STAFF REPORT



CITY OF OCEANSIDE

**ITEM NO. 32** 

DATE: June 26, 2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

FROM: City Manager's Office

## SUBJECT: CONSIDER PLACING AN EXTENSION OF THE CITY'S EXISTING ONE-HALF CENT GENERAL TRANSACTIONS AND USE (SALES) TAX ON THE NOVEMBER 5, 2024 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

## **SYNOPSIS**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution calling for an election to extend, but not raise, the one-half cent general transactions and use (sales) tax (known now as Measure X) for a period of ten years and introduce an ordinance amending Sections 34.6 and 34.6.16 of the Oceanside City Code. Staff recommends that the City Council place this item on the ballot to allow Oceanside voters to decide this important issue.

## BACKGROUND

Following prior City Council action in June 2018, Measure X appeared as an initiative on the November 2018 ballot whereby Oceanside voters were asked to consider increasing Oceanside's sales tax by 1/2 cent for a period of seven years beginning on April 1, 2019. The Measure was subsequently approved by a majority of Oceanside voters participating in the November 2018 election. On April 1, 2019, the sales tax rate in Oceanside became 8.25% and since then, the half-cent tax has generated between \$13 million and \$18 million per year. Measure X will expire in April 2026, unless renewed by voters.

Consistent with the Measure's initial intent, since April 2019, Measure X revenue has been used solely to improve road conditions, modernize the City's infrastructure, enhance public safety, aid in addressing homelessness, and expand youth programs. The expenditures are regularly reviewed by a Measure X Citizen Oversight Committee, which makes funding recommendations to the City Council.

## **Improving Road Conditions**

The Measure X revenue has aided in the repair of over 560 lane miles of Oceanside streets since 2019, and has helped reinitiate traffic calming measures in neighborhoods throughout the City.

## **Modernizing City Infrastructure**

The funding from Measure X has built a modern new Fire Station 1 downtown and a state-of-the-art Fire Training Tower on Jones Road. The revenue contributed to

the recent beachfront improvements, including constructing 16 new restrooms, a wider staircase connecting Pacific Street to an enhanced public plaza, a Police substation on The Strand, a maintenance building, and a new sewer lift station. Measure X has also been expended on designs to improve South Oceanside's Buccaneer Park, create a new park at El Corazon (Park Site 1), and preparation of a siting analysis for a new Police Department headquarters.

## Enhancing Public Safety

An essential effort, Measure X allowed the City to create a highly successful EMT program and implementation of a Downtown Paramedic Squad, purchase ambulances and equipment, expand the use of Police Community Service Officers, and address downtown crime. Notably, since 2021, Oceanside has witnessed a 17% reduction in overall crime and a 7% reduction in violent crime.

## Addressing Homelessness

Measure X funding has been utilized to increase the City's homeless outreach efforts. The most recent Point in Time Count reported an 11% reduction in the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the City. Homeless-related programs funded by Measure X include:

- The creation of an additional Homeless Outreach Team
- Transitional Bridge Housing
- Homelessness prevention funding
- Family reunification efforts

## Expanding Youth Programs

Since 2023, the revenue from Measure X has served over 1,400 Oceanside youth through 14 different no-cost programs providing youth mentoring and gang diversion activities.

<u>Feasibility Survey and Polling.</u> The City recently contracted with True North, Inc. to conduct a Feasibility Survey (Attachment 1) aimed at evaluating voter sentiment towards a potential renewal of the current tax. Polling was conducted in November 2023 to gauge baseline support for renewing the local sales tax while identifying the types of services voters are most interested in funding, should the measure pass. The survey was administered to a random sample of 1,353 registered voters in the City of Oceanside who are likely to participate in the November 2024 election. The margin of error for this sample size is +/- 2.6%. The survey employed multiple methods (telephone, text, and email) and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). The survey was also offered in Spanish.

Seven-in-ten respondents shared favorable opinions of the quality of life in Oceanside, and seventy percent (70%) indicated that they were satisfied with the City of Oceanside's efforts to provide municipal services. Survey results further showed that depending on the scenario presented in the survey, between 67% and 72% of likely voters surveyed indicated that they would likely or probably support a tax renewal at the current half-cent rate. The results of this survey indicate that a Measure X renewal is feasible for the

November 2024 ballot provided that it is kept affordable, focuses on projects and improvements that voters identify as their priorities, and is accompanied by robust community/opinion leader engagement.

## ANALYSIS

A general tax extension measure requires approval of 50% of voters, plus one. The deadline to place a measure on the November 5, 2024 General Election ballot is August 9, 2024, and requires approval by two-thirds of the City Council (four of five affirmative votes).

The average sales tax rate in cities throughout California is 8.68%. With Measure X, the sales tax rate currently applied in the City of Oceanside is 8.25%. This includes a combined statewide rate of 7.25% and a San Diego County district tax of 0.50% for the TransNet Program, administered by SANDAG to fund local transportation projects. Of the statewide 7.75% collected, Oceanside receives only 1%. With the addition of Measure X's half-cent, Oceanside receives 1.5%.

Pursuant to Revenue and Taxation Code Section 7251.1, the combined taxes in any county (above the statewide tax rate) cannot exceed 2% without special legislative exemption. Should the City Council elect to place a sales tax extension on the November 2024 ballot, a general-purpose tax extension of one-half percent (0.50%) is recommended with a ten-year sunset. This extension is projected to generate approximately \$190 million in revenues over the ten-year life of the measure. Pursuant to California Revenue and Taxation Code, food items (groceries), prescriptions, certain medical devices, and other "Necessities of Life" are exempt from sales tax.

Staff contracted with an economist, BW Research, in 2018 who analyzed Oceanside's sales tax revenue and demographics and estimated that 37% of sales tax revenue comes from residents, with the majority (63%) being paid by non-residents, tourists, and businesses.

Although the Measure X half-cent sales tax does not expire until April 2026, any proposal to extend the measure must be presented to voters during a General Election, which occurs every two years. This is why a decision was made to bring it forward in the 2024 election. If approved by voters, the half-cent tax set to expire in April 2026 would be extended until April 2036. In order to extend the local half-cent sales tax, the City Council must adopt a resolution (Attachment 2) calling for and giving notice of a consolidated general election, to be held on November 5, 2024, and ordering submission of a measure at said election, to consider approval of the ordinance. The Council must approve the ordinance and resolution with a two-thirds vote, which requires four out of five affirmative votes. Majority voter approval is required to approve the local sales tax extension (50% of voters, plus one).

If authorized by City Council, the ballot language to be presented to the voters is as follows:

"To continue providing funding to maintain and improve general city services in Oceanside, including: road repairs, infrastructure maintenance, safe parks, beach and habitat restoration, fire, paramedic, and 9-1-1 emergency response, police patrols, crime prevention, and addressing homelessness, shall the City of Oceanside extend the existing ½ cent sales tax at the current rate (no increase) for 10 years, providing approximately \$19,000,000 annually for general government use, with citizen oversight, independent audits, and all funds controlled locally?"

If approved by the voters, the existing half-cent sales tax would be extended until April 2036.

<u>Citizen Oversight and Accountability</u>. An ordinance (Attachment 3) contains the following continued provisions to provide oversight, transparency and accountability for the funds received from the sales tax:

- Separate Fund. All revenue generated by the tax is accounted for in a separate sub-fund within the General Fund entitled with the name of the measure. Any and all expenditures will be tracked and accounted for by the City Financial Services Department in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and presented annually in a report to the Citizens' Oversight Committee.
- Citizens' Oversight Committee. The City Council created a Citizens' Oversight Committee in 2019. Committee members include those with a range of expertise including accounting, finance and engineering. The Committee operates under the Brown Act and is responsible for review and comment on the Finance Report, Spending Plan and Annual Audit; preparation of an annual report regarding compliance with the Spending Plan.
- Spending Plan. The City Manager's Office prepares an annual spending plan for review and recommendation by the Citizens' Oversight Committee prior to City Council consideration. The Spending Plan includes specific proposals for near-term expenditures and a plan for expenditures throughout the ten-year term of the tax.
- Annual Independent Audit. A review of the collection and expenditure of the tax revenue is included in the annual audit by the City's independent auditors. This audit is presented each year to the Citizens' Oversight Committee for review and then presented to the City Council.

In order to continue the level of services and number of projects that Measure X has funded, an extension of the half-cent sales tax would be necessary. Should the half-cent sales tax not be extended, the City would likely reduce its services to levels similar to those that existed prior to 2019. The positions funded by Measure X are provisional and contingent on the existence of this half-cent sales tax. The overwhelming majority of revenues have been spent on programs and capital projects and not positions. Staff reviewed the amount of the existing sales tax spent on positions and found it to be on average \$1.95 Million per year or 19% of total Measure X expenditures. Staff does not

anticipate this percentage to ever exceed 25% and would not develop a spending plan that exceeded 25% toward positions without prior direction from Council.

<u>Impartial Analysis</u>. Pursuant to Elections Code Section 9280, the proposed resolution directs the City Attorney to prepare an impartial analysis of the measure not exceeding 500 words showing the effect of the measure on the existing law and the operation of the measure.

<u>Ballot Arguments.</u> Elections Code Section 9282 allows the legislative body, any member or members of the legislative body authorized by the body, any individual voter who is eligible to vote on the measure, bona fide association of citizens, or any combination of voters and associations, to submit an argument for or against a measure placed on the ballot by the legislative body. Arguments may not exceed 300 words in length, and must be submitted to the City Clerk by a deadline to be established by the Registrar of Voters. Pursuant to Elections Code 9285 (a)(2) the author or a majority of the authors of an argument relating to a city measure may prepare and submit a rebuttal argument or may authorize in writing another person or persons to prepare, submit, or sign the rebuttal argument. A rebuttal argument shall not exceed 250 words.

## FISCAL IMPACT

The City's sales tax consultant, HdL Companies, estimates that a renewed half-cent transaction and use tax (aka sales tax) could generate approximately \$19 million in annual revenue. This increase is projected to generate \$190 million in revenues over the life of the measure, with actual revenues determined by economic conditions. State law requires that the ballot question include the amount of money to be raised annually and the rate and duration of the tax to be levied. Should the City Council elect to place an extension on the ballot, staff recommends a duration of ten years to allow for more effective budgeting by adding a longer period of funding certainty. This timeframe is included in the proposed ballot question.

If passed, preparatory costs and ongoing administration costs will be charged by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration and will be paid from the revenues received.

## **INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Does not apply.

## COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT

At its special meeting on April 30, 2024, the Measure X Citizens Oversight Committee found that funds from the one-half cent sales tax, in the absence of extenuating circumstances, have been expended on improved infrastructure and improved public safety services consistent with the intent of the measure

## **CITY ATTORNEY'S ANALYSIS**

A sales tax extension that generates revenue to be used for any governmental purpose is considered a general tax. A general tax extension must be approved by a majority of voters. The election to approve a general tax extension must be consolidated with a regularly scheduled general election for members of the city council, except in cases of emergency declared by unanimous vote of the council. Revenue and Taxation Code Section 7285.9 requires the extension be approved by two-thirds of the entire city council.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution calling for an election to extend, but not raise, the one-half cent general transactions and use (sales) tax (known now as Measure X) for a period of ten years and introduce an ordinance amending Sections 34.6 and 34.6.16 of the Oceanside City Code. Staff recommends that the City Council place this item on the ballot to allow Oceanside voters to decide this important issue.

