

July 16, 2024

Current and Future Community Leaders Unite to Oppose Proposed Capital Sales Tax

In a rare display of unity, four sitting council members and four council-elect members join forces to urge voters to reject the proposed 1% sales tax.

This unprecedented collaboration signifies a pivotal moment in County Council history, demonstrating a renewed commitment to delivering true, accountable, and transparent governance to the people. This proposed ballot question represents double taxation for the citizens and a billion-dollar boondoggle. It also misleads the public by calling it a “penny” rather than a 1% sales tax.

During these challenging times, our community faces critical decisions that impact every resident. As elected leaders committed to fiscal responsibility and equitable solutions, we collectively urge you to vote NO on the proposed sales tax. While there are a few good projects in the proposed ballot question, they can be included in a future proposal that doesn't force taxpayers to pay twice for a project the state should already be addressing. Of the 500 roads under consideration, 230 are state or federal, meaning the proposed tax will not comprehensively address our local infrastructure needs. Instead, it compensates for the state's disproportionate use of our taxpayer money in other counties rather than our own. Additionally, the county's current budget brings in 380 million a year, yet only about 12 million is spent on roads.

Currently, Greenville County only receives around 15% of the money we pay in gas tax. We urge our state legislators in Columbia to pass legislation ensuring at least 80% of our gas tax dollars return to the county of origin. Presently, only four cents of every 26 cents we pay in gas taxes come back to the Greenville County C Funds committee to fix our roads.

Moreover, implementing this tax would necessitate creating a new county department and staff, further straining our budget without adequate revenue from the tax itself. This billion-dollar boondoggle received only 20 minutes of discussion before being rushed to approval at the first reading. Such monumental decisions demand thorough Council and community deliberation and input.

We urge our colleagues to vote NO on the Capital Projects sales tax. If this request fails, we will campaign for the public to veto the proposal at the ballot box in November. We can preserve Greenville's affordability and promote responsible growth.

Together, let's pursue a more thoughtful and effective approach to addressing our county's needs.

Benton Blount

Councilman, District 19

Rick Bradley

Councilman, District 26

Curt McGahhey

Nominee, District 21

Kelly Long

Nominee, District 18

Steve Shaw

Councilman, District 20

Stan Tzouvelekas

Councilman, District 22

Frank Farmer

Nominee, District 22

Garey Collins

Nominee, District 27