

Article from Pueblo Chieftain on Land Purchase

The following portion of an article is a reprint from the Pueblo Chieftain concerning Canon City Land Purchase.

Text within this document details the purchase of the Hogback area as well as [its designated purpose](#).

## **Canon council revises sales tax proposal**

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Skyline Drive winds its way over hogback hills near Canon City. At right are motorcycle paths cut into the hillside. (Photo deleted).

City Canon City Council on Monday gave initial approval to a revised November ballot question that will ask voters to approve a 1/2-cent sales tax increase for reconstruction and repair of city streets.

Council scrapped a ballot question approved last month in favor of a new question that City Attorney John Havens said has clearer language.

Instead of mentioning an increase of one-half of 1 percent, the wording will ask voters to approve a city sales tax increase to 2.5 percent from 2 percent, City Councilman Glenn Vaughn said.

Funds from the increase would be earmarked strictly for street repair and reconstruction.

The \$750,000 to \$800,000 generated by the sales tax increase, coupled with \$400,000 the city already commits to streets, would be enough to reconstruct 2.5 miles of streets each year, allowing the city to keep up with a 30-year reconstruction cycle suggested by industry standards.

With 72 miles of paved streets at present, the city has only enough money budgeted to reconstruct about half a mile of street per year, putting it on course for a reconstruction cycle of 133 years, said Steve Rabe, city administrator.

The total sales tax rate charged within city limits, including state and county shares, currently is 6.5 percent, 2 percent of which goes to the city. If voters approve the increase, 2.5 percent would go to the city and the total sales tax bite would be 7 percent.

Councilman Mike Near pointed out that one citizen opposed to the sales tax increase "misstated that we had spent \$980,000 for the land we purchased in the hogbacks."

The city's scenic Skyline Drive traverses the hogbacks at the west end of town.

"Actually it was \$98,000 and that came from the quality of life fund which cannot be spent on streets. We purchased that land with the understanding we were going to

keep it as open space so as not to contribute to the flooding problem if it were developed," Near explained.

"Part of it (land) is going to be used for detention ponds. There is a possibility a GOCO (Great Outdoors Colorado) grant will cover two-thirds of the cost of the land and a FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Administration) grant is in the works to help with the (construction cost of) detention ponds in the hogbacks," Near said.

Near pointed out that city and recreation district officials hope that a trail system can be developed for future use of the land between Skyline Drive and residential homes.

"We are looking at cooperating with the recreation district for a trail system. If that land is developed, it will never be turned into a trail system," Near explained.

This reprint is from a cached version of the original article and only page 1, dealing with the Hogback area, is contained therein.