PREPARED BY:

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SUBMITTED BY:

Jonathan Borrego City Manager

**REVIEWED BY:** 

John Mullen, City Attorney Jill Moya, Financial Services Director

### ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. Feasibility Study
- 2. Resolution
- 3. Ordinance

MEASURE X RENEWAL SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT FOR BASELINE STUDY

Prepared for the CITY OF OCEANSIDE







NOVEMBER 2023



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	
List of Tables	ii
List of Figures	iii
Introduction	
Motivation for Research	1
Overview of Methodology	2
Organization of Report.	2
Acknowledgments	2
Disclaimer	2
About True North	2
Key Findings	3
Quality of Life & City Services	
Quality of Life.	5
Question 2	
Changes to Improve Oceanside	
Question 3	
Overall Performance Rating	
Question 4	
Initial Ballot Test	
Question 5	
Support by Subgroups	
Reasons for Not Supporting Measure	
Question 6	
Projects & Services.	
Question 7	
Service Ratings by Initial Support	
Positive Arguments	
Question 8	
Positive Arguments by Initial Support	
Interim Ballot Test	
Question 9	
Support by Subgroups	
Negative Arguments	
Question 10	
Negative Arguments by Initial Support	
Final Ballot Test	
Question 11	
Change in Support	
Fiscal Management	
Question 12	
Background & Demographics	
Methodology	
Questionnaire Development	
Programming, Pre-Test & Translation	
	28
Statistical Margin of Error	28
Recruiting & Data Collection	29
Data Processing	30
Rounding	30
Questionnaire & Toplines	

# LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Demographic Breakdown of Support at Initial Ballot Test
Table 2	Top Projects & Services by Position at Initial Ballot Test
Table 3	Top Positive Arguments by Position at Initial Ballot Test
Table 4	Demographic Breakdown of Support at Interim Ballot Test
Table 5	Negative Arguments by Position at Initial Ballot Test
Table 6	Demographic Breakdown of Support at Final Ballot Test
Table 7	Movement Between Initial & Final Ballot Test 24
Table 8	Demographics of Sample 27

# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Quality of Life
Figure 2	Quality of Life by Years in Oceanside & Age 5
Figure 3	Quality of Life by Child in Hsld, Homeowner on Voter File, Gender & Survey
	Language
Figure 4	Changes to Improve City
Figure 5	Overall Satisfaction
Figure 6	Overall Satisfaction by Years in Oceanside & Age
Figure 7	Overall Satisfaction by Child in Hsld, Homeowner on Voter File, Gender &
	Survey Language
Figure 8	Initial Ballot Test
Figure 9	Reasons for Not Supporting Measure
Figure 10	Projects & Services
Figure 11	Positive Arguments Tier 1
Figure 12	Positive Arguments Tier 2 16
Figure 13	Interim Ballot Test
Figure 14	Negative Arguments
Figure 15	Final Ballot Test 22
Figure 16	Opinion of Fiscal Management 25
Figure 17	Opinion of Fiscal Management by Years in Oceanside, Age & Child in Hsld 25
Figure 18	Opinion of Fiscal Management by Homeowner on Voter File, Gender, Survey
	Language & Position at Initial Ballot Test 26
Figure 19	Maximum Margin of Error Due to Sampling

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

The northernmost coastal city in San Diego County, the City of Oceanside is currently home to an estimated 167,086 residents.<sup>1</sup> Incorporated in 1888, the City's team of full-time and part-time employees provides a full suite of services to its diverse resident and business communities. Oceanside is also one of the few cities of its size with its own Police and Fire Departments, airport, and small craft harbor.

To help keep Oceanside safe, clean, and well-maintained, in 2018 voters approved a half-cent local sales tax (Measure X) to provide funding for general municipal services including police, fire, paramedic, and 911 response, pothole repair, street maintenance, improved infrastructure, parks and beach maintenance, and homeless programs. Since its inception, Measure X has raised more than \$11.2 million annually, every dime of which has been reinvested in the community to provide essential city services. Unless renewed by voters, Measure X will expire in 2027.

**MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH** The primary purpose of this study was to produce an unbiased, statistically reliable evaluation of voters' interest in renewing the Measure X local sales tax to continue funding for essential city services. Additionally, should the City decide to move forward with a revenue measure, the survey can guide how best to structure the measure so it is consistent with the community's priorities and expressed needs. Specifically, the study was designed to:

- Gauge current, *baseline* support for renewing the Measure X local sales tax to continue funding for general municipal services;
- Identify the types of services voters are most interested in funding, should the measure pass;
- Expose voters to arguments in favor of, and against, the proposed tax measure to assess how information affects support for the measure; and
- Estimate support for the measure once voters are presented with the types of information they will likely be exposed to during an election cycle.

It is important to note at the outset that voters' opinions about tax measures are often somewhat fluid, especially when the amount of information they initially have about a measure is limited. How voters think and feel about a measure today may not be the same way they think and feel once they have had a chance to hear more information about the measure during the election cycle. Accordingly, to accurately assess the feasibility of renewing a local sales tax to fund municipal services, it was important that in addition to measuring *current* opinions about the measure (Question 5), the survey expose respondents to the types of information voters are likely to encounter during an election cycle, including arguments in favor of (Question 8) and opposed to (Question 10) the measure, and gauge how this type of information ultimately impacts their voting decision (Questions 9 & 11).

<sup>1.</sup> Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020 DEC Redistricting Data (PL94-171).

**OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY** For a full discussion of the research methods and techniques used in this study, turn to *Methodology* on page 28. In brief, the survey was administered to a random sample of 1,353 voters in the City of Oceanside who are likely to participate in the November 2024 election. The survey followed a mixed-method design that employed multiple recruiting methods (email, text, and telephone) and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). Administered in English and Spanish between November 7 and November 14, 2023, the average interview lasted 16 minutes.

**ORGANIZATION OF REPORT** This report is designed to meet the needs of readers who prefer a summary of the findings as well as those who are interested in the details of the results. For those who seek an overview of the findings, the section titled *Key Findings* is for you. It provides a summary of the most important factual findings of the survey in a Question & Answer format. For the interested reader, this section is followed by a more detailed question-by-question discussion of the results from the survey by topic area (see *Table of Contents*), as well as a description of the methodology employed for collecting and analyzing the data. And, for the truly ambitious reader, the questionnaire used for the interviews is contained at the back of this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 31), and a complete set of crosstabulations for the survey results is contained in Appendix A.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** True North thanks the City of Oceanside for the opportunity to assist the City in this important effort. The collective expertise, local knowledge, and insight provided by city staff and representatives improved the overall quality of the research presented here. A special thanks also to Jared Boigon (TeamCivX) for contributing to the design of the study.

**DISCLAIMER** The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the authors (Dr. Timothy McLarney and Richard Sarles) at True North Research, Inc. and not necessarily those of the City of Oceanside. Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

**ABOUT TRUE NORTH** True North is a full-service survey research firm that is dedicated to providing public agencies with a clear understanding of the values, perceptions, priorities, and concerns of their residents and voters. Through designing and implementing scientific surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews as well as expert interpretation of the findings, True North helps its clients to move with confidence when making strategic decisions in a variety of areas—such as planning, policy evaluation, performance management, establishing fiscal priorities, passing revenue measures, and developing effective public information campaigns.

During their careers, Dr. McLarney and Mr. Sarles have designed and conducted over 1,200 survey research studies for public agencies, including more than 400 revenue measure feasibility studies. Of the measures that have gone to ballot based on Dr. McLarney's recommendation, 95% have been successful. In total, the research that Dr. McLarney has conducted has led to over \$35 billion in voter-approved local revenue measures.

# KEY FINDINGS

As noted in the *Introduction*, this study was designed to provide the City of Oceanside with a statistically reliable understanding of voters' interest in renewing the Measure X sales tax at the existing half-cent rate to continue funding for streets, infrastructure, parks, and other general services. Whereas subsequent sections of this report are devoted to conveying the detailed results of the survey, in this section we attempt to 'see the forest through the trees' and note how the collective results of the survey answer some of the key questions that motivated the research. The following conclusions are based on True North's and TeamCivX's interpretations of the survey results and the firms' collective experience conducting revenue measure studies for public agencies throughout the State.

*Is it feasible to place a Measure X renewal measure on the November 2024 ballot?*  Yes. Oceanside voters value the services they receive from the City and are keenly interested in keeping their community safe, clean, and wellmaintained. Collectively, these sentiments translate into strong *natural* support (72%) for renewing the Measure X sales tax at the current rate to fund city services in the City of Oceanside, including fire protection, paramedic, and 911 emergency response; police patrols and crime prevention; maintenance of streets, potholes, parks, beaches, and infrastructure; and addressing homelessness, graffiti removal, and other city services.

The results of this survey indicate that a Measure X renewal is feasible for the November 2024 ballot provided that it is kept affordable, focuses on projects and improvements that voters identify as their priorities, *and* is accompanied by robust community/opinion leader engagement, education, and communication (more on this below).

Having stated that a sales tax measure appears feasible, it is important to note that the measure's prospects will be shaped by external factors and that a recommendation to place the measure on the November 2024 ballot comes with several qualifications and conditions. Indeed, although the results are promising, all revenue measures must overcome challenges prior to being successful. The proposed measure is no exception. The following paragraphs discuss some of the challenges and the next steps that True North and TeamCivX recommend.

Which services do Oceanside voters view as priorities? A general tax is "any tax imposed for general governmental purposes"<sup>2</sup> and is distinguished from a special tax in that the funds raised by a general tax are not earmarked for a specific purpose(s). Thus, a general tax provides a municipality with a great deal of flexibility with respect to what is funded by the measure on a year-to-year basis.

> Although the Oceanside City Council would have the discretion to decide how to spend the revenues, the survey results indicate that voters are

<sup>2.</sup> Section 1, Article XIIIC, California Constitution.

*primarily* interested in using the proceeds to maintain city streets, sidewalks, and infrastructure (94% strongly or somewhat favor), fix potholes (92%), maintain parks, beaches, and recreation facilities including courts, fields, and playgrounds (92%), provide fire protection and paramedic services (91%), and provide quick responses to 911 emergencies (91%). Considering the *intensity* of responses, voters also expressed great interest in addressing homelessness (70% strongly favor) with Measure X funds.

How might a public information campaign affect support for the proposed measure? As noted in the body of this report, individuals' opinions about revenue measures are often not rigid, especially when the amount of information presented to the public on a measure has been limited. Thus, in addition to measuring current support for the measure, one of the goals of this study was to explore how the introduction of additional information about the measure may affect voters' opinions about the proposal.

It is clear from the survey results that some voters' opinions about the proposed measure are somewhat sensitive to the nature—and amount— of information that they have about the measure. Information about the specific services that could be funded by the sales tax, as well as arguments in favor of the measure, were found by many voters to be compelling reasons to support the measure—effectively boosting support for the measure to 74% at the Interim Ballot Test. However, voters also exhibited sensitivity to opposition arguments, and there is a risk that voters could be swayed by divisive and hyper-partisan campaigning during the 2024 election cycle. Accordingly, one of the keys to building and *sustaining* support for a Measure X renewal will be the presence of an effective, well-organized public outreach effort, as well as an independent campaign that focuses on the need for the measure as well as the many benefits that it will bring.

A survey is a snapshot in time—which means the results of this study and the conclusions noted above must be viewed in light of the *current* economic and political climates. On the one hand, this should provide some reassurances to the City that a Measure X renewal is feasible. Even with lingering concerns regarding the pandemic, inflation, high gas prices, and the trajectory of the economy, voters strongly supported continuing Measure X funding for public safety, streets, infrastructure, parks and beaches, homeless programs, and other general services.

On the other hand, the months leading up to a 2024 election are likely to be punctuated with significant events on the public health, economic, and political fronts. Exactly how these events unfold and may shape voters' opinions remains to be seen. Should the economy and/or political climate improve, support for the measure could increase. Conversely, negative economic and/or political developments (including devolving into a hyper-partisan environment) and/or skewed voter turnout could dampen support for the measure below what was recorded in this study.

How might changes to the economic or political climate alter support for the measure?

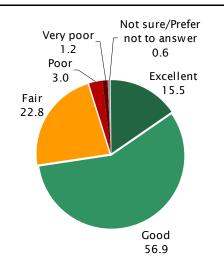
# QUALITY OF LIFE & CITY SERVICES

The opening section of the survey was designed to gauge voters' opinions regarding the quality of life in Oceanside, their ideas for how it can be improved, as well as their assessment of the City's performance in providing municipal services.

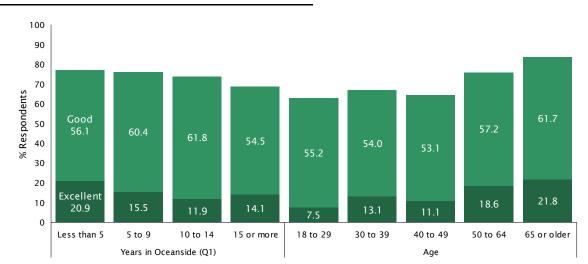
**QUALITY OF LIFE** At the outset of the interview, voters were asked to rate the quality of life in the City of Oceanside using a five-point scale of excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor. As shown in Figure 1 below, seven-in-ten voters shared favorable opinions of the quality of life in Oceanside, with 16% reporting it is excellent and 57% stating it is good. Approximately 23% of voters surveyed rated the quality of life in the City as fair, whereas 4% used poor or very poor to describe the quality of life in Oceanside and 1% were unsure.

**Question 2** How would you rate the overall quality of life in Oceanside? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?

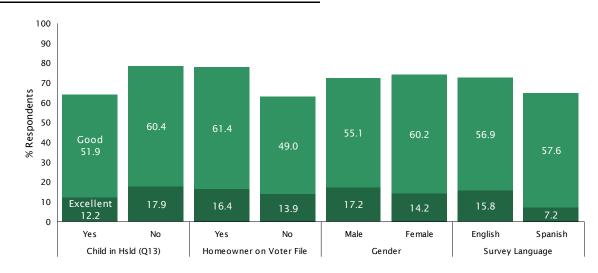




Figures 2 and 3 show how ratings of the quality of life in the City of Oceanside varied by length of residence, age of the respondent, presence of a child in the household, homeownership status, gender, and survey language. When compared to their respective counterparts, quality of life ratings (excellent and good) were highest among voters who have lived in the City less than 15 years, voters 50 years and older, those without a child in the household, homeowners, and respondents who took the survey in English.



