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December 19, 2022

Kechi Community Members,

On Thursday, December 8, 2022, the City Council approved a resolution allowing voters to decide on a citywide 1.0% sales tax for street improvements.

The resolution calls for a special ballot referendum to be scheduled for Thursday, February 7, 2023. If approved, the sales tax would go into effect on July 1, 2023

In 2015, the City Council passed a resolution endorsing the City of Kechi Arts & Business District Redevelopment Design Concept. Which provided design guidance and implementation strategies for making desired enhancements and redeveloping the Arts & Business District. The goal being to maintain a productive local economy and a vibrant core business district.

Between 2015 to 2018, the city worked to update existing zoning and subdivision regulations to facilitate the type of development envisioned for the Arts & Business District and to incorporate it into the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. In 2018, there was an online community survey and public workshops conducted and feedback from these community engagement efforts provided the framework for the Kechi Arts & Business District Master Plan.

The Kechi Arts & Business District includes locations within 500 feet of the Kechi Rd and Oliver Ave intersection in all four directions. These two arterial streets connect Kechi with Bel Aire and Wichita to the south and Park City to the west. The bulk of the daily traffic in and out of the community passes through this "Crossroads of Kechi." Infrastructure condition and capacity are insufficient to support modern commercial development. Walkable streets will allow patrons to park and shop anywhere in the district.

The Kechi Arts & Business District Master Plan is a multiphase project. The City of Kechi was awarded a grant for phase one from the Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WAMPO) in the amount of \$1.5M and total project costs are estimated at \$2.6M-\$3.2M. The city needs to identify a dedicated revenue source to fund the difference and additional phases of the project. This is a large capital improvement project that will improve the overall aesthetics and walkability of the community. The city council is giving residents another opportunity to be engaged in this process by approving the resolution calling for a special ballot referendum.

If passed, the sales tax is estimated to collect \$90K or 38% of the street improvement budget and would provide necessary revenue to fund the debt service payments to implement the Kechi Arts & Business District Master Plan. Currently, Kechi does not have a local retail sales tax and this funding would stay in Kechi to help fund road and capital improvement projects. General sales tax revenue received is a percent of monies collected in Sedgwick County based on population of each city. This is an opportunity for Kechi to capture revenues from non-resident consumers patronizing Kechi businesses.

Please visit the city website (www.kechiks.gov) to review the Kechi Arts & Business District Master Plan and vote February 7, 2023, to have your voice heard. There will be a special workshop meeting on January 26, 2023, at 6pm prior to City Council Meeting to discuss and answer questions regarding the Sales Tax Referendum.

Respectfully,

Mayor Ashley Velazquez