



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®**  
OF METROPOLITAN TULSA

**League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Tulsa Voters' Guide**  
**April 5, 2016 Special Election**  
**Vision Tulsa, Vision Tulsa County and Tulsa County Sheriff**

**Vision Tulsa and Vision Tulsa County Ballot Propositions**

Vision Tulsa and Vision Tulsa County are a set of four ballot propositions that will appear on the April 5, 2016 ballot. Three are City of Tulsa propositions. One is a Tulsa County proposition. Collectively, the propositions call for an extension of the \$0.06 Vision 2025 sales tax to be divided between the City of Tulsa and Tulsa County for purposes defined in each question. Vision 2025 was passed in 2003 as an economic development tool designed to increase sales tax revenue, which along with certain fees, are the only method that cities in Oklahoma can use to pay for government services. Since the current propositions extend the Vision 2025 sales tax, taxes paid by City of Tulsa residents will not increase if passed.

If passed, the current propositions would impact the City of Tulsa's sales tax structure as follows:

<b>Sales Tax</b>	<b>CURRENT</b>	<b>1/1/17-6/30/21</b>	<b>7/1/21-6/30/25</b>	<b>7/1/25-12/31/31</b>	
State	4.500%	4.500%	4.500%	4.500%	
County	0.317%	0.317%	0.317%	0.317%	
County – Vision	0.600%	0.050%	0.050%	0.050%	**
City – Operating	2.000%	2.000%	2.000%	2.000%	
City - Improve Our Tulsa	1.100%	1.100%	0.500%	1.000%	*
City - Vision Tulsa Prop 1		0.160%	0.260%	0.260%	**
City - Vision Tulsa Prop 2		0.085%	0.085%	0.085%	**
City - Vision Tulsa Prop 3		0.305%	0.805%	0.305%	**
	<b>8.517%</b>	<b>8.517%</b>	<b>8.517%</b>	<b>8.517%</b>	

\* A portion of Improve Our Tulsa funds would be moved to the Vision Tulsa package. The remainder will be up for renewal in a vote in 2021.

\*\* These items will be on the April 2016 ballot.

More information on how the City of Tulsa raises and allocates funds can be found on the City of Tulsa's website.

## Purpose of the Voters' Guide

The League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Tulsa is a local nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The Tulsa League does not officially support or oppose any of the Vision propositions, but we do believe that all voters should have access to thorough, nonpartisan information about all ballot questions. As part of this mission, the Tulsa League respectfully offers the following overviews of each proposition and relevant "Proponents Say" and "Opponents Say" points of view for each voter to consider in deciding how to vote on April 5, 2016.

To obtain the complete ordinance language for all of the City of Tulsa propositions check this link:

<https://www.cityoftulsa.org/our-city/vision.aspx>

### City of Tulsa Proposition No. 1 Sales Tax – Public Safety

#### ***Ballot Language***

Do you approve City of Tulsa Ordinance No. 23420 which enacts a permanent sales tax of sixteen one-hundredths of one percent (.16%) commencing on January 1, 2017 increasing to twenty-six one-hundredths of one percent (.26%) on July 1, 2021 for the purpose of funding public safety in the City of Tulsa, and devoting the revenues from said sales tax to police, fire and 911, in accordance with Ordinance No. 23432?

FOR the Proposition

*If the voter desires to vote for the above Proposition, the voter shall fill in the box to the left of the word "FOR".*

AGAINST the Proposition

*If the voter desires to vote against the above Proposition, the voter shall fill in the box to the left of the word "AGAINST".*

### ***Overview of Proposition***

City of Tulsa Proposition 1, Sales Tax – Public Safety calls for a permanent sales tax to be restricted for the purpose of funding public safety including police, fire and 911 services.

The tax would be assessed as follows:

- 1/1/17 – 6/30/21 .16%
- 7/1/2021 - forward .26%

The change in rate on 7/1/21 captures funds from the expiring Improve Our Tulsa (a.k.a. Third Penny fund) and will not change the total tax rate.