### FIGURE 2 QUALITY OF LIFE BY YEARS IN OCEANSIDE & AGE



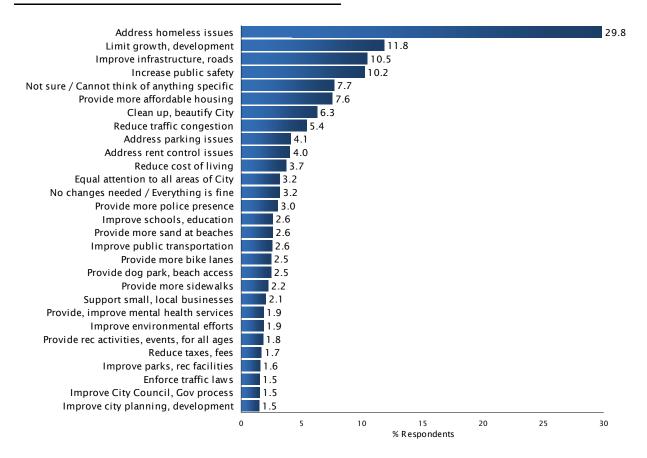
### FIGURE 3 QUALITY OF LIFE BY CHILD IN HSLD, HOMEOWNER ON VOTER FILE, GENDER & SURVEY LANGUAGE

**CHANGES TO IMPROVE OCEANSIDE** The next question in this series asked voters to indicate the one thing that city government could *change* to make Oceanside a better place to live, now and in the future. Question 3 was posed in an open-ended manner, allowing respondents to mention any aspect or attribute that came to mind without being prompted by or restricted to a particular list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in Figure 4 on the next page.

Among specific changes desired, addressing homeless issues was by far the most common, mentioned by approximately 30% of voters surveyed, followed by limiting growth and development (12%), improving infrastructure and roads (11%), and increasing public safety (10%). Approximately one-in-ten respondents could not think of a change to Oceanside that they desired (8%) or stated flatly that no changes are needed/everything is fine (3%).

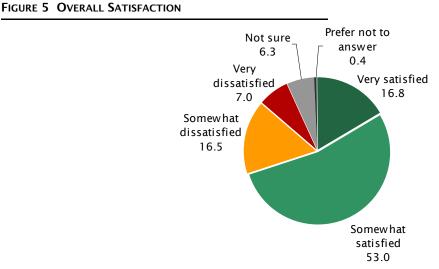
**Question 3** If the city government could change one thing to make Oceanside a better place to live now and in the future, what change would you like to see?

#### FIGURE 4 CHANGES TO IMPROVE CITY

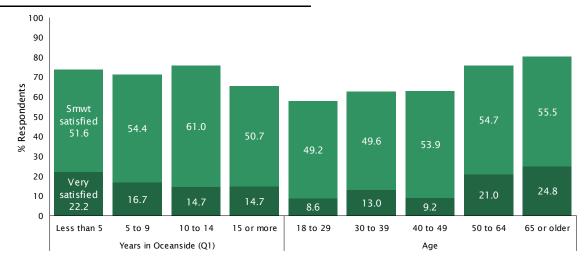


**OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING** The final question in this series asked respondents to indicate if, overall, they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of Oceanside is doing to provide city services. Because this question does not reference a specific program, facility, or service and requested that the respondent consider the City's performance in general, the findings of this question may be regarded as an *overall performance rating* for the City.

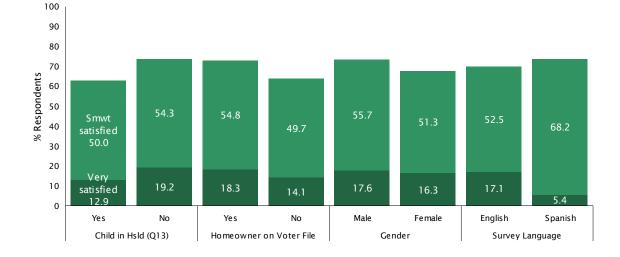
As shown in Figure 5 on the next page, seven-in-ten voters surveyed indicated that they were satisfied with the City of Oceanside's efforts to provide municipal services, with 17% saying they were very satisfied and 53% somewhat satisfied. Approximately 24% reported that they were dissatisfied with the City's overall performance, whereas 7% were unsure or unwilling to state their opinion. For the interested reader, figures 6 and 7 display how the percentage of respondents satisfied with the City's overall performance varied across demographic subgroups. Of note is that satisfaction with the City's performance tends to increase with the age of the respondent. **Question 4** Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of Oceanside is doing to provide city services?











## City of Oceanside

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# INITIAL BALLOT TEST

The primary research objective of this survey was to estimate voters' support for renewing a halfcent sales tax to continue funding for city services in Oceanside including fire protection, paramedic, and 911 emergency response; police patrols and crime prevention; maintenance of streets, potholes, parks, beaches, and infrastructure; and addressing homelessness, graffiti removal, and other city services. To this end, Question 5 was designed to take an early assessment of voters' support for the proposed measure.

The motivation for placing Question 5 near the front of the survey is twofold. First, voter support for a measure can often depend on the amount of information they have about a measure. At this point in the survey, the respondent has not been provided information about the proposed measure beyond what is presented in the ballot language. This situation is analogous to a voter casting a ballot with limited knowledge about the measure, such as what might occur in the absence of an effective campaign. Question 5, also known as the Initial Ballot Test, is thus a good measure of voter support for the proposed measure *as it is today*, on the natural. Because the Initial Ballot Test provides a gauge of natural support for the measure, it also serves a second purpose in that it provides a useful baseline from which to judge the impact of various information items conveyed later in the survey on voter support for the measure.

**Question 5** Next year, voters in your area may be asked to vote on a local ballot measure. Let me read you a summary of the measure. To continue funding for city services in Oceanside including fire protection, paramedic, and 911 emergency response; police patrols and crime prevention; maintenance of streets, potholes, parks, beaches, and infrastructure; addressing home-lessness, graffiti removal, and other city services; shall the ordinance renewing the City of Oceanside's half-cent sales tax be adopted at the current rate (no increase), continuing 18 million dollars annually for unrestricted general government use for 10 years, with citizen oversight, independent audits, and all money locally controlled? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?

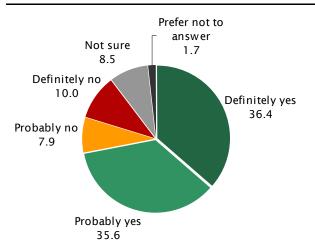


FIGURE 8 INITIAL BALLOT TEST

As shown in Figure 8, 72% of likely November 2024 voters surveyed indicated that they would definitely or probably support the proposed sales tax renewal at the current half-cent rate, whereas 18% stated that they would oppose the measure and 10% were unsure or unwilling to share their vote choice. For general taxes in California, the level of support recorded at the Initial Ballot Test is approximately 22 percentage points above the simple majority (50%+1) required for passage.

**SUPPORT BY SUBGROUPS** For the interested reader, Table 1 shows how support for the measure at the Initial Ballot Test varied by key demographic traits. The blue column (Approximate % of Universe) indicates the percentage of the likely November 2024 electorate that each subgroup category comprises. Support for the proposed measure was widespread, exceeding a majority in *all* identified subgroups with the exception of voters with a negative opinion of the City's fiscal management and those dissatisfied with the job the City is doing to provide municipal services.

		Approximate %		
		of Voter	% Probably or	
		Universe	Definitely Yes	% Not sure
Overall		100.0	72.0	8.5
	Democrat	37.3	79.5	6.4
Party	Republican	30.0	66.3	8.2
	Other / DTS	32.7	68.6	11.1
	Since Nov '18	19.7	75.9	11.4
Registration Year	Jun '06 to <nov '18<="" th=""><th>33.2</th><th>69.3</th><th>9.4</th></nov>	33.2	69.3	9.4
	Before Jun '06	47.2	72.2	6.6
Overall Satisfaction (Q4)	Satisfied	74.8	81.9	5.4
Overall Satisfaction (Q4)	Dissatisfied	25.2	45.4	14.9
	Less than 5	22.3	81.0	8.0
Years in Oceanside (Q1)	5 to 9	19.6	73.1	9.0
	10 to 14	14.0	71.4	5.3
	15 or more	44.0	67.2	9.3
	18 to 29	17.4	63.3	11.6
	30 to 39	16.6	69.0	11.7
Age	40 to 49	15.0	70.1	10.2
	50 to 64	23.5	71.2	7.6
	65 or older	27.5	81.0	4.4
	Excellent, good	35.5	89.9	4.0
Fiscal Management	Fair	29.5	66.5	9.8
Rating (Q12)	Poor, very poor	13.9	30.3	16.4
	Not sure	21.1	77.9	7.5
	Single dem	19.4	76.2	5.6
	Dual dem	10.3	86.5	6.8
Household Party Type	Single rep	12.2	65.1	9.0
	Dual rep	9.5	64.1	8.3
	Other / Mixed	48.6	70.5	9.9
Child in Hsld (Q13)	Yes	31.3	64.7	12.6
	No	68.7	76.6	6.4
Homeowner on Voter File	Yes	64.0	73.0	7.4
	No	36.0	70.2	10.3
Likely to Vote by Mail	Yes	80.1	73.3	7.6
	No	19.9	66.6	12.0
Likely Mar 2024 Voter	Yes	68.1	72.9	6.4
	No	31.9	70.0	12.9
Gender	Male	51.0	74.2	7.8
	Female	49.0	72.0	8.5
Survey Language	English	97.0	72.0	8.4
Sarrey Language	Spanish	3.0	71.9	11.1

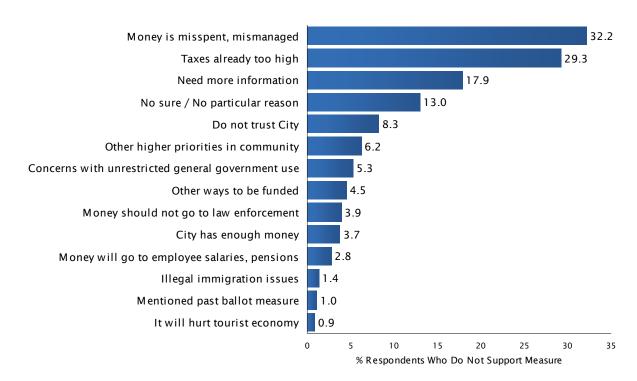
TARLE 1	DEMOGRAPHIC	RREAKDOWN	OF SUPPORT	ΔΤ ΙΝΙΤΙΔΙ	RALLOT TEST
I ADLE I	DEMOGRAPHIC	DREAKDOWN	OF SUPPORT	AT INITIAL	DALLUT TEST

nitial Ballot Test

**REASONS FOR NOT SUPPORTING MEASURE** Respondents who opposed the measure (or were unsure) at the Initial Ballot Test were subsequently asked if there was a particular reason for their position. Question 6 was asked in an open-ended manner, allowing respondents to mention any reason that came to mind without being prompted by, or restricted to, a particular list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in Figure 9.

Among the reasons offered for not supporting the measure, the perception that city funds have been/will be mismanaged or misspent (32%) and a belief that taxes are already too high (29%) were the most common, followed by a need for more information (18%).

**Question 6** Is there a particular reason why you do not support or are unsure about the measure I just described?



#### FIGURE 9 REASONS FOR NOT SUPPORTING MEASURE

# PROJECTS & SERVICES

The ballot language presented in Question 5 indicated that the proposed measure would continue funding for city services in Oceanside including fire protection, paramedic, and 911 emergency response; police patrols and crime prevention; maintenance of streets, potholes, parks, beaches, and infrastructure; and addressing homelessness, graffiti removal, and other city services. The purpose of Question 7 was to provide respondents with a full range of services that may be funded by the proposed measure, as well as identify which of these services voters most favored funding with the proceeds of the measure.

After reading each service, respondents were asked if they would favor or oppose spending some of the money on that particular item assuming that the measure passed. Descriptions of the services tested, as well as voters' responses, are shown in Figure 10 below.<sup>3</sup> The order in which the services were presented to respondents was randomized to avoid a systematic position bias, although they have been sorted in the figure based on the combined percentage of respondents who indicated they strongly favored or somewhat favored spending measure proceeds on the item.

**Question 7** The measure we've been discussing will provide funding for a variety of services in your community. If the measure passes, would you favor or oppose using some of the money to: \_\_\_\_\_, or do you not have an opinion?

