



HOW YOUR PENNY WORKS

What Your Local Option Sales Tax "Can Do"

What is a Local Option Sales Tax, and what can it do?

The local option sales tax is the state authorized one-cent sales tax added to most retail purchases in Escambia County. It is not a new tax; voters first approved it in March 1992. Your one-cent sales tax can:

- ✓ Improve transportation by paving dirt roads and repairing/repaving roads
- ✓ Address flooding problems by improving drainage systems
- ✓ Build new fire stations and improve area fire services
- ✓ Build additional jail facilities to relieve overcrowding
- ✓ Improve 9-1-1 response time through a new computer aided dispatch system
- ✓ Improve public safety services by replacing older EMS and law enforcement vehicles
- ✓ Equip ambulances with stretchers, defibrillators and pulse oxygen machines
- ✓ Build sidewalks so our children can walk or ride their bikes safely
- ✓ Build parks & recreational facilities for family outings and sports teams
- ✓ Build libraries & community centers
- ✓ Improve the court system and community services

By law, local option sales tax revenue can only be used for "capital projects," or infrastructure projects that have a life of five years or more. Most operation costs, staff travel and construction of the new administrative building *are not* paid for by local option sales tax funds. The Southwest Branch Library, Myrtle Grove drainage project, Cantonment Sports Facility, Marie Ella Davis Community Center & Park, Escambia County Equestrian Center, over 130 miles of road paving and the new Public Safety Building are just a few of the projects paid for with the local option sales tax revenues.

The Economic Impact of Local Option Sales Tax

As well as funding county improvements, the local option sales tax also helps our economy. According to the UWF Haas Center, Escambia County will collect \$41,044,586 in local option sales taxes in 2004-2005, which will generate more than \$76 million in economic growth within the county.

QUICK FACTS

- Florida law protects the local option sales tax funds raised by requiring a spending plan be approved at the same time the tax is approved by voters.
- Local option sales tax funds can only be used for projects authorized by the referendum.
- All sales tax revenue is kept separate from other county funds.
- Funds may not be used for daily operations.
- The UWF Haas Center estimates 34% of the sales tax is paid by visitors and tourists.
- Citizens can vote on the local option sales tax extension on March 7, 2006.



*For more information on Escambia County's Local Option Sales Tax please contact:
the Office of Public Information & Communications at (850)595-3476
or visit www.myescambia.com*