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Press Release

City distributing income surveys by mail to water customers

Citizens to begin receiving surveys Saturday, asked to return by July 14

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (June 26, 2015) — Water customers in Arkansas City will be receiving purple- or gold-colored income surveys in the mail starting Saturday, June 26.

Residents are asked to complete the one-page survey honestly and return it to the Utility Billing Office at City Hall, 118 W. Central Ave., by July 14.

Any information residents provide will be held in the strictest confidence. Names and addresses will not be connected with the surveys themselves.

Their participation will help the city possibly receive grant funding that will allow for the construction of needed infrastructure improvements without the use of dollars from local property taxes or water fees.

Surveys also will be distributed Saturday at Manna Ministries at First Baptist Church, 220 E. Central Ave., and the Crops of Righteousness distribution event at Cowley College's Brown Center.

Why surveys are needed

The City Commission of Arkansas City voted June 16, 2015, to enter into an agreement with Ranson Financial Consultants LLC for grant-writing services.

Ranson senior consultant Rose Mary Saunders is conducting the survey and will tabulate the results. Households that do not respond to the mailed survey will receive door-to-door visits in July.

The survey will attempt to verify that 51 percent or more of Ark City's population is of low to moderate income (LMI). Responses from at least 51 percent of the population are needed to do that.

For immediate release

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If the LMI status is verified, the city could be eligible for a Community Development Block Grant from the Kansas Department of Commerce. The status likely would stay on books for the next five years.

In order for the City to obtain the grant, a grant proposal will have to be written and presented to the Kansas Interagency Advisory Committee (KIAC) at a meeting in either late July or early August.

Any grant money obtained would be applied to the construction of a new wastewater line from the new Water Treatment Plant to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Future grants could be used to fund other infrastructure projects as determined by the City Commission.

Survey instructions

If you receive a survey at a residence that has no address, please write "VACANT" on the survey and return it without additional comment.

Surveys that are mailed to rental properties should be filled out by the tenant, not the landlord.

The income level that is being asked for is the adjusted gross income, as defined by how income is reported on the Internal Revenue Service's Form 1040.

Residents do not have to disclose their actual income. Rather, they are asked to indicate where their income falls within a range of incomes, based on the number of people in their families.

Family demographics are another part of the survey. There are allowances on the form for homes that have more than one family occupying them.

The form also asks for racial identification, whether the head of the household is female and if there are any disabled persons in the home. All of these factors can affect the City's overall grant status.

Please fill out the survey in blue ink, if possible. Completed surveys may be returned to a box in the Utility Billing Office at City Hall. Ranson will collect them and compile the results.

Only the final numbers will be presented to the City Commission.

If you have any questions or need assistance in completing the survey, call Saunders at (316) 264-3400 or Andrew Lawson, public information coordinator, at (620) 441-4415.

The City of Arkansas City thanks all residents for their willingness to participate in this important survey and contribute to the City's future growth.