### ***Proponents Say***

- The proposed tax will provide a permanent source of revenue dedicated to public safety without raising taxes.
- A dedicated revenue stream devoted to public safety will be attractive to existing businesses and to businesses that may consider relocating to Tulsa.
- The success of any economic development project is dependent on the ability of the City of Tulsa to provide strong core government services, including all levels of public safety.
- Proposition 1 will address key concerns found in a recent study that showed Tulsa’s emergency response staffing to be sorely lacking.
- The package will provide for 160 additional police officers, 65 additional firefighters and 16 additional 9-1-1 operators.

### ***Opponents Say***

- A permanent tax is inconsistent with the original Vision 2025 mission to stimulate economic development in the City of Tulsa.
- The Vision 2025 program was designed to run for a defined number of years at which time the needs of the community would be reevaluated and the success of the economic development projects evaluated. Vision Tulsa Proposition 1 will not allow the periodic reevaluation of the amount or use of the tax.
- A permanent tax to add police officers and firefighters is not necessary because crime and fire rates have been declining for the past decade.
- We are already taxed too heavily.
- A sales tax is the most regressive tax, which disproportionately impacts low-income people.

**City of Tulsa – Proposition 2**  
**Sales Tax – Street Maintenance and Public Transportation**

***Ballot Language***

Do you approve City of Tulsa Ordinance No. 23421, which enacts a permanent sales tax of eighty-five thousandths of one percent (.085%) commencing on January 1, 2017, for the purpose of supporting the construction, operation and maintenance of public streets, traffic and public transportation systems in the City of Tulsa and paying debt service on indebtedness issued for such purposes, and devoting the revenues from said sales tax to maintaining and supporting public streets and public transportation systems, that is, funding capital projects, operations, salaries and maintenance and purchasing rolling stock, fuel, materials, and supplies, in accordance with Ordinance No. 23424?

FOR the Proposition

*If the voter desires to vote for the above Proposition, the voter shall fill in the box to the left of the word "FOR".*

AGAINST the Proposition

*If the voter desires to vote against the above Proposition, the voter shall fill in the box to the left of the word "AGAINST".*

***Overview of the Proposition***

City of Tulsa Proposition 2, Sales Tax – Street Maintenance and Public Transportation calls for a permanent sales tax to be restricted to:

- Supporting construction, operation and maintenance of public streets, traffic and public transportation systems in the City of Tulsa.
- Paying debt service on indebtedness issued for such purposes.
- Devoting the revenues to maintaining and supporting public streets and public transportation systems such as funding capital projects, operations, salaries and maintenance and purchasing rolling stock, fuel, materials and supplies.

The tax rate for the Street Maintenance and Public Transportation will be set at .085% starting on January 1, 2017.

### ***Proponents Say***

- Because our need for well-maintained streets is ongoing, a portion of the tax will be made permanent for continued investment.
- Proposition 2 will create a street maintenance crew—something we do not currently have. This crew will ensure our extensive past investments are protected and maintained.
- Well-maintained streets save Tulsans money and contribute to overall citizen safety.
- Having good streets contributes to the good impression of the community and makes it more attractive to people considering moving to Tulsa or opening a business in the area.
- Investing in streets and public transit will drastically cut travel time to the city’s economic hubs, allowing workers to get to and from their jobs, allowing more time to spend with their families.
- Improved public transportation options can reduce traffic congestion and wear-and-tear on the streets.
- Proposition 2 will ensure more reliable public transportation service such as seven-day bus schedules, new transit routes and more frequent service.
- More and more reliable public transit will benefit the city’s low-income citizens who rely on public transportation to get to work, medical appointments, shopping, and other activities across the city
- Increased use of public transportation can reduce the negative impact on air quality.

### ***Opponents Say***

- A permanent tax is inconsistent with the original Vision 2025 mission to stimulate economic development in the City of Tulsa.
- The Vision 2025 program was designed to run for a defined number of years at which time the needs of the community would be reevaluated and the success of the economic development projects evaluated. Vision Tulsa Proposition 2 will not allow the periodic evaluation of the tax assessment amount or use of the tax.
- We are already taxed too heavily.
- A sales tax is the most regressive tax, which disproportionately impacts low-income people.

