



Legislation Text

File #: 19-705, **Version:** 1

Report Prepared by: Stephanie Dietz, Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: Approval of First Amendment to the Agreement with Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, Inc., in the Additional Amount of \$29,750 and the Total not to Exceed the Contracted Amount of \$59,500 to Conduct a Feasibility Survey Regarding Potential 2020 Ballot Measures

REPORT IN BRIEF

Considers the approval of the First Amendment to the Agreement with Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, Inc., for an additional amount of \$29,750 and the Total Contracted Amount not to exceed \$59,500 to conduct a feasibility survey regarding the potential 2020 ballot measures.

RECOMMENDATION

City Council - Adopt a motion:

- A. Approving the First Amendment to the Agreement with Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, Inc., for an amount not to exceed \$29,750 related to the potential 2020 ballot measures feasibility survey; and,
- B. Approving a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$29,750 from Fund 061-Measure C unreserved fund balance to the Professional Service account to provide funding for the amended agreement;
- D. Providing staff direction on areas within the feasibility survey regarding the potential 2020 ballot measures; and,
- C. Authorizing the City Manager or the Assistant City Manager to execute the necessary documents.

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 enhanced 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 subverted 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 to continuing enhanced levels of 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 general sales tax V. special sales tax thresholds for voter approval.

Staff are recommending that the City Council approve the First Amendment with Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, Inc., in order to allow for a Public Opinion Survey in Spring of 2020 related to a potential Measure C extension and fully vetting any and all options for November 2020. The Lew Edwards Group tentative project timeline related to the Measure C efforts is attached for Council's consideration.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The original \$29,750 agreement was funded by the Measure C and the Police Station project. The amendment to the agreement in the amount of \$29,750 will be funded by Measure C since it will solely focus on an extension feasibility survey. A supplemental appropriation of \$29,750 of the unappropriated, unreserved fund balance is required and available in Fund 061-Measure C.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, Inc. - First Amendment
2. Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, Inc. - Original Agreement
3. Measure C Proposed Timeline