



## Legislation Text

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**SUBJECT:** Update to the City Council on the Public Survey Results for the Proposed Public Facilities Bond Measure and Charter Amendment

### REPORT IN BRIEF

City Staff will provide an update to the City Council on the results of a recent public option survey conducted to test the viability of a Public Facilities Bond Measure and a Charter Amendment on the March 2020 ballot.

### RECOMMENDATION

Provide staff direction on next steps for pursuing items to be placed on the March Public Facilities financing options and a Charter Amendment.

### ALTERNATIVES

None.

### AUTHORITY

City of Merced Charter, Section 200

### CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES

FY 2019/20 City Council Priorities

### DISCUSSION

On August 21, 2017, staff provided the Council with an update on the current condition of all City-owned facilities and presented options for construction financing. During this meeting, direction was provided to staff to take the initial step of conducting an opinion survey to determine if the community would support a ballot initiative that would directly fund the construction of a new Police Headquarters Station, two new Fire Stations, an expansion of the Corporation Yard, and the remodeling of ten existing bathrooms within City of Merced parks.

At the Council's direction, staff worked quickly to secure professional services to develop and conduct a public opinion survey. The survey was conducted between October 24<sup>th</sup> and October 29<sup>th</sup> and the results were posted on the City's website on December 7, 2017. Based on the findings of the survey, it was recommended to continue education and outreach efforts with a goal of performing a second survey in the Spring 2018.

On January 2, 2018, the Council approved an amendment to the Professional Services Agreement

with the Lew Edwards Group to develop ballot language and put together an aggressive outreach strategy to educate the community about the need for enhanced public facilities within the City of Merced. As part of the education strategy, priority surveys were conducted, staff attended meetings and shared information with service clubs and neighborhood watch groups, and educational material was mailed to residents. At the conclusion of the education efforts, a second survey was conducted between the dates of June 14<sup>th</sup> through June 18<sup>th</sup>.

Staff presented the findings of the public opinion survey on July 2, 2018. During that meeting, Council provided direction to forgo efforts to place a measure on the ballot related to Public Facilities and to pursue conducting a professional Needs Assessment of the Police Department to better determine the space configuration and cost estimates of building a new facility.

During the fall of 2018, staff conducted a Request for Proposal to evaluate consultants to perform a needs assessment. On January 22, 2019, the Council awarded the Needs Assessment contract LPA, Inc. in partnership with MWL, Inc. A draft report of the space needs for a Police Headquarters was provided to the City this June. Staff are currently working through the initial draft to develop a final document. Once the document is completed, LPA, Inc. will present these findings, a draft configuration and proposed site locations to the City Council for direction in the upcoming months.

In addition to the efforts made on the Public Facilities Bond Measure, the City Council also provided staff direction to begin evaluating options for a potential Charter Amendment. At the April 15, 2019 City Council meeting, the Council directed staff to move forward with testing the viability of options for March 2020 Ballot. Staff then retained the services of the Lew Edwards Group and FM3 to perform a baseline public opinion survey. The survey included the viability of both the proposed Public Facilities Bond Measure and potential topics for a Charter Amendment to be considered by the Charter Review Committee. Staff is prepared to share the results of the survey with the City Council during the report of this item and is seeking direction on the potential next steps in working towards the March 2020 Ballot.

## **IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES**

No appropriation of funds is needed.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

None.