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City Manager's Office
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Press Release

Citizen participation needed to possibly obtain \$500K in grants

Citizens asked to return mailed income surveys to City Hall by Aug. 1

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (July 16, 2015) — Water customers in Arkansas City should have received purple- or gold-colored income surveys in the mail starting Saturday, June 26.

Residents are asked to complete the one-page survey and return it to the Utility Billing Office at City Hall, 118 W. Central Ave., by Aug. 1.

Any information residents provide will be held in the strictest confidence. Names and addresses will not be connected with the surveys themselves. City employees will not have individual access to your data and will not use it for anything other than the Community Development Block Grant process.

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.

Your 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 utility fees.

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 consultants Rose Mary and Steve Saunders are conducting the survey and will tabulate the results.

Households that do not respond to the mailed survey may receive door-to-door visits soon.

For immediate release

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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.

If the LMI status is verified, the city could be eligible for a Community Development Block Grant for up to five years from the Kansas Department of Commerce.

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 this year 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 — such as water line replacement, street improvements and community buildings — 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 or black ink, if possible. Completed surveys may be returned to a box in the Utility Billing Office at City Hall or the utility billing dropbox outside. They also can be mailed to Utility Billing Office, City Hall, 118 W. Central Ave., Arkansas City, KS 67005.

Ranson consultants are collecting the surveys and compiling 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 Rose Mary 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.