

2026 Voter Survey/Questionnaire for The Pekin District

(FINAL: 05.15.26)

The Pekin Park District is considering a property tax referendum in the upcoming November election to fund needed park and recreational facility improvements. As a resident within the Park District, your opinions about this potential referendum are very important.

Please take a few minutes to complete this brief survey about this topic. Your responses are completely confidential, and the results will be tallied and reported by aQity Research & Insights (an independent research firm in Evanston, IL).

If you prefer to complete the survey online (instead of by mail), go to our secure website:

www.arisurvey.com/s3/PPD

If you have any technical issues with the survey, please contact aQity Research by phone (847-424-0590) or email (aqity@aqityresearch.com). If you have questions about the proposed Park District improvements or a possible referendum, please contact the Pekin Park District by email at cbettin@pekinparkdistrict.org. If you prefer to complete the survey by phone, you can call aQity at 847-424-0590 between 9AM-5PM Monday through Friday to schedule a time.

Thank you very much for your prompt response; your opinions are very important and greatly appreciated!

[BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS]

1. How long have you lived in Pekin? ____ years (If less than 1 year, enter "0".)

[BASE: ALL REPSONDENTS]

2. Are you registered to vote at your current address? ☐ Yes ☐ No [TERMINATE AT END]

[BASE: REGISTERED VOTERS]

3. As you may know, there will be a general election this coming November which will include candidates for Governor of Illinois, US Senator from Illinois, Congress, and other elected offices. How likely is it that you will vote in the upcoming general election (e.g., on election day, through early voting, absentee ballot, etc.)?

Very likely

☐

Somewhat likely

☐

Not very likely

☐

Not at all likely

☐

[TERMINATE]

[TERMINATE]

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

4. Please rate your overall opinion of the Pekin Park District. If you are unfamiliar with the Park District, please select "Unfamiliar".

Completely
Dislike

0
☐

1
☐

2
☐

3
☐

4
☐

Neutral

5
☐

6
☐

7
☐

8
☐

9
☐

Highest
Regard

10
☐

☐ Unfamiliar

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

5. Prior to this survey, have you heard or read anything about a potential referendum for the Pekin Park District?

Yes
☐

No
☐

Do not recall
☐

[BASE: "YES" TO Q5]

6. From what source(s) have you heard or seen information about a potential Park District referendum, and what did it say? Please be specific. **[OPEN-ENDED]**

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

7. The Pekin Park District is considering a voter referendum on the November ballot for a property tax increase to fund needed repairs and improvements to its parks, access routes, and recreational facilities. The proposed referendum question is expected to read as follows:

*Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law of the Pekin Park District, Tazewell and Peoria Counties, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to **[OPTION 1: 0.083% ; OPTION 2: 0.149%]** above the limiting rate for levy year 2025 for the purposes of improving and repairing parks and recreational amenities, including better and safer roads and access to several major facilities, replacing broken plumbing and infrastructure at the Sunken Garden Fountain, repairing the foundation and other structural improvements at the Pavilion, improving drainage at sports fields at Pekin Park Sports Complex, and other park purposes, and be equal to **[OPTION 1: 0.440% ; OPTION 2: 0.506%]** of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2026?*

- 1. The approximate amount of the taxes extendable at the most recently extended limiting rate is \$2,161,564 , and the approximate amount of taxes extendable if the proposition is approved is **[OPTION 1: \$2,661,554; OPTION 2: \$3,061,564]**.*
- 2. For the 2025 levy year, the approximate amount of the additional tax extendable against property containing a single-family residence and having a fair market value at the time of the referendum of \$100,000 is estimated to be **[OPTION 1: \$27.54; OPTION 2: \$49.56]**.*
- 3. If the proposition is approved, the aggregate extension for 2026 will be determined by the limiting rate set forth in the proposition, rather than the otherwise applicable limiting rate calculation under the provisions of the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (commonly known as the Property Tax Cap Law).*

If the November election were tomorrow and this question were on the ballot, would you oppose or support this referendum?

