



# CITY OF WESTWOOD, KANSAS NEWSLETTER

January through March 2018 4700 Rainbow Blvd, Westwood www.westwoodks.org

## A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Friends and Neighbors,

More than a generation ago, Westwood citizens and leaders made sensible capital investments in streets, sidewalks, curbs and guttering, and storm water systems. While streets and storm drains may not be inspiring, reliable infrastructure supports valuable housing and vibrant neighborhoods. It also attracts people to area schools and businesses. Infrastructure is the key to the high quality of life we expect and enjoy in Westwood.

Now Westwood faces a common challenge: streets and storm systems built in the 1960s and 1970s have reached - or gone past - their lifespans. While we have serviced and maintained them year over year, we now have a backlog of major projects. Engineers have identified in excess of \$4.6 million of needed projects. We can't fix them all in one year, but we've started a plan to get the job done.

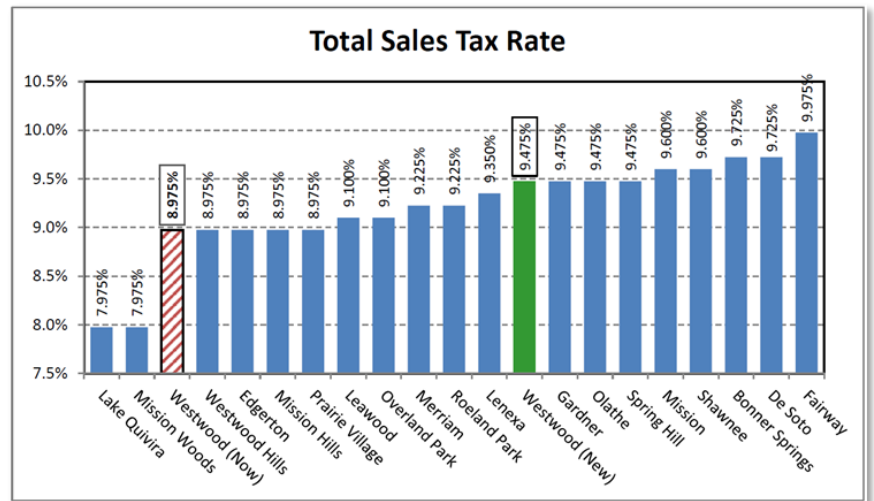
The responsible time to invest in Westwood is now while other private investment is occurring, helping support the cycle of reinvestment, not later when costs are higher and our streets and storm water systems have declined even further. Inadequate infrastructure not only affects Westwood residents' quality of life; it is also bad for business. So, on February 8th, your City Council resolved to ask Westwood voters to make an important decision: to vote on a 1/2 cent increase on our sales tax. This election will be conducted via mail-in ballot in accordance with State Statutes.

A 1/2 cent increase on our sales tax adds a complementary means to fund critical infrastructure projects. Increasing the retail sales tax means those who purchase goods/services in Westwood or pay for utilities and use our infrastructure will help pay for these needed repairs, including non-residents and non-property owners. By law, revenue from the sales tax increase can only be spent on items outlined in the ballot. If approved, the sales tax ends after 10 years.

There will be many communications coming to you regarding this mail-in ballot election. In the meantime be sure to visit <http://www.westwoodks.org/salestaxballot> for more information.

### Important Election Dates

- **April 7:** Public Meeting—10am - 12pm @ City Hall
- **April 10:** Last day to register to vote
- **April 11:** Ballots mailed to registered voters
- **May 1:** Signed ballots must be received by JOCO Election Office by Noon



The Westwood Council members, Planning Commission members, staff and myself are ready to answer your questions and provide insight. As spring envelops Westwood, it is a time for optimism and making Westwood the very best City in Northeast Johnson County.

As always, I am honored to serve you.



**SPRING 2018 SALES TAX BALLOT**  
**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**What is street reconstruction?**

Most of the street repair projects that have been completed in Westwood in the recent past have been mill-and-overlay street projects, where only the top surface area of the street is shaved off, and a new asphalt driving surface is applied.

Many of the needed remaining street projects for Westwood will require a complete rebuilding of the subgrade, asphalt base and surface course of asphalt - not a simple repair or overlay. These types of projects are more expensive to complete.

**What does storm water improvements include?**

Storm water improvements include curb and gutter, curb inlets (where water enters the system), and the necessary underground piping system.

Many of the needed street projects were initially constructed without any underground storm water systems.

New storm water infrastructure will be added on several Westwood street projects, in addition to other needed drainage areas where the existing piping systems are old and deteriorating.

