



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 20-124, **Version:** 1

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**SUBJECT:** Report to the City Council on the Current Measure C Educational Efforts and an Update on Next Steps for Conducting a Feasibility Survey Regarding a Potential November 2020 Ballot Measure

### REPORT IN BRIEF

Report to the City Council on the current Measure C educational efforts and an update on next steps for conducting a feasibility survey regarding potential November 2020 ballot measures.

### RECOMMENDATION

**City Council** - Adopt a motion providing staff direction to continue existing Measure C educational efforts and to return to the City Council with the results of the Feasibility Survey for further direction.

### ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve as recommended by staff; or
2. Approve, subject to notifications as conditioned by Council; or
3. Deny the request completely; or
4. Refer back to staff for reconsideration of specific items as requested by Council; or
5. Defer action until a specified time

### AUTHORITY

City of Merced Charter, Section 200

### CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES

FY 2019/20 City Council Priorities, Staffing - Measure C

### DISCUSSION

On April 1, 2006, a voter approved general-purpose half-cent sales tax went into effect. Locally known as Measure C, sales tax funding has been historically used to support public safety services and local street projects. Measure C was approved for a period of 20 years, set to sunset in 2026. With the approval of the half-cent sales tax, a Citizens Oversight Committee was also created to create community accountability and ensure that additional funding was allocated in accordance with voter approval.

During the economic downturn, Measure C was used to stabilize public safety services by directly funding positions within the Police and Fire departments. As the economy began to stabilize, the City Council directed staff to develop a plan to transition positions from Measure C to more sustainable funding sources. A total of four positions have been transferred off Measure C support to date. Even

with this initial progress, staffing levels are still heavily subvented by Measure C, with a total of 20.49 FTE remaining in the Police Department and 12.30 FTE remaining in the Fire department.

Measure C funding has become a critical funding source for public safety services to the residents of Merced. On July 1, 2019, the City Council recognized the importance of Measure C and directed staff to begin evaluating the development of an education strategy to test the viability of extending Measure C on a potential November 2020 ballot. In addition to seeking a strategy to extend Measure C in its current form, the Council also expressed an interest in exploring other options, including but not limited to, removal of the sunset date, potentially adding a quarter-cent to support Parks Maintenance, and evaluating extending the general sales tax or amending the tax to a special sales tax with varying thresholds for voter approval.

This report is an update to the Council on the progress staff has made to inform residence about the impact Measure C has on public safety and street services and also to share an outline of next steps for conducting a feasibility survey and other options to consider should the City Council choose to place an item on the November ballot.

### **IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES**

Funding for current efforts was previously allocated by the City Council. There is no additional fiscal impact at this time.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Presentation