



Agenda Report

20-633

Agenda Date: 6/23/2020

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Presentation On Voter Research Activities Related to Potential Revenue Measures for the November 2020 Ballot

BACKGROUND

In November 2019, the City Council authorized the City Manager to negotiate a consultant agreement for the purposes of conducting voter research related to revenue measures for consideration on the November 2020 ballot. In February 2020, the City retained the services of the Lew Edwards Group and their subconsultants EMC Research and Public Dialogue Consortium to conduct voter research activities using a variety of methodologies including a telephone survey, in-person community meetings and online surveys. A survey tool for the telephone survey was developed in early March with planned implementation for late March to be followed by a series of 14 community meetings and two pop-up events in the months of April and May. However, on March 11, 2020, the City declared a local state of emergency in alignment with the County of Santa Clara's Shelter-in-Place Order related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the uncertainty of allowable activities and without a viable means of soliciting community engagement, the voter research project was put on hold.

The City's successful transition to virtual communications allowed for a pivot of voter research strategies that included the development of "behind the scenes" tours to inform residents of the City's infrastructure needs via the Facebook Live platform as well as the utilization of video conferencing tools to conduct a series of virtual webinars directly with City residents. According to Facebook analytics, the video tours had a reach of 9,100 individuals ("reach" is defined as the number of unique people who saw the content). With a viable plan to ensure community engagement, the City authorized the consultants to proceed with voter survey activities which took place from May 27, 2020 through June 6, 2020. The purpose of June 23rd study session will be to share the findings of the voter research activities and community engagement activities.

DISCUSSION

The voter research consultant team consisted of the following three groups:

- **EMC Research**, a full-service opinion research firm that has conducted thousands of highly regarded and cited quantitative research studies. EMC was responsible for implementing the voter research survey.
- **The Lew Edwards Group**, a nationally-recognized, award-winning firm specializing in services to local governments, who served as Project Lead.
- **Public Dialogue Consortium (PDC)**, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with extensive experience in cutting edge, qualitative community dialogue and collaboration. PDC facilitated

the virtual community meeting process.

At the June 23, 2020 study session, each of the consultants will make a short verbal presentation of their findings and recommendations. Based on the Council discussion, staff will return on July 14, 2020 with any formal action on potential revenue measures to be added to the November 2020 ballot.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact with the presentation of the results of this community engagement initiative except for the consultant and staff time; however, there may be costs associated with implementing any professional recommendations from the consultants as directed by the Council/Board.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City’s official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City’s website and in the City Clerk’s Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>> or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

RECOMMENDATION

Review and Provide Input on Potential Revenue Measures to be Placed on the November 2020 Ballot.

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