

Cle Elum Voter Poll

Executive Summary

Cle Elum voters have a high level of awareness about the City's financial crisis (94%). Nearly everyone surveyed knew about the court judgment of more than \$25 million and the bankruptcy filing, though most say it's not important to pay the full judgment if doing so means major tax increases, cutting essential services, or selling off public assets.

When asked to consider options for generating revenue, voters express strong preferences. A modest sales tax increase has majority support (57%), especially because the burden would be shared by visitors, not just residents. Many voters become even more supportive (53%) when they learn the added revenue would help protect funding for police, fire, and road maintenance.

Voters express strong opposition to a property tax increase (70%). Opposition remains firm even after hearing arguments in favor (68%). Residents are particularly concerned about affordability and fairness for homeowners.

Selling City-owned assets, such as surplus land, underused buildings, or the municipal airport, has broad support (75%) and is viewed as a reasonable way to reduce debt. Voters are somewhat divided when learning that those assets would be gone permanently, but overall, asset sales are the most favored strategy.

Other ideas, such as increasing the utility tax on water and sewer, get no traction due to added strain on household budgets. Consolidating fire services with a neighboring district draws mixed reactions, though many recognize potential insurance savings and improved service levels.

Overall, voters want solutions that protect essential services, avoid large increases in taxes for residents, and share costs fairly. Selling assets and implementing a modest sales tax increase, particularly one paid in part by visitors, emerge as the preferred approaches for addressing the City's financial challenges.

Methodology

From October 10 to 17, 2025, Probolsky Research conducted a poll among 154 Cle Elum voters, yielding a +/-7.5% margin of error. Interviews were conducted online and by telephone. Security measures precluded individuals from completing the survey more than once.

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