			Strongl	y favoı				Somewha	at favor		
K Maintain city streets, sidewalks and i	nfrastructure			66.4					27.1		
Q7e	Fix potholes			63.6				2	8.5		
<ul> <li>Maintain parks, beaches, and recreation facilit</li> <li>courts, fields, and playgrounds</li> </ul>	ies including		(	51.0				30	0.8		
$\overset{\circ}{O}$ Provide fire protection and param	edic services			67.0	)				23.6		
Provide quick responses to 911	emergencies			69.	2				21.4		
Keep trash and pollution out of local waterway O beaches	s and off our			65.4				2	5.0		
Remove graffiti and clean piles of trash and litte of ump along streets, sidewalks, and in public		e 56.2		33.2							
Address H	homelessness	s 69.8			18.7						
م ک Reduce gang activity and drug-re	elated crimes		6	50.3				24.0			
$\overset{E}{\sim}$ Support youth programs that keep kids away	y from gangs		53.	.5				29.5			
e Provide police services, including neighborhood p ک and crime prevention	oolice patrols		5	9.1				22.5			
Restore sand on I	local beaches		47.0				31.	2			
E Provide programs and servic	ces to seniors		39.7				36.9		Ī		
K ♂ Improve affordable hou	using options		46.5			2	20.8				
	0	10	20	30	40 %	50 Respoi	60 ndents	70	80	90	_

### FIGURE 10 PROJECTS & SERVICES

3. For the full text of the services tested, turn to Question 7 in *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 31.

All projects and services tested were quite popular with Oceanside voters, with at least twothirds of respondents indicating they would favor spending measure proceeds on each item tested. That said, the items that resonated with the largest percentage of respondents were maintaining city streets, sidewalks, and infrastructure (94% strongly or somewhat favor), fixing potholes (92%), maintaining parks, beaches, and recreation facilities including courts, fields, and playgrounds (92%), providing fire protection and paramedic services (91%), and providing quick responses to 911 emergencies (91%). Considering the *intensity* of responses, another notable service was addressing homelessness (70% strongly favor).

**SERVICE RATINGS BY INITIAL SUPPORT** Table 2 on the next page presents the top five services (showing the percentage of respondents who *strongly* favor each) by position at the Initial Ballot Test. Not surprisingly, individuals who initially opposed the measure were generally less likely to favor spending money on a given service when compared with supporters. Nevertheless, initial supporters, opponents, and the undecided did agree on two of the top five priorities for funding.

Position at Initial Ballot			
Test (Q5)	Item	Project or Service Summary	% Favor
	Q7d	Provide quick responses to 911 emergencies	77
	Q7c	Provide fire protection and paramedic services	75
Probably or Definitely <b>Yes</b> (n = 974)	Q7i	Address homelessness	74
	Q7h	Keep trash and pollution out of local waterways and off our beaches	72
	Q7f	Maintain city streets, sidewalks and infrastructure	72
	Q7i	Address homelessness	55
	Q7e	Fix potholes	53
Probably or Definitely <b>No</b> (n = 242)	Q7f	Maintain city streets, sidewalks and infrastructure	50
	Q7d	Provide quick responses to 911 emergencies	47
	Q7c	Provide fire protection and paramedic services	47
	Q7e	Fix potholes	65
	Q7i	Address homelessness	64
<b>Not Sure</b> ( <i>n</i> = 115)	Q7h	Keep trash and pollution out of local waterways and off our beaches	58
	Q7f	Maintain city streets, sidewalks and infrastructure	56
	Q7g	Maintain parks, beaches, and recreation facilities including courts, fields, and playgrounds	52

### TABLE 2 TOP PROJECTS & SERVICES BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST

14

# POSITIVE ARGUMENTS

If the City chooses to place a measure on an upcoming ballot, voters will be exposed to various arguments about the measure in the ensuing months. Proponents of the measure will present arguments to try to persuade voters to support a measure, just as opponents may present arguments to achieve the opposite goal. For this study to be a reliable gauge of voter support for the proposed sales tax measure, it is important that the survey simulate the type of discussion and debate that will occur prior to the vote taking place and identify how this information ultimately shapes voters' opinions about the measure.

The objective of Question 8 was thus to present respondents with arguments in favor of the proposed measure and identify whether they felt the arguments were convincing reasons to support it. Arguments in opposition to the measure were also presented and are discussed later in this report (see *Negative Arguments* on page 20). Within each series, specific arguments were administered in random order to avoid a systematic position bias.

**Question 8** What I'd like to do now is tell you what some people are saying about the measure we've been discussing. Supporters of the measure say: \_\_\_\_. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to SUPPORT the measure?

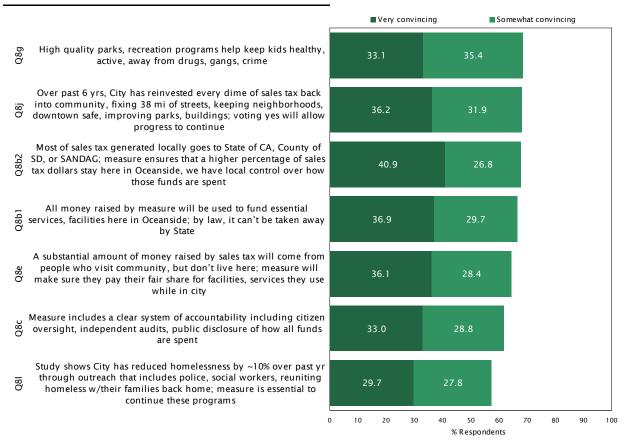
		Very convincing
Q8h1	Beaches are vital to quality of life & economy in Oceanside,but they are shrinking more each yr; by replacing sand that is lost due to erosion, removing trash, pollution from waterways, this measure will help keep beaches healthy	41.6
Q8i	City maintains 400+ mi of streets, 590 mi of water pipes, 500 mi of sewer pipes; measure will allow City to keep up with repairs, maintenance; if we don't take care of it now, will be more expensive to repair in future	42.3
Q8h2	Beaches are vital to quality of life in Oceanside, but they are shrinking more each yr; by replacing sand that is lost due to erosion, removing trash, pollution from waterways, measure will help keep beaches healthy	43.3
Q8f	Fast emergency response times for 911 calls are critical for saving lives; measure will ensure that we have enough police officers, firefighters, dispatchers, paramedics to respond quickly to 911 emergencies	45.1
Q8k	Since 2021, Oceanside has reduced overall crime by 17%, violent crime by 7% thanks to funding for public safety, crime prevention; we need to renew funding to avoid cuts in programs that have proven to be effective	36.1
Q8a	Measure will NOT raise your taxes; it simply extends sales tax approved by voters in 2018 for 10 more years to continue funding for important city services	46.5
Q8d	By keeping city safe, clean, well-maintained, measure will help protect our property values, keep Oceanside a special place to live	38.4

## Somewhat convincing 34.8 33.7 32.0 30.0 33.9 22.9 0 10 20 30 50 70 80 90 100 40 60 % Respondents

### FIGURE 11 POSITIVE ARGUMENTS TIER 1

Figure 11 presents the truncated positive arguments that tested in the top tier, as well as voters' reactions to the arguments. Figure 12 presents the remainder of the positive arguments tested. The arguments in both figures are sorted from most convincing to least convincing based on the percentage of respondents who indicated that the argument was either a 'very convincing' or 'somewhat convincing' reason to support the measure. Using this methodology, the most compelling positive arguments were: Our beaches are vital to the quality of life in Oceanside and our local economy - but they are shrinking more each year. By replacing sand that is lost due to erosion and removing trash and pollution from our waterways, this measure will help keep our beaches healthy (76% very or somewhat convincing),<sup>4</sup> The City maintains over 400 miles of streets in Oceanside, 590 miles of water pipes, and 500 miles of sewer pipes. The funding raised by this measure will allow the City to keep up with basic repairs and maintenance to streets as well as sidewalks, storm drains, pipes, and public facilities. If we don't take care of it now, it will be a lot more expensive to repair in the future (76%), Our beaches are vital to the quality of life in Oceanside, but they are shrinking more each year. By replacing sand that is lost due to erosion and removing trash and pollution from our waterways, this measure will help keep our beaches healthy (75%), and Fast emergency response times for 911 calls are critical for saving lives. This measure will ensure that we have enough police officers, firefighters, dispatchers, and paramedics to respond quickly to 911 emergencies (75%).

FIGURE 12	POSITIVE A	RGUMENTS	TIER 2
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<sup>4.</sup> The top and third-rated arguments were tested using a split-sample approach to identify if adding to the statement a reference to the local economy materially impacted respondents' reactions to the statement.

Positive Arguments

**POSITIVE ARGUMENTS BY INITIAL SUPPORT** Table 3 lists the top five most convincing positive arguments (showing the percentage of respondents who cited it as *very* convincing) according to respondents' vote choice at the Initial Ballot Test. The positive arguments resonated with a much higher percentage of voters initially inclined to support the measure compared with those who initially opposed the measure or were unsure. Nevertheless, three arguments were ranked among the top five most compelling by all three groups.

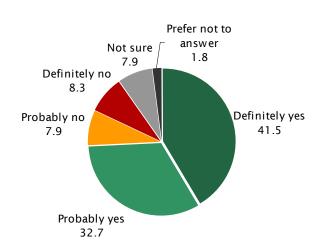
Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q5)	ltem	Positive Argument Summary	% Very Convincing
	Q8a	Measure will NOT raise your taxes; it simply extends sales tax approved by voters in 2018 for 10 more years to continue funding for important city services	59
	Q8f	Fast emergency response times for 911 calls are critical for saving lives; measure will ensure that we have enough police officers, firefighters, dispatchers, paramedics to respond quickly to 911 emergencies	56
Probably or Definitely <b>Yes</b> (n = 974)	Q8i	City maintains 400+ mi of streets, 590 mi of water pipes, 500 mi of sewer pipes; measure will allow City to keep up with repairs, maintenance; if we don't take care of it now, will be more expensive to repair in future	52
	Q8h2	Beaches are vital to quality of life in Oceanside, but they are shrinking more each yr; by replacing sand that is lost due to erosion, removing trash, pollution from waterways, measure will help keep beaches healthy	50
	Q8h1	Beaches are vital to quality of life in Oceanside, economy, but they are shrinking more each yr; by replacing sand that is lost due to erosion, removing trash, pollution from waterways, this measure will help keep beaches healthy	50
	Q8h1	Beaches are vital to quality of life in Oceanside, economy, but they are shrinking more each yr; by replacing sand that is lost due to erosion, removing trash, pollution from waterways, this measure will help keep beaches healthy	21
	Q8h2	Beaches are vital to quality of life in Oceanside, but they are shrinking more each yr; by replacing sand that is lost due to erosion, removing trash, pollution from waterways, measure will help keep beaches healthy	21
Probably or Definitely <b>No</b> (n = 242)	Q8f	Fast emergency response times for 911 calls are critical for saving lives; measure will ensure that we have enough police officers, firefighters, dispatchers, paramedics to respond quickly to 911 emergencies	20
	Q8g	High quality parks, recreation programs help keep kids healthy, active, away from drugs, gangs, crime	15
	Q8i	City maintains 400+ mi of streets, 590 mi of water pipes, 500 mi of sewer pipes; measure will allow City to keep up with repairs, maintenance; if we don't take care of it now, will be more expensive to repair in future	15
	Q8h2	Beaches are vital to quality of life in Oceanside, but they are shrinking more each yr; by replacing sand that is lost due to erosion, removing trash, pollution from waterways, measure will help keep beaches healthy	28
	Q8h1	Beaches are vital to quality of life in Oceanside, economy, but they are shrinking more each yr; by replacing sand that is lost due to erosion, removing trash, pollution from waterways, this measure will help keep beaches healthy	22
<b>Not Sure</b> ( <i>n</i> = 115)	Q8i	City maintains 400+ mi of streets, 590 mi of water pipes, 500 mi of sewer pipes; measure will allow City to keep up with repairs, maintenance; if we don't take care of it now, will be more expensive to repair in future	19
	Q8b2	Most of sales tax generated locally goes to State of CA, County of SD, or SANDAG; measure ensures that a higher percentage of sales tax dollars stay here in Oceanside, we have local control over how those funds are spent	19
	Q8j	Over past 6 yrs, City has reinvested every dime of sales tax back into community, fixing 38 mi of streets, keeping neighborhoods, downtown safe, improving parks, buildings; voting yes will allow progress to continue	17

TABLE 3 TOP POSITIV	e Arguments by Positio	n at Initial Ballot Test
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# INTERIM BALLOT TEST

After exposing respondents to services that could be funded by the measure as well as the types of positive arguments voters may encounter during an election cycle, the survey again presented respondents with the ballot language used previously to gauge how support for the proposed sales tax measure may have changed. As shown in Figure 13, overall support among likely November 2024 voters ticked up to 74%, with 42% of voters indicating that they would *definitely* vote yes on the measure. Approximately 16% of respondents opposed the measure at this point in the survey, and an additional 10% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.

