



Public Safety Local Control Measure

Maintaining Our Local Quality of Life

City Council Presentation
July 23, 2024

The Downey Discussion: City Service Needs & Budget Priorities

As part of this year's budget process the City conducted extensive outreach and engagement with residents and local businesses through the *Downey Discussion*.

As a result of an interactive community survey and dozens of community presentations, over 1,200 residents participated in this important community discussion. These priorities are reflected as part of this year's budget.

Community Priorities identified included:

- Maintaining 911 emergency responses
- Preventing crimes including thefts and burglaries
- Helping ensure children have safe places to play
- Recruiting and retaining well-trained firefighters and paramedics.
- Repairing streets and potholes
- Retaining and attracting local businesses



Resident's Highly Value Downey as a Full-Service City

- Downey is one of the few cities in the area that still provides safety services through our own local police and fire departments to provide the highest level of safety measures to our residents.
- Other cities no longer do this, due to the financial cost of this type of service model.
- Residents have told us they highly value these services and want us to remain a full-service City.



Public Safety is a Top Priority

- Residents told us they want us to keep addressing crime as a top priority.
- The Police Department is working hard to continue to keep our community safe, but similar to other communities in the region, last year saw a 5-year high in reported property crimes including over 3,100 incidents of:
 - Robberies
 - Burglaries
 - Thefts, such as auto thefts.
- The City seeks to maintain 911 emergency response times and police patrols in neighborhoods and business areas to keep residents and their properties safe.



Maintaining 911 Emergency Response Times

- Residents clearly prioritized public safety services through the Downey Discussion.
- Maintaining 911 emergency response remains at the top of the list of priorities.
- Over 70% of calls to the Downey Fire Department are related to medical emergencies.
- The City is working towards maintaining/improving response times and recruiting/retaining well-qualified firefighters and paramedics.
- Additionally, the City is working to expand/replace life savings equipment to capably respond to emergencies and save lives.



What Pressures are we Facing?

- It is difficult to maintain the City when:
 - Experiencing significant inflation
 - Increased cost of services
 - Staffing levels below similar cities
 - Future economic uncertainty
 - Increased crime trends
 - Shifting needs of the community
 - Changing demographics

WE CAN SOLVE THESE PROBLEM!



Proposal: Public Safety/Local Control ¼ Cent Sales Tax Ballot Measure

- Annual revenue estimated at \$6 million each year
- Provides funding for:
 - Maintaining 911 emergency response.
 - Reducing crimes trends.
 - Attracting and retaining high level public safety staff.
 - Putting additional Public Safety staff on City streets.
 - Keeping this community safe and clean.
 - Accomplishing this all now.

It's the community's choice!

Proposal Important Points

- Recent survey says 62% of Downey voters approve of a Measure for Public Safety
- This would be local funding for Downey, where we have local control – once the measure is passed, it CAN'T be taken by the State or the County.
- 100% of the funds come to and remain in Downey. Other agencies could pursue the remaining ¼ cent.
- Downey's sales tax rate will be equal with its surrounding neighbors
- Our Police Department Assessment will be ready in September, which we expect will tell us we need more officers. We are reviewing and looking at Fire as well. This will pay for the new staff.
- Help the City maintain its 911 response efforts.

Conclusion

- A local measure would help address priorities the community has said are important, including:
 - Keep tax payer dollars local.
 - Improve our 911 emergency response.
 - Ensure properly resourced fire/police protection and paramedic services.
 - Put more public safety staff on the streets.
 - Help reduce crime and keep us safe.
- Therefore, staff recommends that the City Council adopt the Resolutions placing the Public Safety/Local Control ballot measure before the voters for consideration in November.





City of *Downey*

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