## **City of Tulsa Proposition 3 Sales Tax – Economic Development**

### ***Ballot Language***

Do you approve City of Tulsa Ordinance No. 23422 which enacts a temporary sales tax of three hundred five thousandths of one percent (.305%) commencing January 1, 2017, increasing to eight hundred five thousandths of one percent (.805%) on July 1, 2021, decreasing to three hundred five thousandths of one percent (.305%) on July 1, 2025 and expiring on December 31, 2031, for purposes

of acquiring, constructing, equipping, furnishing, operating, and maintaining economic development projects in the City of Tulsa, including Arkansas River development and paying debt service on indebtedness issued for such purposes, in accordance with Ordinance No. 23435?

FOR the Proposition

*If the voter desires to vote for the above Proposition, the voter shall fill in the box to the left of the word "FOR".*

AGAINST the Proposition

*If the voter desires to vote against the above Proposition, the voter shall fill in the box to the left of the word "AGAINST".*

### **Overview of the Proposition**

City of Tulsa Proposition 3 – Sales Tax – Economic Development calls for a sales tax assessment for the purpose of:

- Acquiring, constructing, equipping, furnishing, operating and maintaining economic development projects in the City of Tulsa;
- And paying debt service or indebtedness issued for such purposes
- Includes a list of specific proposed projects including the Arkansas River Development.

The tax would be assessed as follows:

- 1/1/2017 – 6/30/2021 .305%
- 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2025 .805%
- 7/1/2025 – 12/31/2031 .305%

The change in rate on 7/1/21 temporarily captures funds from the expiring Improve Our Tulsa (a.k.a. Third Penny fund) and will result in no change in the total tax rate.

The final list of the proposed projects can be found on the City of Tulsa’s website or by following this link: [https://www.cityoftulsa.org/media/451416/Vision\\_Proposal\\_Summary1-28-16.pdf](https://www.cityoftulsa.org/media/451416/Vision_Proposal_Summary1-28-16.pdf)

### **Proponents Say**

- Proposition 3, the economic development portion of the Vision Tulsa plan, is a temporary tax that will be used for projects that create jobs, while keeping our tax rate the same.
- The projects will help to diversify our economy so we aren’t so reliant on any specific industry.
- The final economic development package was developed through widespread town hall meetings and community input.

- The resulting package has unanimous support from the Mayor and all City Councilors and will benefit all parts of the city.
- Strategic development of the Arkansas River is long overdue. This package will result in two river lakes and preserve areas for parkland, trails and recreational areas like Turkey Mountain.
- It will also further enhance the Gathering Place and allow the full vision of this public-private partnership to come to fruition.
- The river development is not for strip malls or other unsightly projects.
- Passing Proposition 3 provides leverage for future private and public investment in Tulsa.

***Opponents Say***

- Several of the projects on the final list, including the Arkansas River development projects, have questionable, if any, value for economic development and could cause irreparable environmental harm.
- Projections of economic development impact are potentially misleading.
- Methods of progress and accountability reporting used in the past have not always proved to be effective.
- Some of the proposed projects are essentially corporate welfare under the guise of economic development.
- Many of the proposed projects are not the responsibility of the City of Tulsa, so why should we be using city sales tax revenue to pay for them.
- We are already taxed too heavily.
- A sales tax is the most regressive tax, which disproportionately impacts low-income people.

**Tulsa County Proposition No. 1**

***Ballot Language***

Shall the County of Tulsa, Oklahoma, by its Board of County Commissioners, levy and collect a one-twentieth of one percent (.05%) sales tax for the purpose of funding capital improvements for Tulsa County, and/or to be applied or pledged toward the payment of principal and interest on any indebtedness, including refunding indebtedness, incurred by or on behalf of Tulsa County for such purpose, commencing January 1, 2017 and continuing thereafter until December 31, 2031, at which time said sales tax shall expire?

- FOR the Proposition - YES
- AGAINST the Proposition - NO

### ***Overview of the Proposition***

The amount of tax being sought by Tulsa County is what was essentially left on the table for the County by the City of Tulsa based on mutual agreement. Tulsa County intends to use the revenue from the tax for:

- Funding capital improvements for Tulsa County and/or
- Apply or pledge the funds toward the payment of principal and interest on any indebtedness, including refunding indebtedness, incurred on or behalf of Tulsa County for such purposes.

Assessment of the .05% tax will begin on 1/1/2017 and end on 12/31/2031.

