



IN BRIEF

JEFFERSON PARISH TAX RENEWALS

On the Ballot: December 10, 2016

The Propositions

On December 10, 2016, voters in Jefferson Parish will consider renewing four dedicated taxes: a sales tax for parish sewerage, road and drainage projects, law enforcement and municipal governments in Jefferson; and three property taxes for parish drainage, recreation and public schools. The taxes generate \$83.7 million for the Jefferson Parish Government (Parish) – 14% of its budget – plus another \$30 million for the Sheriff and municipal governments and \$15 million for the Jefferson Parish Public School System. In this report, BGR examines the four tax renewals, provides analysis and offers positions to assist voters in making informed choices.

JEFFERSON PARISH: SALES TAX RENEWAL

What It Would Do

Voters will decide whether to renew for 20 years, beginning December 2, 2022, a 1% sales tax that funds:

- Sewerage, road and drainage projects performed by the Parish in the unincorporated area and the Town of Jean Lafitte.
- Law enforcement by the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office in the unincorporated area.
- General purposes of the other five municipalities in the parish.

The proposition would continue to allow the tax proceeds to support bonds.

BGR Position

FOR. Renewal of the sales tax would enable the Parish to finance much-needed road and sewerage improvements on both sides of the Mississippi River. The Parish also could leverage additional state and federal dollars for major road projects. In addition, the Sheriff and five municipalities would retain an important funding source for an additional 20 years.

JEFFERSON PARISH: DRAINAGE TAX RENEWAL

What It Would Do

Voters parishwide, except in the Town of Grand Isle, will decide whether to renew a 4.64-mill property tax for drainage for 10 years, beginning in 2017. Because the renewal would set the maximum tax rate at the previously authorized level of six mills, it could result in a 1.36-mill tax increase.

BGR Position

FOR. Renewal of the tax will preserve a critical funding source for day-to-day operation and maintenance of the drainage system and provide new revenue to help fund capital needs the Parish has identified in its drainage master plan.

JEFFERSON PARISH: RECREATION TAX RENEWAL

What It Would Do

The proposition would renew the existing 7.8-mill property tax for recreation in the parish's unincorporated area and the Town of Jean Lafitte for 10 years, beginning in 2017. Because the renewal would set the maximum tax rate at the previously authorized level of 10 mills, it could result in a 2.2-mill tax increase.

BGR Position

FOR. Renewing the millage will preserve the core funding source for recreation facilities and programs in the unincorporated parish and the Town of Jean Lafitte for the next 10 years. Without it, the Parish's recreation system would suffer a tremendous funding loss. The Parish has established a track record of carefully controlling the recreation district's costs.

JEFFERSON PARISH: SCHOOL TAX RENEWAL

What It Would Do

Voters parishwide will decide whether to renew a 4-mill property tax for the Jefferson Parish Public School System for 10 years, beginning in 2018. The tax will continue to fund school technology, capital projects, and school facility maintenance and improvement. Renewal of the tax would maintain the current tax rate of 4 mills.

BGR Position

FOR. Renewal of the tax will preserve significant funding for school technology, a key component of classroom education in the Jefferson Parish public schools. It will also preserve funding for the maintenance, repair and improvement of the school system's aging stock of school buildings.

Read the full report at www.bgr.org.