of sidewalks repaired
- Increased crews for plowing & salting during winter weather to speed up snow removal & ice control
- ADA ramps, asphalt patching, crack sealing, and sealing of gravel streets
- Improvements and maintenance of our parks, cemeteries and playground equipment



PAVEMENT. PARKS. POWER. PUBLIC SAFETY.

# How will the one-cent be used if renewed?

On November 4, Ottawa voters will decide the method used to finance public services. If approved, continuation of the one-cent sales tax will continue to reduce the reliance on property taxes and share costs across more taxpayers, including visitors who utilize city streets and services but do not pay city property taxes. It will also help fund the following priorities that were identified by the voters in our recent community survey:

## Pavement

Increase the resources available for street and infrastructure improvements throughout the city, including maintaining, repairing and rebuilding streets; making repairs to sidewalks, curbs and gutters; repairing potholes; upgrading stormwater facilities; and upgrading street lighting.

## Parks & Pool

Maintaining and improving our community parks, walking trails, recreation amenities, and aquatics, including addressing the community's aging pool.

## Power

Improving, rebuilding, and maintaining our electric and water utility infrastructure so homeowners and business owners continue to have reliable access to power, in addition to ensuring our infrastructure remains up-to-date for future power and water capacity needs.

## Public Safety

Funding essential services in our community, such as police and fire programs, without shifting these costs onto property taxes. This includes services currently funded by the one cent – police K9 program, community police officer and crisis responder program, crime mapping communication system, and firefighter positions.



## WILL THIS INCREASE TAXES?

No. This is **not** a new tax. If passed by Ottawa voters, there would **not** be any change for taxpayers. We would continue to pay the same sales tax rate we pay now. And, the sales tax would continue to hold down our property taxes by 13.87 mills.



**CITY OF OTTAWA**  
101 S Hickory Street  
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SCAN TO LEARN MORE  
or visit [ottawaks.gov/salestax](http://ottawaks.gov/salestax)

## How to vote

### VOTE BY MAIL

Visit [www.franklincoks.org/467/](http://www.franklincoks.org/467/)  
Advanced-Voter-Application to  
download the mail ballot request  
form. Oct. 28 is the last day  
to request a mail ballot.

### VOTE EARLY

Vote at the County Courthouse  
Oct. 20 through Oct. 31 (weekdays)  
from 8AM to 4:30PM, or on  
Nov. 3 from 8AM to noon.

### VOTE ELECTION DAY

Vote in person on election day –  
Tuesday, Nov. 4 – at your designated  
polling place. Polls will be open  
from 7AM to 7PM.

## UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Visit [www.ottawakansas.org/events](http://www.ottawakansas.org/events) for more events

Monday, September 29  
**Classic Movie Monday -  
Free Movie, Popcorn & Drinks**  
2 PM at Plaza Cinema

Monday, September 29  
**Ride the Flint Hill Trails Together  
(bikes available to borrow)**  
9 AM start at Ottawa Library

Saturday, October 4  
**A Tribute to the King:  
George Strait Tribute Concert**  
7 PM at Ottawa Municipal Auditorium

Saturday, October 4  
**Ottawa Main Street Association  
Harvest Moon Street Dance  
Food Trucks & Live Music**  
4 PM at 2nd & Main

Tuesday, October 7  
**Line Dance Lessons**  
6:30 PM at Ottawa Municipal Auditorium

Wednesday, October 15  
**General Election Candidate Forum**  
6:30 PM at City Commission Chambers

Thursday, October 16  
**Free Music Bingo**  
7 PM at Ottawa Municipal Auditorium

Saturday, October 18  
**Taps & Tunes + 80s Rock Tribute Band**  
6 PM at Ottawa Municipal Auditorium

Monday, October 27  
**Classic Movie Monday -  
Free Movie, Popcorn & Drinks**  
2 PM at Plaza Cinema

Tuesday, November 4  
**Line Dance Lessons**  
6:30 PM at Ottawa Municipal Auditorium

**Ottawa Farmers Market**  
4PM Wednesdays at Legacy Square  
8AM Saturdays at Tractor Supply