Strongly
oppose
☐

Somewhat
oppose
☐

Somewhat
support
☐

Strongly
support
☐

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

8. Why would you [PIPE IN “support” / “oppose”] this referendum? Please be specific. [OPEN-ENDED]

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS] [SHOW PRO-ARGUMENT BLOCKS Q9/Q10 AND ANTI- BLOCKS Q11/Q12 RANDOMLY]

9. Below are reasons to **support** a possible Pekin Park District referendum. Please read and indicate how effective you think each is as a reason to **support** the referendum. [VARY ORDER]

	Poor reason	Fair reason	Good reason	Excellent reason
A successful referendum will allow the District to fully repair and improve roads, parking areas, and sidewalks in and around key facilities (Miller Center, Mineral Springs Park, Pekin Park Sports Complex, and others) for easier access and greater safety for all users and will lower expensive repair costs for several years. Much of the District’s limited resources are currently being spent on ongoing repairs to these roads, parking lots, and sidewalks.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The last tax referendum sought by the Park District was over 45 years ago in 1980 (which was passed mostly to pay for road repairs). Since then the District has done its best to stretch its limited finances to cover the most needed repairs and upkeep, but can no longer keep up with these costs without additional funds.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having excellent parks and recreational facilities and features helps make Pekin a more desirable place to live, which protects and improves our property values.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Sunken Garden Fountain at Mineral Springs Park has not been fully functional for several years and requires significant ongoing repair/maintenance costs. A successful referendum will fund newer and more efficient infrastructure (plumbing, motors, jets, lighting, etc.) to fix these issues, improve the Fountain, and greatly reduce ongoing (and increasing) repair costs.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The current Pavilion needs major repairs to its foundation, porch, masonry, and interior walls. A successful referendum will provide the funds to address these structural needs and ensure that the Pavilion is safe and more usable for years to come.	☐	☐	☐	☐
A successful referendum will allow for needed improvements to the athletic fields at Pekin Park Sports Complex, including a complete renovation of the baseball/softball infields to improve drainage, and also improved drainage on the soccer and football fields.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Without additional funds from a referendum, the Park District may need to limit access or eventually close some of its park features and/or recreational facilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐
This referendum would translate into an additional [OPTION 1: \$500,000 ; OPTION 2: \$900,000] per year going to the Park District. This seems to be a reasonable amount given the delays, scope, and number of the improvements needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS] [SHOW Q9 STATEMENTS BELOW; SINGLE RESPONSE; ADD “None” OPTION]

10. Please indicate the **ONE** statement that you feel represents the best reason to **support** the referendum.

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

11. Below are reasons to **oppose** a possible Pekin Park District referendum. Please read and indicate how effective you think each is as a reason to **oppose** the referendum. **[VARY ORDER]**

	<i>Poor reason</i>	<i>Fair reason</i>	<i>Good reason</i>	<i>Excellent reason</i>
Property taxes are too high already, and I oppose any property tax increase.	☐	☐	☐	☐
My household does not use the Pekin Park District parks or facilities and would not benefit from any proposed improvements.	☐	☐	☐	☐
With the current rate of inflation, high interest rates, and overall economic uncertainty, now is not the time to ask for a tax referendum or borrow money.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel that there is waste and unnecessary spending at the Park District. It should first cut spending and waste before asking for a tax increase.	☐	☐	☐	☐
If the Park District needs more money, it should add or increase fees instead of asking for more tax dollars.	☐	☐	☐	☐
While adding [OPTION 1: \$27.54 ; OPTION 2: \$49.56] per \$100,000 of a home's value may seem reasonable to some, there are many in this area who are retired or on fixed incomes that cannot afford this.	☐	☐	☐	☐
This referendum would translate into an additional [OPTION 1: \$500,000 ; OPTION 2: \$900,000] per year going to the Park District. This seems to be too much money, and the Park District should scale back its plans to focus only on the most needed improvements, and then come back with a lower, more affordable amount.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Illinois has some of the highest property taxes in the country. We need to start finding ways to cut them or keep them from increasing further.	☐	☐	☐	☐
On the November ballot, there may also be a referendum to raise the Tazewell County sales tax by 1% in order to help fund county schools. If both end up on the ballot, I cannot afford or do not want to pay for two tax increases.	☐	☐	☐	☐

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

12. Please indicate the **ONE** statement that you feel represents the best reason to **oppose** the referendum. **[SHOW Q11 STATEMENTS; SINGLE RESPONSE; ADD "None" OPTION]**

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

13. Thinking about the previous ballot wording and the arguments that you read both for and against the referendum, if the November election were tomorrow and this question were on the ballot, would you oppose or support this referendum?