**Question 9** Sometimes people change their mind about a measure once they have more information about it. Now that you have heard a bit more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it again. To continue funding for city services in Oceanside including fire protection, paramedic, and 911 emergency response; police patrols and crime prevention; maintenance of streets, potholes, parks, beaches, and infrastructure; addressing homelessness, graffiti removal, and other city services; shall the ordinance renewing the City of Oceanside's half-cent sales tax be adopted at the current rate (no increase), continuing 18 million dollars annually for unrestricted general government use for 10 years, with citizen oversight, independent audits, and all money locally controlled? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?



### FIGURE 13 INTERIM BALLOT TEST

**SUPPORT BY SUBGROUPS** Table 4 on the next page shows how support for the measure at this point in the survey varied by key voter subgroups, as well as the change in subgroup support when compared with the Initial Ballot Test. Positive differences appear in green, whereas negative differences appear in red. As shown in the table, support for the sales tax measure increased or decreased by modest amounts (5 percentage points or less) between the Initial and Interim Ballot Test for nearly all subgroups. The only exception was the small subgroup of voters who took the survey in Spanish (-8%).

		Approximate %		Change From
		of Voter	% Probably or	Initial Ballot
		Universe	Definitely Yes	Test (Q5)
Overall		100.0	74.2	+2.2
	Democrat	37.3	81.2	+1.7
Party	Republican	30.0	70.5	+4.2
	Other / DTS	32.7	69.4	+0.9
	Since Nov '18	19.7	75.4	-0.6
Registration Year	Jun '06 to <nov '18<="" td=""><td>33.2</td><td>70.2</td><td>+0.9</td></nov>	33.2	70.2	+0.9
	Before Jun '06	47.2	76.4	+4.2
Overall Satisfaction (Q4)	Satisfied	74.8	83.9	+2.0
Overall Satisfaction (Q4)	Dissatisfied	25.2	48.7	+3.3
	Less than 5	22.3	81.4	+0.4
Years in Oceanside (Q1)	5 to 9	19.6	74.4	+1.4
reals in Oceanside (QT)	10 to 14	14.0	74.7	+3.3
	15 or more	44.0	70.5	+3.3
	18 to 29	17.4	67.9	+4.6
	30 to 39	16.6	70.2	+1.3
Age	40 to 49	15.0	71.8	+1.7
	50 to 64	23.5	74.0	+2.9
	65 or older	27.5	81.9	+0.9
	Excellent, good	35.5	92.6	+2.7
Fiscal Management	Fair	29.5	69.7	+3.2
Rating (Q12)	Poor, very poor	13.9	29.7	-0.6
	Not sure	21.1	79.7	+1.8
	Single dem	19.4	80.0	+3.8
	Dual dem	10.3	86.7	+0.1
Household Party Type	Single rep	12.2	68.7	+3.5
	Dual rep	9.5	68.2	+4.1
	Other / Mixed	48.6	71.7	+1.3
Child in Hsld (Q13)	Yes	31.3	69.5	+4.8
	No	68.7	78.4	+1.8
Homeowner on Voter File	Yes	64.0	75.5	+2.5
	No	36.0	71.8	+1.6
Likely to Vote by Mail	Yes	80.1	74.9	+1.6
	No	19.9	71.1	+4.5
Likely Mar 2024 Voter	Yes	68.1	75.6	+2.7
	No	31.9	71.1	+1.1
Gender	Male	51.0	75.7	+1.5
Genuer	Female	49.0	75.5	+3.5
Survey Language	English	97.0	74.5	+2.5
Survey Language	Spanish	3.0	64.3	-7.6

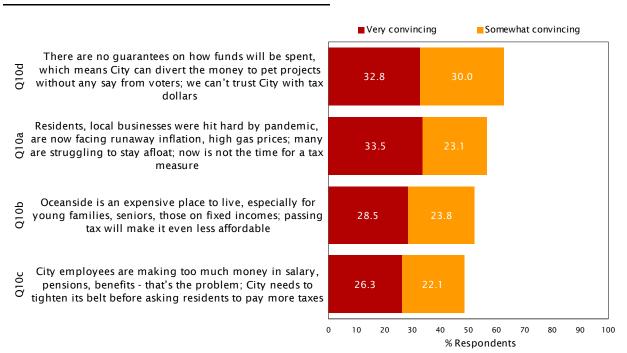
#### TABLE 4 DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SUPPORT AT INTERIM BALLOT TEST

## NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS

Whereas Question 8 of the survey presented respondents with arguments in favor of the sales tax measure, Question 10 presented respondents with arguments designed to elicit opposition to the measure. In the case of Question 10, however, respondents were asked whether they felt that the argument was a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to *oppose* the measure. The arguments tested, as well as voters' opinions about the arguments, are presented below in Figure 14.

**Question 10** Next, let me tell you what opponents of the measure are saying. Opponents of the measure say: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to OPPOSE the measure?

#### FIGURE 14 NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS



Overall, the most compelling negative arguments were: There are no guarantees on how funds will be spent, which means the City can divert the money to pet projects without any say from voters. We can't trust the City with our tax dollars (63% very or somewhat convincing) and Residents and local businesses were hit hard by the pandemic and are now facing runaway inflation and high gas prices. Many are struggling to stay afloat. Now is not the time for a tax measure (57%).

**NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS BY INITIAL SUPPORT** Table 5 on the next page ranks the negative arguments (showing the percentage of respondents who cited each as very convincing) according to respondents' vote choice at the Initial Ballot Test.

Position at Initial Ballot			% Very		
Test (Q5)	ltem	Negative Argument Summary	Convincing		
Probably or Definitely <b>Yes</b> (n = 974)	Q10a	Residents, local businesses were hit hard by pandemic, are now facing runaway inflation, high gas prices; many are struggling to stay afloat; now is not the time for a tax measure			
	Q10d	There are no guarantees on how funds will be spent, which means City can divert the money to pet projects without any say from voters; we can't trust City with tax dollars			
	Q10b	Oceanside is an expensive place to live, especially for young families, seniors, those on fixed incomes; passing tax will make it even less affordable			
	Q10c	City employees are making too much money in salary, pensions, benefits - that's the problem; City needs to tighten its belt before asking residents to pay more taxes	19		
Probably or Definitely <b>No</b> (n = 242)	Q10a	Residents, local businesses were hit hard by pandemic, are now facing runaway inflation, high gas prices; many are struggling to stay afloat; now is not the time for a tax measure	63		
	Q10d	There are no guarantees on how funds will be spent, which means City can divert the money to pet projects without any say from voters; we can't trust City with tax dollars			
	Q10b	Oceanside is an expensive place to live, especially for young families, seniors, those on fixed incomes; passing tax will make it even less affordable	59		
	Q10c	City employees are making too much money in salary, pensions, benefits - that's the problem; City needs to tighten its belt before asking residents to pay more taxes	56		
<b>Not Sure</b> ( <i>n</i> = 115)	Q10b	Oceanside is an expensive place to live, especially for young families, seniors, those on fixed incomes; passing tax will make it even less affordable	36		
	Q10d	There are no guarantees on how funds will be spent, which means City can divert the money to pet projects without any say from voters; we can't trust City with tax dollars	34		
	Q10a	Residents, local businesses were hit hard by pandemic, are now facing runaway inflation, high gas prices; many are struggling to stay afloat; now is not the time for a tax measure	29		
	Q10c	City employees are making too much money in salary, pensions, benefits - that's the problem; City needs to tighten its belt before asking residents to pay more taxes	28		

### TABLE 5 NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST

# FINAL BALLOT TEST

Voters' opinions about ballot measures are often not rigid, especially when the amount of information presented to the public on a measure has been limited. A goal of the survey was thus to gauge how voters' opinions about the proposed measure may be affected by the information they could encounter during the course of an election cycle. After providing respondents with the wording of the proposed measure, services that could be funded, and arguments in favor of and against the proposal, the survey again asked voters whether they would vote 'yes' or 'no' on the proposed sales tax measure.

**Question 11** Now that you have heard a bit more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it one more time. To continue funding for city services in Oceanside including fire protection, paramedic, and 911 emergency response; police patrols and crime prevention; maintenance of streets, potholes, parks, beaches, and infrastructure; addressing homelessness, graffiti removal, and other city services; shall the ordinance renewing the City of Oceanside's half-cent sales tax be adopted at the current rate (no increase), continuing 18 million dollars annually for unrestricted general government use for 10 years, with citizen oversight, independent audits, and all money locally controlled? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?

# Prefer not to answer 2.0 Definitely no 9.0 Probably no 10.8 Probably yes 31.3

### FIGURE 15 FINAL BALLOT TEST

At this point in the survey, support for renewing the Measure X sales tax measure was found among 68% of likely November 2024 voters, with 37% indicating that they would *definitely* support the measure. Approximately 20% of respondents were opposed to the measure at the Final Ballot Test, and 12% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.

# CHANGE IN SUPPORT

Table 6 provides a closer look at how support for the proposed measure changed over the course of the interview by calculating the difference in support between the Initial, Interim, and Final Ballot tests within various subgroups of voters. The percentage of support for the measure at the Final Ballot Test is shown in the column with the heading % *Probably or Definitely Yes*. The columns to the right show the difference between the Final and the Initial, and the Final and Interim Ballot Tests. Positive differences appear in green, and negative differences appear in red.

		Approximate % of Voter Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	Change From Initial Ballot Test (Q5)	Change From Interim Ballot Test (Q9)
Overall		100.0	68.4	-3.6	-5.7
Party	Democrat	37.3	77.4	-2.1	-3.8
	Republican	30.0	63.8	-2.5	-6.7
	Other / DTS	32.7	62.4	-6.2	-7.0
Registration Year	Since Nov '18	19.7	64.3	-11.6	-11.1
	Jun '06 to <nov '18<="" th=""><td>33.2</td><td>65.9</td><td>-3.4</td><td>-4.3</td></nov>	33.2	65.9	-3.4	-4.3
	Before Jun '06	47.2	71.9	-0.3	-4.5
Overall Satisfaction (Q4)	Satisfied	74.8	79.3	-2.6	-4.6
	Dissatisfied	25.2	42.2	-3.2	-6.5
	Less than 5	22.3	77.4	-3.7	-4.0
Years in Oceanside (O1)	5 to 9	19.6	70.4	-2.7	-4.1
rears in Oceanside (QT)	10 to 14	14.0	65.9	-5.5	-8.8
	15 or more	44.0	64.1	-3.1	-6.4
	18 to 29	17.4	54.0	-9.3	-13.9
	30 to 39	16.6	66.5	-2.5	-3.7
Age	40 to 49	15.0	62.5	-7.6	-9.3
5	50 to 64	23.5	72.1	+0.9	-1.9
	65 or older	27.5	78.8	-2.2	-3.1
	Excellent, good	35.5	90.8	+0.9	-1.9
Fiscal Management	Fair	29.5	62.1	-4.5	-7.7
Rating (Q12)	Poor, very poor	13.9	26.2	-4.1	-3.5
_	Not sure	21.1	68.8	-9.1	-10.9
	Single dem	19.4	76.9	+0.7	-3.0
	Dual dem	10.3	81.4	-5.2	-5.3
Household Party Type	Single rep	12.2	66.0	+0.9	-2.6
, ,,	Dual rep	9.5	63.9	-0.2	-4.3
	Other / Mixed	48.6	63.8	-6.7	-8.0
	Yes	31.3	60.4	-4.2	-9.1
Child in Hsld (Q13)	No	68.7	73.5	-3.1	-4.9
	Vec	64.0	71.1	-1.9	-4.4
Homeowner on Voter File	No	36.0	63.7	-6.5	-8.1
	Yes	80.1	69.7	-3.6	-5.2
Likely to Vote by Mail	No	19.9	63.2	-3.4	-8.0
	Yes	68.1	71.9	-1.0	-3.7
Likely Mar 2024 Voter	No	31.9	60.9	-9.1	-10.2
	Male	51.0	71.5	-2.7	-4.1
Gender	Female	49.0	67.9	-4.1	-7.6
	English	97.0	68.8	-3.2	-5.7
Survey Language	Spanish	3.0	56.0	-15.9	-8.3

### TABLE 6 DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SUPPORT AT FINAL BALLOT TEST

As expected, voters generally responded to the negative arguments with a reduction in their support for the sales tax measure when compared with levels recorded at the Interim Ballot Test. The trend over the course of the entire survey (Initial to Final Ballot Test) was also one of decreasing support for many voter subgroups, averaging -4% overall. Even with this trend, however, support for the proposed sales tax measure at the Final Ballot Test (68%) remained well above the simple majority (50%+1) required for passage.

Whereas Table 6 displays change in support for the measure over the course of the interview at the subgroup level, Table 7 displays the individual-level changes that occurred between the Initial and Final Ballot tests for the measure. On the left side of the table is shown each of the response options to the Initial Ballot Test and the percentage of respondents in each group. The cells in the body of the table depict movement within each response group (row) based on the information provided throughout the course of the survey as recorded by the Final Ballot Test. For example, in the first row we see that of the 36.4% of respondents who indicated that they would definitely support the measure at the Initial Ballot Test. Approximately 4.7% moved to the probably support group, 1.4% moved to the probably oppose group, 0.0% moved to the definitely oppose group, and 1.0% stated they were now unsure of their vote choice.