**Why do we need to invest more in street and storm water improvements?**

It is projected that at current funding levels it would take decades to accomplish the needed improvements which ultimately would lead to a significantly higher costs.

The City of Westwood has typically budgeted about that \$200,000 a year for all CIP projects.

Meanwhile:

- Construction costs will continue to rise;
- Any other projects on the “Upcoming Needs” CIP list are delayed 10 years or more; and
- Streets will continue to age; the streets in most need have not been significantly upgraded in nearly 50-years.

**Can the city use existing revenues to pay for these needed improvements?**

While other revenue sources will help pay for these needed repairs, the city can’t responsibly divert additional money away from other budgeted items to cover

street and storm water needs without significantly impacting those other services that citizens have said are top priorities.

**What options does the city have for revenue to pay for project costs?**

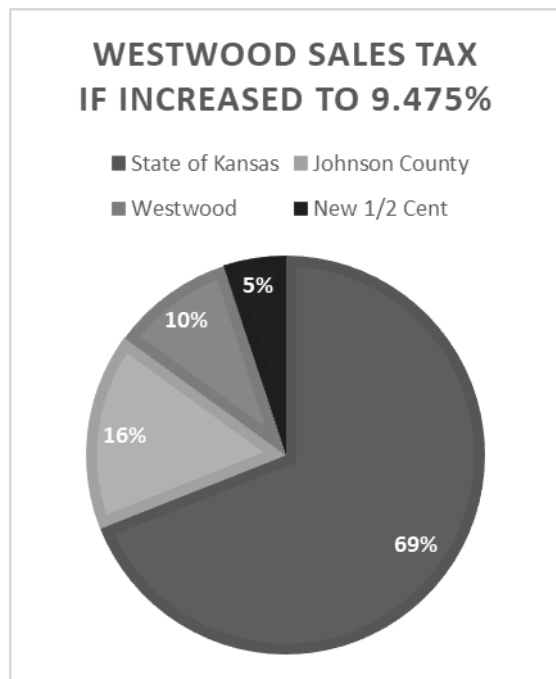
The CIP "Pay-Go" Option: Continue to budget \$200,000 per year, complete projects only as cash is on hand. Downsides: Further delays needed projects, more expensive approach in the long run because construction costs/inflation will increase at a higher rate than the municipal bond interest rate.

Increase the Mill Rate / Property Taxes: The current Westwood city property tax mill levy is 21.307 mills. For Westwood, 1-mill generates about \$25,000 per year.

Increase City Fees: The current storm water utility fee in Westwood is \$1.00 per month, for every 500 square feet of impervious surface on a property. This fee structure currently generates approximately \$96,000 per year, that can only be used for storm water improvements.

Special Retail Sales Tax: Westwood's current local rate of 1.0% is the lowest municipal sales tax rates in Johnson County. In 2017 it generated about \$430,000.

*This chart reflects the breakdown if the 1/2 cent sales tax were approved.*



**Why a special sales tax to fund these needed infrastructure projects?**

The city has proposed the 1/2-cent sales tax to fund the infrastructure projects for several reasons. The City Council has the authority to increase the property tax mil rate, but that rate increase would only apply to Westwood property owners.

Other users of Westwood streets, including the many thousands that live outside Westwood, would not contribute to an increase in the property tax mil levy. In addition, the City Council feels that an issue this important should be the decision of the Westwood voters.

A dedicated special infrastructure sales tax ensures that all money collected must be used ONLY for the infrastructure projects outlined in the ballot.

**Will the new sales tax rate be permanent?**

No. The proposed 1/2-cent sales will last ten years.

**What will the sales tax rate be if this is approved?**

The current sales tax rate in Westwood is 8.975%.



**WESTWOOD FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP**  
**APPLICATION AVAILABLE APRIL 2ND**

During its March 2018 meeting the Westwood Foundation Board of Directors voted to award a Westwood Foundation Merit Scholarship. The awardee will receive \$5,000 per academic year for a total of four (4) years. Applicants must meet the following qualifications:

- Westwood resident
- High school senior
- Full time enrollment status of 12 or more credit hours for the 2018-2019 academic year
- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher

Scholarship applications are available online at <http://www.westwoodks.org/westwoodfoundation> and at City Hall. All applications must be received by 5 pm on Friday, June 1, 2018. If you have any questions, please contact Abby Schneweis at 913.362.1550 or at [abby.schneweis@westwoodks.org](mailto:abby.schneweis@westwoodks.org)

Directors of the Westwood Foundation and their immediate families are not eligible for this scholarship program.

