



Press Release

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Contact: William Fox
Interim Finance Director
(626) 579-6540 Ext. 3251
Email: wfox@soelmonte.org

South El Monte's Measure ES Bound For November 2020 Ballot

South El Monte, California - The South El Monte City Council unanimously voted to place Measure ES on the November 2020 ballot that provides South El Monte voters a choice to enact a 0.25% sales tax. If passed by a majority of South El Monte voters, Measure ES would take the City's sales tax rate from 10.00% to 10.25%, which would provide approximately \$1 million annually to support local essential services, such as public safety and community services, and to help with the City's long-term financial viability.

“The City Council is dedicated to ensuring the legacy and success of South El Monte for generations to come,” said Mayor Gloria Olmos. “If South El Monte voters approve Measure ES in November, the approximate \$1 million in new funding generated from it could maintain public safety patrols and rapid response to 9-1-1 calls, well-preserved streets, sidewalks and community spaces, and emergency response centers able to provide resources in the event of a natural disaster such as an earthquake or a future health pandemic.”

The City has made difficult choices in the face of recent funding challenges. This includes utilizing the City's reserve balances to maintain service levels, deferring maintenance and improvements to the City's facilities and roads, and seeking one-time funds to offset the loss of General Fund and reserve balances. However, the City's 2020-21 budget includes a general fund deficit of \$2.4 million, and the City has no new revenue sources to address this.

In a series of City Council sessions in June 2020, numerous proposals were made to address the City's budget deficit, which has accumulated since the State dissolved the South El Monte Redevelopment Agency, which used to dedicate property tax generated in South El Monte for local use. The City's 2020-21 budget also reflects rising expenses that are out of the City's control, including certain contract costs and insurance rates. After analyzing the effects of similar sales tax measures in other areas of Los Angeles County, the City Council voted unanimously to place Measure ES on the November 2020 ballot.

Without additional revenue and certain action being taken, as stated in the City's adopted budget, the City is projected to have a deficit balance in two years, and it will not be possible for the City to maintain current levels and quality of essential services.

Ultimately, voters will decide whether to approve Measure ES, which features strict accountability requirements to ensure full transparency and public awareness at every stage of implementation. The measure includes public disclosure of all spending as well as annual independent financial audits to ensure the funds from the tax are used locally and effectively to solely benefit the South El Monte community.

Like cities across the country, South El Monte has been significantly impacted by the worldwide coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). Many facets of City life have been affected, including the closing of schools and businesses, and this has only added to the City's financial predicament by causing a loss in sales tax revenue.

The City Council will continue engaging and educating all community members about Measure ES and the impacts on City services if approved by voters.

For more information on Measure ES, visit cityofsouthelmonte.org or call (626) 579-6540.

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