To ease interpretation of the table, the cells are color coded. Red shaded cells indicate declining support, green shaded cells indicate increasing support, whereas white cells indicate no movement. Moreover, within the cells, a white font indicates a fundamental change in the vote: from yes to no, no to yes, or not sure to either yes or no.

		Final Ballot Test (Q11)				
		Definitely	Probably	Probably	Definitely	Notours
Initial Ballot Test (Q5)		support	support	oppose	oppose	Not sure
Definitely support	36.4% —	► 29.2%	4.7%	1.4%	0.0%	1.0%
Probably support	35.6% —	▶ 7.0%	23.5%	1.6%	0.2%	3.4%
Probably oppose	7.9% —	▶ 0.1%		4.8%	1.0%	
Definitely oppose	10.0% —	• 0.3%		1.7%	7.4%	
Not sure	10.1% —	➡ 0.6%	1.7%	1.4%	0.3%	6.2%

 TABLE 7
 MOVEMENT
 Between Initial & Final Ballot Test

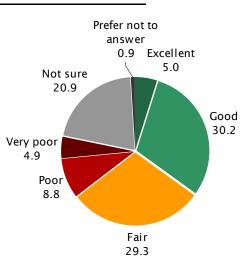
As one might expect, the information conveyed in the survey had the greatest impact on individuals who either weren't sure about how they would vote at the Initial Ballot Test or were tentative in their vote choice (probably yes or probably no). Moreover, Table 7 makes clear that although the information did impact some voters, it did not do so in a consistent way for all respondents. Some respondents found the information conveyed during the course of the interview to be a reason to become more supportive of the measure, whereas a slightly larger percentage found the same information to be a reason to be less supportive. Despite 15% of respondents making a *fundamental*<sup>5</sup> shift in their opinion about the measure over the course of the interview, the net impact is that support for the measure at the Final Ballot Test (68%) was just four percentage points different than support at the Initial Ballot Test (72%).

<sup>5.</sup> This is, they changed from a position of support, opposition or undecided at the Initial Ballot Test to a different position at the Final Ballot Test.

## FISCAL MANAGEMENT

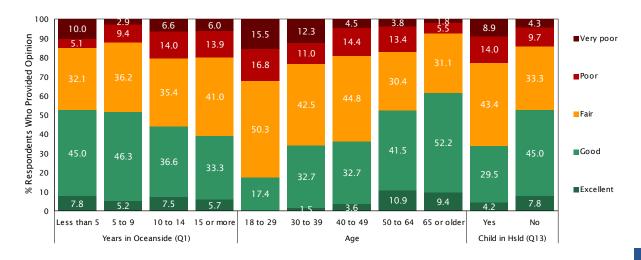
After measuring support for the proposed measure, the survey turned to assessing voters' opinions about the City's performance in managing its financial resources. Approximately 65% of respondents gave the City a positive or neutral rating, with 5% rating the City's performance as excellent, 30% good, and 29% fair. Approximately 14% rated the job the City has done in managing its finances as poor or very poor, while 22% confided they were not sure or preferred not to answer the question (Figure 16).

**Question 12** In your opinion, has the City of Oceanside done an excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor job of managing its financial resources?



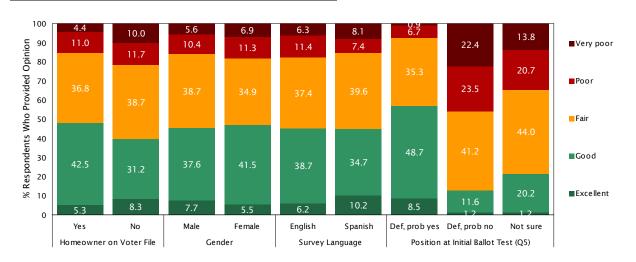
### FIGURE 16 OPINION OF FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Figures 17 and 18 show how, among those with an opinion, fiscal management ratings varied by length of residence, age of the respondent, presence of a child in the household, homeowner-ship status, gender, the language in which the respondent completed the survey, and position at the Initial Ballot Test.



### FIGURE 17 OPINION OF FISCAL MANAGEMENT BY YEARS IN OCEANSIDE, AGE & CHILD IN HSLD

FIGURE 18 OPINION OF FISCAL MANAGEMENT BY HOMEOWNER ON VOTER FILE, GENDER, SURVEY LANGUAGE & POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST



## BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS

 TABLE 8
 DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE

Total Respondents	1353
Years in Oceanside (Q1)	
Less than 5	22.2
5 to 9	19.6
10 to 14	14.0
15 or more	43.8
Prefer not to answer	0.4
Child in Hsld (Q13)	
Yes	29.4
No	64.6
Prefer not to answer	6.1
Gender	••••
Male	48.6
Female	46.7
Non-binary	0.9
Prefer not to answer	3.8
Party	5.0
Democrat	37.3
Republican	30.0
Other / DTS	32.7
Age	52.7
18 to 29	17.4
30 to 39	16.6
40 to 49	15.0
50 to 64	23.5
65 or older	27.5
Registration Year	27.3
Since Nov '18	10.7
Jun '06 to <nov '18<="" td=""><td>19.7 33.2</td></nov>	19.7 33.2
	55.2 47.2
Before Jun '06 Household Party Type	47.2
	10.4
Single dem Dual dem	19.4 10.3
Single rep	12.2
Dual rep	9.5
Other / Mixed	48.6
Homeowner on Voter File	64.0
Yes	64.0
No	36.0
Likely to Vote by Mail	00.1
Yes	80.1
No	19.9
Likely Mar 2024 Voter	
Yes	68.1
No	31.9
Survey Language	
English	97.0
Spanish	3.0

In addition to questions directly related to the proposed measure, the study collected basic demographic information about respondents and their households. Some of this information was gathered during the interview, although much of it was collected from the voter file. The profile of the likely November 2024 voter sample represented in this report is shown in Table 8.

## METHODOLOGY

The following sections outline the methodology used in the study, as well as the motivation for using certain techniques.

**QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT** Dr. McLarney of True North Research worked closely with the City of Oceanside to develop a questionnaire that covered the topics of interest and avoided possible sources of systematic measurement error, including position-order effects, wording effects, response-category effects, scaling effects, and priming. Several questions included multiple individual items. Because asking the items in a set order can lead to a systematic position bias in responses, items were asked in random order for each respondent.

Some questions asked in this study were presented only to a subset of respondents. For example, only individuals who did not support the measure (or were unsure) at the Initial Ballot Test (Question 5) were asked the follow-up, open-ended Question 6 regarding their reasons for not supporting the measure. In some cases, two versions of a project or argument were tested to identify how wording differences impact perception of the item. In such cases, half of the sample received the item with version 1 wording (e.g., Question 8, item B1) and the other half received version 2 (e.g., Question 8, item B2). The questionnaire included with this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 31) identifies the skip patterns that were used during the interview to ensure that each respondent received the appropriate questions.

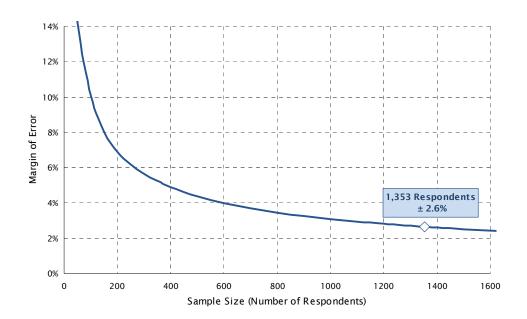
**PROGRAMMING, PRE-TEST & TRANSLATION** Prior to fielding the survey, the questionnaire was CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) programmed to assist interviewers when conducting telephone interviews. The CATI program automatically navigates skip patterns, randomizes the appropriate question items, and alerts the interviewer to keypunching mistakes should they occur. The survey was also programmed into a passcode-protected online survey application to allow online participation for sampled voters, and professionally translated into Spanish. The integrity of the questionnaire was pre-tested internally by True North and by dialing into voter households in the City prior to formally beginning the survey.

**SAMPLE** The survey was administered to a stratified and clustered random sample of registered voters in the City who are likely to participate in the November 2024 general election, with a subset of voters who are also likely to participate in the lower turnout March 2024 primary election. Consistent with the profile of this universe, the sample was stratified into clusters, each representing a combination of age, gender, and household party type. Individuals were then randomly selected based on their profile into an appropriate cluster. This method ensures that if a person of a particular profile refuses to participate, they are replaced by an individual who shares their same profile.

**STATISTICAL MARGIN OF ERROR** By using the probability-based sampling design noted above, True North ensured that the final sample was representative of voters in the City who are likely to participate in the November 2024 general election. The results of the survey can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* voters likely to participate in said election. Because not all voters participated in the study, however, the results have what is known as a statistical margin of error due to sampling. The margin of error refers to the difference between what was found in the survey of 1,353 voters for a particular question and what would have been

found if all of the estimated 94,654 likely November 2024 voters identified in the City had been surveyed for the study.

Figure 19 provides a graphic plot of the *maximum* margin of error in this study. The maximum margin of error for a dichotomous percentage result occurs when the answers are evenly split such that 50% provide one response and 50% provide the alternative response. For this survey, the maximum margin of error is  $\pm 2.6\%$ .





Within this report, figures and tables show how responses to certain questions varied by subgroups such as age, gender, and partisan affiliation. Figure 19 is thus useful for understanding how the maximum margin of error for a percentage estimate will grow as the number of individuals asked a question (or in a particular subgroup) shrinks. Because the margin of error grows exponentially as the sample size decreases, the reader should use caution when generalizing and interpreting the results for small subgroups.

**RECRUITING & DATA COLLECTION** The survey followed a mixed-method design that employed multiple recruiting methods (telephone, text, and email) and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). Telephone interviews averaged 16 minutes in length and were conducted during weekday evenings (5:30PM to 9PM) and on weekends (10AM to 5PM). It is standard practice not to call during the day on weekdays because most working adults are unavailable and thus calling during those hours would likely bias the sample.

Voters recruited via email and text were assigned a unique passcode to ensure that only voters who received an invitation could access the online survey site, and that each voter could complete the survey one time only. During the data collection period, an email reminder notice was also sent to encourage participation among those who had yet to take the survey. A total of 1,353 surveys were completed between November 7 and November 14, 2023.

**DATA PROCESSING** Data processing consisted of checking the data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, weighting, and preparing frequency analyses and cross-tabulations.

**ROUNDING** Numbers that end in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole number, whereas numbers that end in 0.4 or lower are rounded down to the nearest whole number. These same rounding rules are also applied, when needed, to arrive at numbers that include a decimal place in constructing figures and tables. Occasionally, these rounding rules lead to small discrepancies in the first decimal place when comparing tables and charts for a given question.

30

# QUESTIONNAIRE & TOPLINES



City of Oceanside Sales Tax Renewal Survey Final Toplines (n=1,353) November 2023

Section 1: Introduction to Study

Hi, may I please speak to \_\_\_\_\_. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm calling from TNR on behalf of the City of Oceanside. We're conducting a confidential survey of voters about important issues in Oceanside and I'd like to get your opinions.

*If needed:* This is a survey about important issues in your community. I'm NOT trying to sell anything and I won't ask for a donation.

If needed: The survey should take about 12 minutes to complete.

*If needed*: If now is not a convenient time, can you let me know a better time so I can call back?

If the person asks why you need to speak to the listed person or if they ask to participate instead, explain: For statistical purposes, at this time the survey must only be completed by this particular individual.

#### Section 2: Quality of Life & City Services

I'd like to begin by asking you a few questions about what it is like to live in Oceanside.

