

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Results from the May 2011 Greene County Parks, Stormwater and Law Enforcement Survey are based on 402 completed telephone interviews of “likely voters” residing in Greene County. Overall survey results have a margin of error of +/- 5% at the 95% confidence interval. The survey was designed, conducted, and analyzed by **Opinion Research Specialists, LLC** of Springfield, Missouri. Survey findings are summarized below.

### **Support for a Parks Sales Tax Increase AND Stormwater Renewal (Option 1)**

- A proposed 1/8-cent sales tax increase to fund additional parks and recreation improvements in Springfield and Greene County AND renewal of an existing 1/8-cent sales tax currently used to fund stormwater projects in Springfield and Greene County was opposed by 56% of respondents, 33% favored it, and 11% were undecided.
- 44% of respondents were **strongly opposed** to this option compared to 16% strongly in favor.
- Support for this option failed to exceed 42% among any demographic group. Respondents most likely to oppose this option were county residents living outside of Springfield and high school graduates (67% and 66% respectively).

### **Support for a Parks Sales Tax Renewal Only (Option 2)**

- A proposed 1/8-cent sales tax **renewal** to fund additional parks and recreation improvements in Springfield and Greene County (no funding for stormwater projects) was opposed by 66% of respondents, 22% favored it, and 12% were undecided.
- 47% of respondents were **strongly opposed** to this option compared to 5% strongly in favor.
- Support for this option failed to exceed 29% among any demographic group.

### Support for a Stormwater Sales Tax Renewal Only (Option 3)

- A proposed five-year renewal of a 1/8-cent sales tax passed in 2006 to fund stormwater projects in Springfield and Greene County (no additional funding for parks) was favored by 53% of respondents, opposed by 38% of respondents, and 9% were undecided.
- 25% of respondents **strongly favored** this option (28% were somewhat in favor), while 25% were **strongly opposed** (13% were somewhat opposed).
- With the exception of high school graduates, all demographic groups were more likely to support this option than oppose it.

### Support for a Law Enforcement Sales Tax Increase–Assumption A

- Assuming voter approval of Option 1 (parks sales tax increase AND stormwater sales tax renewal), 51% of respondents would oppose a 1/4-cent sales tax increase to fund countywide law enforcement and address overcrowding in the county jail if placed on the November 2011 ballot and 36% would favor it (13% undecided).
- 34% of respondents were **strongly opposed** to this option vs. 22% **strongly in favor**.
- Support for this proposal failed to exceed 45% among any demographic group. With the exception of respondents 18-59 years old and college graduates, all demographic groups were more likely to oppose this initiative than favor it.

### Support for a Law Enforcement Sales Tax Increase–Assumption B

- Assuming Option 1 (parks sales tax increase AND stormwater sales tax renewal) was either defeated in August or never placed on the August ballot, 45% of respondents would favor a 1/4-cent sales tax increase to fund countywide law enforcement and address overcrowding in the county jail if placed on the November 2011 ballot, while 43% would oppose it (12% undecided).
- 26% of respondents **strongly favored** this option vs. 29% **strongly opposed**.
- College educated and younger/middle-aged respondents were the most supportive of this proposal, while high school graduates and older respondents (73+ years old), were the least supportive.

## INTRODUCTION

This study was authorized by the Greene County Commission to assess the level of voter support for a sales tax proposal in August to fund additional parks and recreation improvements and/or stormwater projects in Springfield and Greene County. Moreover, level of voter support for a sales tax proposal in November to fund countywide law enforcement and address crowding in the Greene County jail was also ascertained. The survey was designed, conducted, and analyzed by **Opinion Research Specialists, LLC** of Springfield, Missouri.

## SURVEY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Opinion Research Specialists, LLC interviewed by telephone 402 registered voters residing within Greene County. Survey participants were randomly selected from a group of registered voters (stratified on the basis of voting precinct) who had voted in the April 2011 and/or November 2009 elections. This information was provided by the Greene County Clerk's office.

Up to four attempts were made to contact each randomly selected registered voter with at least one attempt made during the weekend, weeknight, and weekday during the calling period. Telephone interviews were conducted May 14–18, 2011 from Opinion Research Specialists' phone bank facility in Springfield, Missouri. Telephone interviews averaged four minutes in duration.

## INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Overall survey results, based on 402 completed telephone interviews have a margin of error of +/- 5% at the 95% confidence interval. For example, if a response listed in the report is 60%, one can be 95% confident that the "true" percentage, that which would have been obtained if every Greene County registered voter who had voted in the April 2011 and/or November 2009 elections had participated in the survey, is between 55% and 65%. Margin of error increases when subsets of the total sample are analyzed (e.g., male vs. female respondents).

## PROFILE OF GREENE COUNTY SURVEY RESPONDENTS