More information on the proposed projects can be found on Tulsa County's website, or by following this link: [http://www.tulsacounty.org/Tulsacounty/vision\\_default.aspx](http://www.tulsacounty.org/Tulsacounty/vision_default.aspx)

### ***Proponents Say***

- Tulsa County has genuine, on-going needs that need to be funded to support the general well-being of the community.
- Funds will be used to make enhancements to Expo Square, replace county roads and bridges, improve county-owned parks and modernize the county's capital assets.
- Expo Square is one of the area's most important assets to support our sales tax base. It already generates more than \$300 million in economic each year for the Tulsa area. The facilities must be retrofitted and maintained to allow Expo Square to continue competing with other regional event centers.
- This funding will help Tulsa County leverage additional funding, especially from the federal government.

### ***Opponents Say***

- There is no specific information available about the scope or structure of oversight of these projects. Parameters are not in place to evaluate project proposals over the 15-year span of the tax.
- The citizens of Tulsa were not provided the opportunity to provide input on the Tulsa County proposed projects nor to vet any suggested projects.
- Tulsa County has a history of starting and not completing capital improvement projects, such as the Sheriff's Training Center and the Juvenile Justice Center.
- Some of the projects listed will not be fully funded by the proposed tax.
- We are already taxed too heavily.
- A sales tax is the most regressive tax, which disproportionately impacts low-income people.



**Information about the Tulsa County Sheriff Candidates can be found at:**

<http://www.Vote411.org>

**Special Election — Tuesday, April 5, 2016**

The April 5, 2016 Special Election is open to all registered voters in:

- Tulsa County (Tulsa County Sheriff and Tulsa County Proposition 1) and
- the City of Tulsa (City of Tulsa Propositions 1, 2, and 3).

The Voter Guide for the candidates for Tulsa County Sheriff can be found at [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org)

**Absentee Ballots:**

The deadline to request absentee ballot is: 5 p.m. March 30, 2016

Absentee ballot applications can be downloaded from the Tulsa County Election Board website (<http://www.tulsacounty.org/TulsaCounty/electionboard.aspx>) or can be obtained from The League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Tulsa office at 3336 E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 4 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**Early Voting:**

Early voting: Thursday, March 31, 8 AM - 6 PM and Friday, April 1, 8 AM - 6 PM

**Sample Ballot:**

Sample ballots are posted on the Tulsa County Election Board website.

<http://www.tulsacounty.org/TulsaCounty/electionboard.aspx>

**Voter ID:**

All Oklahoma voters are required to produce proof of identity before casting a ballot whether voting at a regular polling place or voting early at the County Election Board.

Acceptable identification includes documents issued by the federal, state (of Oklahoma) or a tribal government that includes the voter's name, photograph, and an expiration date that is after the date of the election in which the voter is attempting to vote. Voters also may use a voter identification card or a temporary voter identification document issued by the County Election Board.

The following forms ID will be accepted:

- A valid driver's license with an expiration date later than the day of the election.

- An identification card issued by the state of Oklahoma, which is not a driver's license, with an expiration date that is later than the day of the election; persons 65 or older are not required to have an expiration date on their state identification card.
- A tribal government ID, with a photo and expiration date later than the date of the election.
- A military/uniformed services ID, with a photo and expiration date later than the date of the election.
- A United States passport with an expiration date later than the date of the election.
- A voter registration card or a temporary voter registration document – the only forms of ID without a photo that will be accepted. A voter registration card does not have an expiration date. However, the temporary voter ID does have an expiration date and that date must be after the election.

### **Don't have ID? Ask for a provisional ballot!**

It will take time to do the paperwork, but the Tulsa County Election Board says your vote will be counted if the name on the affidavit that accompanies the provisional ballot matches to the name on the voter rolls. Be sure the name you put on the affidavit matches the name you used to register to vote.

### **VOTE!**

Polls are open at 7 a.m. on Election Day and remain open until 7 p.m. If you are in line by 7 p.m., you can vote.

You can vote in person at your polling place for the precinct in which you live. There are three ways to find your precinct.

- Look at your voter identification card for the name and address of your polling place;
- Go to [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org); or
- Use the Tulsa County Election Board's Precinct Locator at:  
<http://www.tulsacounty.org/TulsaCounty/TulsacoHtempl.sapx?framesrc-pctloc>

### **League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Tulsa**

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