

HALF CENT SALES TAX

BAY COUNTY
& MUNICIPALITIES



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What will appear on my ballot?

- * “Bay County’s one half cent local government infrastructure sales surtax”
 - ➔ “Shall the half-cent sales surtax be levied for ten years in Bay County to provide for the repair of local roads, reduce traffic congestion, increase neighborhood safety with pedestrian paths, build sidewalks near schools, reduce local flooding and other similar uses authorized under Florida law and to seek matching state and federal funds for these purposes, subject to a citizen’s oversight committee and, to ensure that all dollars are spent in Bay County?
____ YES = FOR THE ONE HALF CENT (1/2%) SALES TAX
____ NO = AGAINST THE ONE HALF CENT (1/2%) SALES TAX”

Q: Why is a half-cent sales tax necessary?

- * Bay County needs better roads, a way to reduce traffic congestion, and to reduce neighborhood flooding. Since visitors and tourists use our roads too, a half-cent sales tax is a fair way to make sure everyone contributes to our community and to ensure our ability to implement property tax cuts.

Q: Who will pay the sales tax?

- * Anyone who buys goods in Bay County will pay the half-cent sales tax. This means that visitors and tourists to the county will also help pay for the roads and bridges that they use.

Q: Where will the money go?

- * Every dollar generated will stay right here in Bay County.
- * The revenues will be shared across the county with municipalities on projects that will:
 - ➔ Resurface roads
 - ➔ Repair bridges
 - ➔ Pave county dirt roads prone to flooding
 - ➔ Reduce neighborhood flooding

Q: How do I know my money will be spent wisely?

- * The referendum comes built-in with three layers of protection:
 1. State law requires that any money generated from the half-cent sales tax only be spent on projects in Bay County as specified on the ballot.
 2. Your locally elected leaders must ensure that the money is spent properly.
 3. The referendum calls for a citizens’ oversight committee to serve as an additional layer of protection and to ensure added transparency and accountability to taxpayers.

Q: Do other counties have local option sales taxes?

- * Yes. This measure will make our sales tax equal or still less than our neighbors in the panhandle in Gulf, Franklin, Calhoun, Washington, Wakulla, Walton, Liberty, Jackson, and Holmes counties.

Q: Why isn't the current funding enough?

- * Currently, property taxes and gas taxes pay for maintenance and repairs of Bay County roads and bridges. As more people invest in fuel-efficient vehicles, the gas tax portion of this revenue will steadily decrease. That just leaves property owners to fund more and more of those needed projects. A half-cent sales tax is a fair way to ensure that all of Bay County's tourists and visitors contribute to maintaining the roads and bridges that they also use.

Q: When will voters get to decide?

- * The surtax vote will appear on the ballot in the general election on November 8, 2016. Early voting will take place from October 29th through November 5th and you can find your polling place at www.bayvotes.org/Election-Info/Election-History-Sample-Ballots.