

### Atchison sales tax proposal defeated Thursday

(KAIR)--City of Atchison residents Thursday soundly rejected a retailer's 1% sales tax to fund transportation infrastructure and property tax relief.

The unofficial results, following Thursday night's tabulation of ballots, show that 743 Atchison voters said no to the proposal, while 313 voted in favor of the of the tax during the City of Atchison's Save Our Streets Special Ballot question.

The Atchison City Commission in May, citing the results of a 2021 Community Survey, gave approval to the Citywide Sales Tax Referendum.

If approved, the sales tax would have earmarked 75% of the revenue generated for Atchison infrastructure, including street and sidewalk repair, while 25% would go toward property tax relief, meaning the City's portion of the mill levy would be lowered by an amount directly correlated to the money generated by the tax.

The proposal was met with controversy, beginning with public questions posed to the Commission regarding the short turn-around time from approval to the vote.

The timeline issue took another turn when Atchison residents learned their cutoff to register for the August 2nd Primary was shortened from the state's July 12 deadline to late last month due to the timing of the City's special sales tax ballot question.

Once that was learned, a group of nine residents last week appeared before the City Commission, with the Commissioner's asked to cancel the special election.

The City took no action on the request, but Atchison County and the State of Kansas, including ACLU of Kansas intervention, made an exception to the state statute regarding voter registration cutoffs, restoring the July 12 registration deadline for Atchison voters, while allowing the special election to proceed.

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