



### Bond Referendum

#### What is a bond referendum?

A bond referendum is a voting process that gives voters the power to decide if a municipality should be authorized to borrow money for citizen-desired improvements and projects through the sale of bonds. A bond is a loan taken out by the City to fund capital improvements. In Kansas, any bond intended to be used for parks or recreation projects must be approved by the voters.

#### How much will this public financing affect my property taxes? Are there other sources of revenue possible which might assist in funding these projects and lessen the impact on my property taxes?

In order to repay the bond, the City will have to increase the mill levy by an estimated 2.55 mills.

The following shows the effect of a 2.55-mill tax levy increase on property taxes for residential properties of varying values:

HOUSE VALUE	INCREASE PER MONTH
\$200,000	\$4.89
\$300,000	\$7.33
\$400,000	\$9.78
\$600,000	\$14.66



Additionally, we will pursue regional and federal grant sources which come with a required match.

#### If the bond referendum doesn't pass, what happens?

No new projects will be completed in the near term. Future needs of the Parks and Recreation Department will be considered along with other capital needs of the City during annual Capital Improvement Plan updates.

### Background

#### How did we determine the need for these improvements? Whose idea is this?

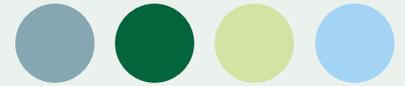
In 2018, the City completed a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan that involved information gathering, findings and visioning, draft recommendations, and a final plan. A Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was formed through the Master Plan process to aid in the development of the Plan. The Plan made numerous recommendations for prioritized capital and operational improvements. Once complete, the Board and City Staff worked together to prioritize potential projects from the Plan, which are included in the projects to be funded by the proposed bond referendum.

#### What are some highlighted projects included in this bond referendum?

- **Trails Connecting the City**
- **Riverfest Park:** Shelter House, Disc Golf, More Playground Equipment
- **Miller Park:** More Parking, Playground Equipment Replacement, Restroom Expansion
- **Sports Fields:** Soccer Field, Restrooms



## Parks & Trails



### **How are we maintaining and utilizing our currently owned Parks Facilities? Shouldn't those assets be our first priority?**

The maintenance, preservation, and improvement of our existing park assets has long been a top priority. These assets are maintained and operated with funding from the Parks & Recreation budget within the general fund of the City. Largely, property taxes and recreation usage fees are the funding sources the department. However, there is a need for upgraded and additional facilities to meet the vision of the community.

### **Why do we need more trails?**

By far, recreational trails ranked highest among suggested capital upgrades during the formulation of our 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. A well-connected trail system creates a healthy city that provides safe routes to school for kids and offers alternative transportation modes, which keeps air clean by reducing carbon emissions from automobiles. It is recognized that there is an overall lack of pedestrian connectivity between neighborhoods and activity nodes throughout the City. The corridors proposed in the referendum are intended to connect the community while providing opportunities to enjoy nature, renew, and participate in a healthy outdoor fitness activity.



## Sports Fields

### **Why do we need more sports fields? What is wrong with the fields we have?**

The new fields are needed primarily for the City's youth soccer programs, which is the only recreation program run by the City that does not have dedicated fields for play. The youth soccer programs are hosted on fields throughout the City that are not specifically designed for soccer; we currently utilize open spaces at Riverfest Park, Sunflower Baseball & Softball Fields, and property owned by the school district for soccer. The development of a permanent, dedicated facility for the soccer program ranked highly during the development of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

### **Why aren't we installing artificial turf? Isn't that the direction sports fields are going?**

Our soccer program is seasonal and does not receive the intense usage needed to justify the additional cost of artificial turf.

### **Are we working with the school district to share resources? Couldn't we save money by sharing space with USD 232?**

De Soto maintains a strong and valuable partnership with USD 232 in all mutual areas of governance, and recreational programming is no exception. Our youth basketball program relies heavily on the use of USD 232 facilities for gym space, and parts of our soccer programming take place on school property. However, there are schedule overlaps with the City's youth soccer seasons and the district's use of their outdoor soccer facility which makes scheduling games and practices impossible.



## Other Questions

### **What is the timeline for the projects? How soon can we use the new amenities?**

All projects have different timelines, ranging from one to three years for completion.

### **Are maintenance costs included in your budget?**

Maintenance cost are included in our yearly budget appropriations for the Park & Recreation Department. If the bond referendum passes, the cost for maintaining the new amenities will be budgeted appropriately on a yearly basis. Because of the largely passive nature of the proposed improvements, maintenance costs for the new facilities will be relatively low.