



AS RIVERFRONT PLANS COME TOGETHER, WICHITANS NOT WILLING TO PAY HIGHER TAXES

A new poll shows Wichitans want city council to focus on core services, skeptical of subsidies to businesses, and are not ready for sales tax hikes

Wichita, KS - A years-long series of community discussions, polls, and debate is reaching the next big turning point as the Greater Wichita Partnership offers their recommendations on the Riverfront Legacy Masterplan.

While there has been much discussion on the development projects involving Century II, many Kansans feel the question of how to pay for it has not been sufficiently addressed. **A new poll from SurveyUSA on behalf of Kansas Policy Institute shows that 60% of voters do not want a sales tax increase to pay for work around Century II.**

The full poll and cross tabs are [available here](#).

“This is 2014 all over again with Wichitans being deeply skeptical of tax hikes and preferences to businesses and developers,” said KPI president James Franko referring to the 2014 sales tax debate and [polling conducted by KPI at the time](#).

“52% of voters do not think the city has spent money efficiently of late. This new council and mayor have an opportunity to focus on simply doing the blocking and tackling of municipal governance well.”

The poll surveyed 409 registered voters in Wichita in a combination of telephone and online questionnaires. SurveyUSA has been recognized across the polling and political spectrum for their work in recent election cycles.

In addition to the survey results on recent Wichita spending and questions about public financing of Century II/Riverfront redevelopment, respondents also answered questions about business subsidies and the priorities of city leaders in 2020;

- **51% disagreed with the idea of using taxpayer money to subsidize specific businesses, 29% agreed**
- **65% were opposed to a “deal-closing fund” to attract new businesses to the city, 17% agreed**
- **When asked about priorities in 2020 spending efficiency, lower taxes, and long-term water infrastructure consistently topped the list**

At the “Wichita’s Economic Future Summit” hosted by Kansas Policy Institute Thursday, at the Wichita Marriot, representatives from the Greater Wichita Partnership gave a presentation on the overview of the Riverfront Legacy Master Plan. Members of the public were eager to ask a wide range of questions, including questions about the cost of the proposal, and if it would come with a tax increase.

Two academic economists also presented on Wichita’s economy, giving insight into how the development projects would most likely impact Wichita’s economy. 140 people attended this event.

Franko concluded, “We saw it our event last Thursday, Century II brings out passionate views from Wichitans. Until specific questions are answered about how it is to be paid for Wichitans are rightly dubious of another scheme to ‘save’ downtown that directly impacts a cultural icon like Century II.”

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