Q1	How long have you lived in Oceanside?				
	1	Less than 1 year	2%		
	2	1 to 4 years	20%		
	3	5 to 9 years	20%		
	4	10 to 14 years	14%		
	5	15 years or longer	44%		
	99	Prefer not to answer	0%		
Q2	How would you rate the overall quality of life in Oceanside? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?				
	1	Excellent	16%		
	2	Good	57%		
	3	Fair	23%		
	4	Poor	3%		
	5	Very poor	1%		
	98	Not sure	0%		
	99	Prefer not to answer	0%		
Q3	If the city government could change one thing to make Oceanside a better place to live now and in the future, what change would you like to see? Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.				
	Add	ress homeless issues	30%		
	Limi	t growth, development	12%		
	Incre	ease public safety	10%		

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November 2023

		r
Impr	rove infrastructure, roads	10%
Prov	ide more affordable housing	8%
Not	sure / Cannot think of anything specific	8%
Clea	n up, beautify City	6%
Redu	ace traffic congestion	5%
Redu	ace cost of living	4%
Addı	ress parking issues	4%
Addı	ress rent control issues	4%
Impr	ove schools, education	3%
Prov	ide more police presence	3%
Impr	rove public transportation	3%
Equa	al attention to all areas of City	3%
Prov	ide more sand at beaches	3%
No c	hanges needed / Everything is fine	3%
Enfo	rce traffic laws	2%
Impr	rove parks, rec facilities	2%
Redu	uce taxes, fees	2%
Prov	ide rec activities, events, for all ages	2%
Impr	ove environmental efforts	2%
Impr	rove City Council, Gov process	2%
Impr	rove city planning, development	2%
Supp	oort small, local businesses	2%
Prov	ide more sidewalks	2%
Prov	ide dog park, beach access	2%
Prov	ide more bike lanes	2%
Prov	ide, improve mental health services	2%
doin	erally speaking, are you satisfied or dissati g to provide city services? <i>Get answer, the</i> sfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/d	n ask: Would that be very
1	Very satisfied	17%
2	Somewhat satisfied	53%
3	Somewhat dissatisfied	17%
4	Very dissatisfied	7%
98	Not sure	6%
99	Prefer not to answer	0%

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November 2023

	,	, voters in Oceanside may be asked to vote nmary of the measure.	on a local ballot n	neasure. Let me read		
	To	continue funding for city services in Oceans	ide including:			
Q5	Sha the gen	<ul> <li>Fire protection, paramedic, and 9-1-1 emergency response</li> <li>Police patrols and crime prevention</li> <li>Maintenance of streets, potholes, parks, beaches, and infrastructure</li> <li>Addressing homelessness, graffiti removal, and other city services</li> </ul> Shall the ordinance renewing the City of Oceanside's half-cent sales tax be adopted at the current rate (no increase), continuing 18 million dollars annually for unrestricted general government use for 10 years, with citizen oversight, independent audits, and all money locally controlled?				
		e election were held today, would you vote <i>n ask:</i> Would that be definitely (yes/no) or p		measure? Get answer,		
	1	Definitely yes	36%	Skip to Q7		
	2	Probably yes	36%	Skip to Q7		
	3	Probably no	8%	Ask Q6		
	4	Definitely no	10%	Ask Q6		
	98	Not sure	8%	Ask Q6		
	99	Prefer not to answer	2%	Skip to Q7		
Q6	Is there a particular reason why you do <u>not</u> support or are unsure about the measure I just described? <i>If yes, ask</i> : Please briefly describe your reason. Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.					
	Mor	ney is misspent, mismanaged		32%		
		es already too high	29%			
	Nee	d more information	1 8%			
	No s	sure / No particular reason	1 3%			
	Do	not trust City	8%			
	Oth	er higher priorities in community		6%		
		er ways to be funded		5%		
		cerns with unrestricted general ernment use		5%		
		has enough money	4%			
	Mor	ey should not go to law enforcement	4%			
	Mor	ey will go to employee salaries, pensions		3%		
	Mer	tioned past ballot measure		1%		
	Illeg	al immigration issues		1%		
			1%			

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November 2023

Section 4: Projects & Services The measure we've been discussing will provide funding for a variety of services in your community. Q7 If the measure passes, would you favor or oppose using some of the money to: \_ or do you not have an opinion? Get answer, if favor or oppose, then ask: Would that be strongly (favor/oppose) or somewhat (favor/oppose)? Somewhat favor Somewhat oppose Prefer not to answer Strongly oppose Not sure Strongly favor Randomize Provide police services, including 23% 6% 3% А neighborhood police patrols and crime 59% 7% 2% prevention В Reduce gang activity and drug-related crimes 60% 24% 5% 4% 5% 2% Provide fire protection and paramedic С 67% 24% 3% 3% 2% 2% services D Provide quick responses to 9-1-1 emergencies 69% 21% 3% 2% 2% 2% Е Fix potholes 64% 29% 2% 2% 2% 2% Maintain city streets, sidewalks and F 66% 27% 2% 1% 2% 2% infrastructure Maintain parks, beaches, and recreation G facilities including courts, fields, and 61% 31% 3% 2% 1% 2% playgrounds Keep trash and pollution out of local н 65% 25% 3% 2% 2% 2% waterways and off our beaches L Address homelessness 70% 19% 4% 4% 2% 2% Remove graffiti and clean piles of trash and J litter that people dump along streets, 56% 33% 4% 2% 2% 2% sidewalks, and in public areas Κ Improve affordable housing options 47% 21% 12% 13% 6% 2% 47% L Restore sand on local beaches 31% 10% 5% 5% 2% М Provide programs and services to seniors 40% 37% 10% 5% 6% 2% Support youth programs that keep kids away 53% 5% 2% Ν 29% 6% 4% from gangs

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City of Oceanside Survey

#### November 2023

	It I'd like to do now is tell you what some people n discussing.	are say	ing abc	out the	measur	e we've	2
Q8	Supporters of the measure say: Do you the convincing, or not at all convincing reason to <b>S</b>	hink thi <b>UPPOR</b>	s is a ve T the m	ery con leasure	vincing ?	, some	what
	Randomize. Split Sample B1/B2, H1/H2	Very convincing	Somewhat convincing	Not at all convincing	Don' t believe	Not sure	Prefer not to
A	This measure will NOT raise your taxes. It simply extends the sales tax approved by voters in 2018 for 10 more years to continue funding for important city services.	47%	23%	13%	10%	5%	3%
B1	All money raised by the measure will be used to fund essential services and facilities here in Oceanside. By law, it can't be taken away by the State.	37%	30%	17%	9%	5%	3%
B2	Most of the sales tax generated locally goes to the State of California, the County of San Diego, or SANDAG. This measure ensures that a higher percentage of our sales tax dollars stay here in Oceanside and we have local control over how those funds are spent.	41%	27%	13%	13%	5%	2%
С	The measure includes a clear system of accountability including citizen oversight, independent audits, and public disclosure of how all funds are spent.	33%	29%	16%	14%	5%	2%
D	By keeping our city safe, clean and well- maintained, this measure will help protect our property values and keep Oceanside a special place to live.	38%	31%	16%	8%	4%	3%
E	A substantial amount of the money raised by the sales tax will come from people who visit our community, but don't live here. This measure will make sure they pay their fair share for the facilities and services they use while in our city.	36%	28%	16%	13%	4%	3%
F	Fast emergency response times for 9-1-1 calls are critical for saving lives. This measure will ensure that we have enough police officers, firefighters, dispatchers, and paramedics to respond quickly to 9-1-1 emergencies.	45%	30%	11%	9%	3%	3%
G	High quality parks and recreation programs help keep kids healthy, active, and away from drugs, gangs and crime.	33%	35%	17%	9%	3%	3%

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November 2023

HI	Our beaches are vital to the quality of life in Oceanside and our local economy – but they are shrinking more each year. By replacing sand that is lost due to erosion and removing trash and pollution from our waterways, this measure will help keep our beaches healthy.	42%	35%	11%	6%	4%	2%
H2	Our beaches are vital to the quality of life in Oceanside, but they are shrinking more each year. By replacing sand that is lost due to erosion and removing trash and pollution from our waterways, this measure will help keep our beaches healthy.	43%	32%	12%	8%	2%	2%
I	The City maintains over 400 miles of streets in Oceanside, 590 miles of water pipes, and 500 miles of sewer pipes. The funding raised by this measure will allow the City to keep up with basic repairs and maintenance to streets as well as sidewalks, storm drains, pipes, and public facilities. If we don't take care of it now, it will be a lot more expensive to repair in the future.	42%	34%	11%	7%	3%	3%
J	Over the past six years, the City has reinvested every dime of the sales tax revenues back into the community – fixing 38 miles of streets, keeping our neighborhoods and downtown safe, and improving local parks and community buildings. Voting 'yes' on this measure will allow this progress to continue.	36%	32%	13%	13%	4%	2%
к	Since 2021, Oceanside has reduced overall crime by 17% and violent crime by 7% thanks to local funding for public safety and crime prevention. We need to renew this local funding to avoid cuts in programs that have proven to be effective.	36%	34%	13%	11%	4%	3%
L	An independent study shows that Oceanside has reduced homelessness by nearly 10% over the past year through effective outreach that includes police, social workers and reuniting homeless people with their families back home. The funding from this measure is essential to continue these programs.	30%	28%	18%	18%	4%	2%

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Page 6

City of Oceanside

November 2023

#### Section 6: Interim Ballot Test

Sometimes people change their mind about a measure once they have more information about it. Now that you have heard a bit more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it again.

To continue funding for city services in Oceanside including:

- $\circ$   $\;$  Fire protection, paramedic, and 9-1-1 emergency response
- Police patrols and crime prevention
- $\circ$   $\;$  Maintenance of streets, potholes, parks, beaches, and infrastructure  $\;$
- $\circ$   $\;$  Addressing homelessness, graffiti removal, and other city services  $\;$

Q9	Shall the ordinance renewing the City of Oceanside's half-cent sales tax be adopted at the current rate (no increase), continuing 18 million dollars annually for unrestricted general government use for 10 years, with citizen oversight, independent audits, and all money locally controlled? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? <i>Get answer, then ask</i> : Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?				
	1	Definitely yes	41%		
	2	Probably yes	33%		
	3	Probably no	8%		
	4	Definitely no	8%		
	98	Not sure	8%		
	99	Prefer not to answer	2%		

#### Section 7: Negative Arguments

Next, let me tell you what opponents of the measure are saying.

Q10	Opponents of the measure say: Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to OPPOSE the measure?						
	Randomize	Very convincing	Somewhat convincing	Not at all convincing	Don' t believe	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
А	Residents and local businesses were hit hard by the pandemic and are now facing runaway inflation and high gas prices. Many are struggling to stay afloat. Now is not the time for a tax measure.	34%	23%	24%	12%	5%	2%
В	Oceanside is an expensive place to live, especially for young families, seniors, and those on fixed incomes. Passing this tax will make it even less affordable.	28%	24%	26%	14%	5%	2%

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с	City employees are making too much money in salary, pensions and benefits - that's the problem. The City needs to tighten its belt before asking residents to pay more taxes.	26%	22%	25%	18%	7%	3%
D	There are no guarantees on how funds will be spent, which means the City can divert the money to pet projects without any say from voters. We can't trust the City with our tax dollars.	33%	30%	18%	12%	5%	2%

#### Section 8: Final Ballot Test

Now that you have heard a bit more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it one more time.

To continue funding for city services in Oceanside including:

- Fire protection, paramedic, and 9-1-1 emergency response
- Police patrols and crime prevention
- o Maintenance of streets, potholes, parks, beaches, and infrastructure
- o Addressing homelessness, graffiti removal, and other city services

Q11 Shall the ordinance renewing the City of Oceanside's half-cent sales tax be adopted at the current rate (no increase), continuing 18 million dollars annually for unrestricted general government use for 10 years, with citizen oversight, independent audits, and all money locally controlled?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? *Get answer, then ask:* Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

1	Definitely yes	37%
2	Probably yes	31%
3	Probably no	11%
4	Definitely no	9%
98	Not sure	1 0%
99	Prefer not to answer	2%

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#### November 2023

### Section 9: Background & Demographics

Thank you so much for your participation. I have just two background questions for statistical purposes.

Q12 In your opinion, has the City of Oceanside done an excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor job of managing its financial resources?

1	Excellent	5%
2	Good	30%
3	Fair	29%
4	Poor	9%
5	Very poor	5%
98	Not sure	21%
99	Prefer not to answer	1%

Q13 Do you have children under the age of 18 living in your household?

1	Yes	29%		
2	No	65%		
99	Prefer not to answer	6%		

Those are all of the questions that I have for you. Thanks so much for participating in this important survey.

