

ELECTION FOR PROPOSITION A FACT SHEET ON THE SALE OR EXCHANGE OF SESQUICENTENNIAL PARK AND FIRE STATION

What is Proposition A?

The City of Gainesville is holding a special election on May 6, 2023, seeking voter approval to sell, convey, or exchange Sesquicentennial Park and the fire station site located on the corner of Gribble Street and N. Clements Street for the purpose of acquiring a new fire station site and making other park improvements. Voters will be asked to vote “for” or “against” the proposition to sell, convey, or exchange the park.

Why must voters decide the issue?

According to Texas law, land owned or claimed as a city park may not be sold, leased, or conveyed unless the qualified voters of the city authorize the conveyance by a majority of the votes received at an election. Because the City of Gainesville has designated Sesquicentennial Park as a park, the voters must authorize the sale or exchange of the land.

What happens if Proposition A passes?

If Proposition A passes, the City Council plans to sell, convey or exchange Sesquicentennial Park and the existing fire station site for another tract of land in the eastern portion of the City for the purposes of building a new fire station. The City is seeking a new location that will:

- ✓ significantly improve Fire Department response times;
- ✓ decrease the overlap between fire response districts; and
- ✓ improve fire protection services for new residential developments in the City.

The funds from the sale or exchange will be used for the cost of the new fire station and park site. The former site may be used for commercial purposes.

Do Fire Department response times affect homeowner insurance rates?

Yes, all fire departments are subject to an ISO Rating, which is a score determined by the Insurance Service Office (ISO) that reflects how well a fire department is able to serve its community. ISO scores range from 1 to 10, with lower scores indicating a better score and leading to lower home insurance rates. Ideally, fire stations and firefighting assets will be located in a city to decrease response times to residences and businesses and minimize fire damage to property. If Proposition A passes, the City’s ISO rating may improve.

Wasn’t there a vote on Sesquicentennial Park in 2021?

Yes, the voters approved abandoning the Park in 2021 with a limitation of building a fire station on the existing site. The City is now proposing to build the new fire station in a different location to improve response times for more areas of the City, which requires a new election.

How can I vote?

Election Day is Saturday, May 6, 2023, from 7AM to 7PM at the Gainesville Civic Center located at 311 S. Weaver. Early voting will also be held at the Civic Center between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM beginning on April 24, 2023 and ending on May 2, 2023. Information about the election and how to apply for a ballot by mail can be found on the City’s website at <https://www.gainesville.tx.us/140/Elections>.