Strongly
oppose
☐

Somewhat
oppose
☐

Somewhat
support
☐

Strongly
support
☐

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

14. Below are some of the major improvements that would occur if the referendum is approved (with estimated costs). Please rank order the importance of each to you and your household by writing “1” next to the most important improvement, “2” next to the second most important, etc. **[VARY]**

- ☐ Road repairs at and around major District facilities including Miller Center, Mineral Springs Park, and Pekin Sports Complex to improve vehicular access. *(estimated cost \$3.9 million)*
- ☐ Constructing new sidewalks at the Miller Center, and within Mineral Springs Park to provide easier and safer access to major Park District facilities. *(estimated cost \$630 thousand)*
- ☐ Infrastructure improvements for a fully functional Sunken Garden Fountain at Mineral Springs Park, and better accessibility down to the fountain. *(estimated cost \$1 million)*
- ☐ Structural and safety repairs to the Pavilion *(estimated cost roughly \$250 thousand)*
- ☐ Improved athletic fields at Pekin Park Sports Complex, including a complete renovation of the baseball/softball infields to improve drainage and also improving drainage on the soccer and football fields. *(estimated cost \$312 thousand)*
- ☐ None are important to me **[EXCLUSIVE OPTION, ANCHOR ALWAYS LAST]**

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

15. Which of the following Pekin Park District locations have you or any household members used or visited in the past 12 months?

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE

- ☐ Blenkiron Park
- ☐ Coal Miners' Park
- ☐ Dirksen Park
- ☐ Dirksen Park bike trail
- ☐ Independence Park
- ☐ Independence Park bike trail
- ☐ James Field
- ☐ Kiwanis Park North
- ☐ Kiwanis Park South
- ☐ McNaughton Park
- ☐ McNaughton Park bike trail
- ☐ Miller Park
- ☐ Mineral Springs Park
- ☐ Pekin Bike Trail
- ☐ Railsplitters' Park
- ☐ Riverfront Park
- ☐ Rotary Park
- ☐ Southside Business Association Park
- ☐ Tante Park
- ☐ Willow Park

FACILITIES

- ☐ Archery Range (Dirksen Park)
- ☐ Disc Golf Course (McNaughton Park)
- ☐ DragonLand Water Park
- ☐ Happy Tails Dog Park
- ☐ IRVSRA Recreational Center
- ☐ Lick Creek Golf Course
- ☐ Magic Dragon Mini Golf
- ☐ Horse Stables
- ☐ Miller Center
- ☐ Mineral Springs Park Lagoon
- ☐ Parkside Fitness
- ☐ Parkview Golf Course
- ☐ Pavilion on the Lagoon
- ☐ Pekin Sports Complex
- ☐ Remote Control Airfield (Dirksen Park)
- ☐ Skate Park (Mineral Springs Park)
- ☐ Splash Pad (Riverfront Park)
- ☐ Sunken Gardens Fountain/Sundial (Mineral Springs Park)
- ☐ Veterans Memorial Arena

- ☐ None of the above **[EXCLUSIVE]**

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

16. A. Below are some sources of information for local or Park District issues. Please indicate the two sources you rely on the most for this information. [MULTI-SELECT UP TO 2, VARY ORDER]

- ☐ The City of Pekin (website, newsletter, social media)
- ☐ Local news (print, digital, streaming/TV): Which papers/stations/sources? _____
- ☐ Pekin Park District website
- ☐ Pekin Park District newsletter or emails
- ☐ Pekin Park District social media/Facebook
- ☐ Other website(s): Which website(s)? _____
- ☐ Other **non-Pekin Park District** social media (e.g., local groups/agencies)
- ☐ Word of mouth from friends, neighbors, etc.
- ☐ Other source(s): Please specify _____

B. Which **one** of these do you rely on the most? [SHOW SELECTED ITEMS FROM Q15A]

*These last questions are to make sure we have a representative sample. **Your responses are completely confidential** and will be grouped with everyone else who completes the survey.*

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

17. In what year were you born? ____ _

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

18. Please note your gender:
☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

[BASE: LIKELY VOTERS]

19. Including yourself, how many people in your household are:

[DROPDOWN LIST: None, One, Two, Three, Four or more]

Under age 5? _____
Ages 5 to 11? _____
Ages 12 to 17? _____
Ages 18 to 64? _____
Ages 65 or older? _____

20. Please indicate where you fall on the political spectrum.

[SHOW 6-PT SLIDER SCALE WITH LABELS: 1 = Lean left/Democrat; midpoint=Independent/Neutral; 6 = Lean right/Republican]

Thank you very much for completing our survey!