**EASTER EGG SCRAMBLE ON MARCH 31st**

Gather your baskets and hop over to Dennis Park (50th & Rainbow) on Saturday, March 31st to join us for a Community Easter Egg Scramble. The scramble will begin at 3pm sharp! Details about this event will be posted at [www.westwoodks.org](http://www.westwoodks.org). If you have any questions you can contact Abby Schneweis at 913.362.1550

or at [abby.schneweis@westwoodks.org](mailto:abby.schneweis@westwoodks.org)

**SPRING COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE ON MAY 19TH**

The Spring Community Garage Sale will be held on Saturday, May 19th. Those who are interested in participating can register at <http://bit.ly/2mpkHF7> or by contacting Abby Schneweis at 913.362.1550. The City will be advertising this event online, and participants are welcome to any additional advertising as they see fit. A listing of participants will be available on the City's website and at City Hall.



**WCA BULK ITEM COLLECTION**

**SCHEDULE CHANGE STARTING MARCH 2018**

WCA has made a change in their bulk item collection scheduled for Westwood. Bulk items will be collected only on the first and third Wednesdays of the month

starting March 2018. Bulk items set out on any other Wednesday will not be collected.



If you have a question or issues with the collection of your trash, recycling, yard waste or bulk items, or to request special services from WCA use their on-line Customer Service Request Form located at <http://www.mywca Waste.com/> or by calling the WCA Customer Service line at 816.380.5595.

**FEATURED SHIRLEY STILES GALLERY ARTISTS**

Stiles Gallery Coordinator Kathy Butler, Shirley Stiles' daughter, continues to line up talented artists who share their works with our community. Thank you Kathy for your dedication to the Gallery and helping make Westwood beautiful! For more information about these and future artists visit [www.westwoodks.org/stilesgallery](http://www.westwoodks.org/stilesgallery)

**Senior Arts Council—March 2018**

The Senior Arts Council of Kansas City is an organization of artists over 50 years of age. There are some 60 members. The group holds meeting the last Monday of each month at the Roeland Park community Center. The artists in the group include oil, acrylic and watercolor artists, along with photographers and various other art mediums. The group puts on a number of exhibits each year and have had exhibits at the Tim Murphy Art Gallery at the Merriam, The Endres Art Gallery in Prairie Village, The Johnson County Libraries, Wyandotte County Libraries, Unity Spot Light Gallery, and many other locations in the Kansas City area.

**Shirley Stiles—April 2018**

Shirley Stiles is the local artist and patron of the arts for whom the Shirley Stiles Gallery in Westwood City Hall is named. After the new Westwood City Hall was built, she was the driving force behind the establishment of a gallery dedicated to showcasing the work of local area artists that formed the basis for the city's well-deserved reputation as a unique venue for local artists to show without having to pay high commissions charged by commercial galleries. With her work in scheduling artists for monthly shows in Westwood, she became the city's first Art Coordinator, a volunteer position that she held for a decade before her passing in 2006.

Every April, we feature a show of artwork by Shirley Stiles. Shirley loved experimenting with her art and used many media as well as a wide variety of subject matter in her work. This year we decided to do a show of just her flower art. We thought it would be a good way to get us all in the mood for a colorful spring. Welcome to Shirley's Garden!





**CITY OF WESTWOOD**  
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**MAYOR**

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**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

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**CHIEF OF POLICE:** Greg O'Halloran

**SERGEANT:** Gary Baker

**PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS:** Chris Bishop, Marcus Burke,  
 Timothy Filson, Ruth Peter, Kurtis Stone

**COURT CLERK:** Shelley Floyd

**DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS:** John Sullivan

**SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS:** Mitch Landis

**PUBLIC WORKS STAFF:** Richard Fatherley, James Rankin

**CITY CLERK:** Fred Sherman

**BUILDING/CODES OFFICIAL:** Eddie McNeil

**ASSISTANT CITY CLERK:** Abby Schneweis

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Emergencies .....	911
City Hall.....	913.362.1550
Public Works.....	913.432.1550
Public Safety.....	913.362.3737
JOCo Sheriff 24 Hour Dispatch.....	913.782.0720
Municipal Court.....	913.362.3737
WCA Disposal.....	816.380.5595
Kansas Gas Service.....	1.800.794.4780
KCPL.....	816.471.5275
WaterOne.....	913.895.5500
JOCo Wastewater.....	913.715.8587
Animal Control.....	913.782.0720
JOCo Information.....	913.715.1500
Driver's License Bureau.....	913.432.2266
JOCo Election Office.....	913.782.3441
JOCo Appraiser.....	913.715.9000
Shawnee Mission School Dist.....	913.993.6200