Post	Post-Interview & Sample Items					
<b>S</b> 1	Gender					
	1	Male	49%			
	2	Female	47%			
	3	Non-binary	1%			
	99	Prefer not to answer	4%			
S2	Party					
	1	Democrat	37%			
	2	Republican	30%			
	3	Other	8%			
	4	DTS	25%			

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City of	Oceanside	Survey
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November 2023

<b>S</b> 3	Age	on Voter File		
	1	18 to 29	1 7%	
	2	30 to 39	1 7%	
	3	40 to 49	1 5%	
	4	50 to 64	24%	
	5	65 or older	27%	
S4	Registration Date			
	1	Since Nov 2018	20%	
	2	Jun 2012 to before Nov 2018	23%	
	3	Jun 2006 to before Jun 2012	10%	
	4	Before June 2006	47%	
S5	Household Party Type			
	1	Single Dem	1 9%	
	2	Dual Dem	10%	
	3	Single Rep	12%	
	4	Dual Rep	10%	
	5	Single Other	1 5%	
	6	Dual Other	6%	
	7	Dem & Rep	4%	
	8	Dem & Other	11%	
	9	Rep & Other	10%	
	0	Mixed (Dem + Rep + Other)	2%	
<b>S</b> 6	Hon	neowner on Voter File		
	1	Yes	64%	
	2	No	36%	
S7	Like	ly to Vote by Mail		
	1	Yes	80%	
	2	No	20%	

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November 2023

S8	Likely March 2024 Voter			
	1	Yes	68%	
	2	No	32%	
S9	Likely November 2024 Voter			
	1	Yes	100%	
	2	No	0%	
S10	Survey Language			
	1	English	97%	
	2	Spanish	3%	

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### **RESOLUTION NO.**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OCEANSIDE, CALIFORNIA, CALLING FOR THE HOLDING OF GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION A ON TUESDAY. NOVEMBER 5, 2024, FOR THE SUBMISSION OF A PROPOSED ORDINANCE FOR THE EXTENSION OF A TEMPORARY ONE-HALF CENT GENERAL TRANSACTIONS AND USE (SALES) TAX INCREASE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BY THE VOTERS; CONSOLIDATING THE ELECTION WITH THE STATEWIDE ELECTION; REQUESTING THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TO PERMIT THE REGISTRAR OF VOTERS TO CONDUCT THE ELECTION; AUTHORIZING BALLOT ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF THE MEASURE; AND DIRECTING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO PREPARE AN **IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS** 

WHEREAS, the City of Oceanside may extend a local transactions and use tax for general governmental purposes, previously approved by the electorate, with the approval of the majority of voters in the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Oceanside ("City Council") has adopted an ordinance amending Chapter 34, Article II, sections 34.6.5 and 34.6.16(b) to the Oceanside City Code to extend an existing temporary one-half cent general transactions and use (sales) tax to be administered by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration including maintaining existing provisions for citizen's oversight and accountability ("the Ordinance"); and

WHEREAS, the Ordinance attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference would extend the existing temporary one-half cent sales tax to April 1, 2036, if approved by the voters; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is authorized by statute to submit the proposed Ordinance to the voters; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has called a General Municipal Election to be held in the City of Oceanside, California, on Tuesday, November 5, 2024; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable that the General Municipal Election be consolidated with the Statewide General Election to be held on the same date; that the City precincts, polling places and

election officers of the two elections be the same; that the Registrar of Voters canvass the returns of the General Municipal Election; and that the election be held in all respects as if there were only one election.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Oceanside DOES RESOLVE as follows:

SECTION 1. That pursuant to the requirements of the laws of the State of California relating to charter cities, there is called and ordered to be held in the City of Oceanside, California, on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, a General Municipal Election for the purpose of submitting the following proposed Ordinance extending a general transactions and use (sales) tax to the qualified electors of the City of Oceanside:

	To continue providing funding to maintain and improve
	general city services in Oceanside, including: road
	repairs, infrastructure maintenance, safe parks, beach
YES	and habitat restoration, fire, paramedic, and 911
	emergency response, police patrols, crime prevention,
	and addressing homelessness, shall the City of
	Oceanside extend the existing $\frac{1}{2}$ cent sales tax at the
	current rate (no increase) for 10 years, providing
	approximately \$19,000,000 annually for general
NO	government use, with citizen oversight, independent
	audits, and all funds controlled locally?

SECTION 2. That the text of the Ordinance submitted to the voters is attached as Exhibit A.

SECTION 3. That the vote requirement for the measure to pass is a majority (50%+1) of the votes cast.

SECTION 4. That the ballots to be used at the election shall be in form and content as required by law.

SECTION 5. That the San Diego County Registrar of Voters is authorized, instructed and directed to procure and furnish any and all official ballots, notices, printed matter and all

supplies, equipment and paraphernalia that may be necessary in order to properly and lawfully conduct the consolidated election.

SECTION 6. That the polls shall be open at seven o'clock a.m. of the day of the election and shall remain open continuously from that time until eight o'clock p.m. of the same day when the polls shall be closed, pursuant to Election Code section 10242, except as provided in § 14401 of the Elections Code of the State of California.

SECTION 7. That pursuant to the provisions of section 10403 of the Elections Code of the State of California, the Board of Supervisors of San Diego County is hereby requested to consent and agree to the consolidation of the General Municipal Election with the Statewide General Election on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, for the purpose of the ballot measure authorized by the City Council.

SECTION 8. That the election shall be held in all respects as if there were only one election and only one form of ballot shall be used, and that the Registrar of Voters is authorized to canvass the returns of the General Municipal Election at the proper time.

SECTION 9. That the Board of Supervisors is requested to issue instructions to the Registrar of Voters to take any and all steps necessary for the holding of the consolidated election.

SECTION 10. That the City of Oceanside recognizes that additional costs will be incurred by the County by reason of this consolidation and agrees to reimburse the County for its reasonable share of these costs, upon a proper invoice.

SECTION 11. That the City of Oceanside agrees to indemnify and save free and harmless the County, its officers, agents and employees from expense or liability, including reasonable attorneys' fees, as a result of an election contest arising after conduct of this election.

SECTION 12. That the City Clerk is hereby directed to file a certified copy of this resolution with the Board of Supervisors and the Registrar of Voters of San Diego County.

SECTION 13. That in all particulars not recited in this resolution, the election shall be held and conducted as provided by law for holding municipal elections.

SECTION 14. That notice of the time and place of holding the election is given and the City Clerk is authorized, instructed and directed to give further or additional notice of the election, in time, form and manner as required by law. SECTION 15. Pursuant to Elections Code section 9282(b), the City Council authorizes

to submit a written argument, not to exceed 300 words in favor of the measure on behalf of the City Council. Arguments must be submitted to the City Clerk and may be changed until and including the date fixed by the Clerk by 5:00 p.m. after which no arguments for or against the measure may be submitted, withdrawn or changed.

The arguments shall be filed with the City Clerk, signed, with the printed name(s) and signature(s) of the author(s) submitting it, or if submitted on behalf of an organization, the name of the organization, and the printed name and signature of at least one of its principal officers who is the author of the argument. The arguments shall be accompanied by the Form of Statement to be Filed by Author(s) of Argument supplied by the City Clerk.

SECTION 16. That pursuant to section 9285 of the Elections Code of the State of California, when the elections official has selected the arguments for and against the measure, which will be printed and distributed to the voters, the Elections Official shall send a copy of an argument in favor of the proposition to the authors of any argument against the measure and a copy of an argument against the measure to the authors of any argument in favor of the measure immediately upon receiving the arguments.

The author or a majority of the authors of an argument relating to a city measure may prepare and submit a rebuttal argument not exceeding 250 words or may authorize in writing any other person or persons to prepare, submit, or sign the rebuttal argument.

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A rebuttal argument may not be signed by more than five individuals.

The rebuttal arguments shall be filed with the City Clerk, signed, with the printed name(s) and signature(s) of the author(s) submitting it, or if submitted on behalf of an organization, the name of the organization, and the printed name and signature of at least one of its principal officers, not more than 10 days after the final date for filing direct arguments. The rebuttal arguments shall be accompanied by the Form of Statement to be Filed by Author(s) of Argument as supplied by the City Clerk.

Rebuttal arguments shall be printed in the same manner as the direct arguments. Each rebuttal argument shall immediately follow the direct argument which it seeks to rebut.

SECTION 17. That the City Council directs the City Clerk to transmit a copy of the

measure to the City Attorney. Pursuant to California Elections Code section 9280, the City Attorney shall prepare an impartial analysis of the measure not exceeding 500 words showing the effect of the measure on the existing law and the operation of the measure. PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Oceanside, California, this \_\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_, 2024, by the following vote: AYES: NAYS: ABSENT: ABSTAIN: MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OCEANSIDE APPROVED AS TO FORM: ATTEST: Ville CITY CLERK CITY ATTORNEY 

### ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OCEANSIDE AMENDING CHAPTER 34, ARTICLE II, SECTIONS 34.6.5 AND 34.6.16(b) OF THE OCEANSIDE CITY CODE EXTENDING THE TEMPORARY ONE-HALF CENT GENERAL TRANSACTIONS AND USE TAX FOR AN ADDITIONAL TEN YEARS WHILE MAINTAINING PROVISIONS FOR CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

WHEREAS, on June 6, 2018, the City Council of the City of Oceanside ("City Council") introduced Ordinance No. 18-OR0334-1 establishing, subject to voter approval, Chapter 34, Article II, sections 34.6.1 through 34.6.17, known as the "Oceanside Temporary One-Half Cent Sales Tax"; and

WHEREAS, on June 6, 2018, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 18-R03042-1 calling for a general municipal election on November 6, 2018 for the submission of the proposed ordinance for a temporary one-half cent transactions and use tax increase ("Measure X"); consolidating the election with the statewide election; requesting that the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego permit the Registrar of Voters to conduct the election; authorizing the mayor and designated council members to submit ballot arguments in favor of Measure X, and directing the City Attorney to prepare an impartial analysis; and

WHEREAS, on December 12, 2018, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 18-R0616-1, declaring the election results, including a declaration that Measure X was approved by 55.68 percent of the electorate voting in the general municipal election; and

WHEREAS, on December 5, 2018, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 18-OR0605-1 establishing the Measure X Citizens Oversight Committee ("COC") which is comprised of seven Oceanside residents all of whom have demonstrated expertise in accounting, finance, engineering, construction and/or municipal government experience, including one member representing the San Diego County Taxpayers Association; and

WHEREAS, the COC is responsible to review and report on City compliance with the provisions of Measure X, particularly with respect to the City's accounting and expenditure of Measure X revenues. The COC is also charged with the responsibility to review and comment

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on each year's Measure X Spending Plan, as well as the auditor's and Financial Services Department's annual reports; and

WHEREAS, consistent with the requirements of Measure X, the COC has reviewed and commented on the annual Measure X Spending Plan each year between 2019-2024; and

WHEREAS, the Revised Year 5 Spending Plan approved by the City Council on September 13, 2023 included total revenue of approximately \$20,182,896, including \$10,173,200 to be spent on improved public safety services and measures to address the homeless population in Oceanside. The Revised Year 5 Plan also included \$4,000,000 in street and road repairs and improvements, \$6,500,000 in improvements to the City's parks, beaches and the Oceanside Pier, and a carry forward of \$3,409,696 to be used for improvements and services consistent with the intent of Measure X; and

WHEREAS, the COC has found that the Measure X revenues have been spent on improved infrastructure and public safety services consistent with the intent of the measure; and

WHEREAS, the City has determined that extending the temporary one-half cent general local transactions and use tax (commonly known as a "sales tax") would allow the City to continue to address public safety and homelessness issues, infrastructure requirements, improvements to beaches, parks and other City facilities and equipment without compromising existing City services; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article XIII C of the California Constitution, and California Revenue and Taxation Code section 7285.9, the City has the authority to enact a local sales tax for general purposes with the approval of the majority of voters in the City voting in an election on the issue; and

WHEREAS, the proposed extension of Measure X by the voters would preserve the existing one-half cent sales tax for an additional ten years after its April 1, 2026 expiration date and retains all other provisions of Chapter 34, Article II, including measures continuing citizens' oversight, separate accounting and independent audits for the duration of the tax; and

WHEREAS, proposed section 34.6.5 of the Oceanside City Code, set forth below, extends the existing transactions and use tax, and the proceeds from the tax extended by this Ordinance, estimated by the City's independent sales tax consultant at 19 million dollars annually, shall continue to be used for unrestricted general revenue purposes of the City and shall be received into the general fund of the City as required by Oceanside City Code section 34.6.15; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Ordinance also ensures continued citizen oversight by extending the COC for the duration of the extended tax, if approved by the electorate.

NOW, THEREFORE, subject to approval by an affirmative, simple majority vote of the people as required by law, the People of the City of Oceanside do ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. The Oceanside Code is hereby revised to amend Chapter 34, Article II, section 34.6.5 as set forth below, thereby extending the termination date of the local transactions and use tax within the City of Oceanside, to be administered by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration:

## "34.6.5 Termination date.

The authority to levy the tax imposed by this Ordinance shall expire on April 1, 2036." <u>SECTION 2</u>. The Oceanside City Code is hereby revised to amend Chapter 34, Article II, section 34.6.16(b) as follows:

### "34.6.16 Citizens' oversight and accountability.

(b) *Initial and annual submittal of spending plan*. If the ballot measure is approved by the voters, the city manager shall, prior to city council consideration of the city's annual budget, prepare and present to the COC for its review a spending plan for the revenues generated by this ordinance. It is the intent that funds be used to improve infrastructure and the delivery of public safety services and the plan shall reflect these priorities and include specific proposals for near term expenditures as well as a plan for expenditures throughout the term of the tax, and finance options for larger-scale projects that may require the pledge of revenues. After review and recommendation by the COC, the spending plan shall be presented to the city council for its consideration and final decision, in its discretion, as part of the City's annual budget process. The city council must consider for approval the

expenditure of projected revenues generated by this ordinance as a separate line item category
 in each year's budget."

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