



Office of the City Manager

ACTION CALENDAR

June 2, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: David A. White, Deputy City Manager

Subject: Presentation and Discussion of Community Survey Results and Direction About Next Steps for Possible Ballot Measure Development

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss results of the community survey and provide direction to the City Manager about the drafting of possible measures for inclusion on the November 2020 ballot.

SUMMARY

At the April 28, 2020 City Council meeting, City Council asked staff to undertake a community survey to determine the ways in which the community has been impacted by COVID-19 and to include questions about the following possible ballot measures:

- A parcel tax, at varying levels per square foot, to address fire, emergency medical service, and public health needs. This tax requires a two-thirds vote for approval.
- A parcel tax for wildfire prevention activities. This tax requires a two-thirds vote for approval
- An increase in the utility user tax by 2.5 percent to generate resources for a climate action fund. A special tax requires a two-thirds vote for approval and a general tax requires approval by a simple majority of voters.
- A tax on wholesale distributors of gas and diesel fuel to generate resources for a climate action fund.

Lake Research Partners conducted the survey from May 16 through May 19. The results from the survey will not be available until after the filing deadline for this report. The final questionnaire is attached and a summary of the survey results will be provided to Council in a supplemental report.

If the City Council wishes to move forward with placing a revenue measure (or measures) on the ballot in the fall, city staff will need direction on the specifics of the measure(s) to allow adequate time to draft final ballot measure language for Council consideration and to meet County Registrar of Voter deadlines for the November 2020 ballot.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The total cost of implementing the community survey is estimated at \$27,438 and staff does not anticipate spending more than \$30,000 under the contract with Lake Research Partners that was approved by City Council. The total amount authorized by City Council to administer two community surveys was an amount not-to-exceed \$75,000. City staff estimates generating savings of at least \$45,000 by implementing only one community survey.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

On April 28, 2020, City Council provided direction to city staff to move forward with a community survey with focused questions to understand the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on residents and the level of support for a number of revenue measures. Lake Research Partners designed and administered a 15-minute community survey for the City of Berkeley which was conducted by telephone (May 16-19, 2020) using professional interviewers. The results of the survey will be provided to City Council in a supplemental report. If the City Council wishes to move forward with placing a revenue measure (or measures) on the ballot in the fall, city staff will need direction on the specifics of the measure(s) to allow adequate time to draft final ballot measure language for Council consideration and to meet County Registrar of Voters deadlines for the November 2020 ballot.

In order to meet the deadlines set by the Alameda County Registrar of Voters to place items on the November ballot, the following timeline has been developed for the Council’s consideration:

June 2, 2020 Action Calendar	Presentation and Discussion of Community Survey Results and Provide Direction on Ballot Language
July 14, 2020 Action Calendar	Draft Ballot Language to Council (from June 2 direction)
July 28, 2020 Action Calendar	Last Council meeting before recess; Adopt Final Ballot Language and Resolutions placing measures on the ballot
August 7, 2020	Last Day to Place a Measure on the Ballot

BACKGROUND

On January 28, staff delivered a presentation to the City Council on fire and emergency services and various operational and system enhancements as well as funding options that included ballot measures, fees, and special studies. On February 4, 2020, staff provided an overview to the City Council on the ballot schedule and discussed the items that could be part of a community survey along with a variety of potential ballot measures that were being considered for the November 3, 2020 ballot. On February 11, 2020, staff delivered a subsequent presentation to City Council and received direction to survey the community on a number of revenue measures. The original timeline indicated that the first, of two, surveys would take place two weeks after the March 3, 2020 primary with city staff returning to City Council on April 14, 2020 with the results of the first survey. However, due to the local, state, and national emergencies that were declared as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the shelter-in-place orders that were issued on March 17, 2020 and on March 31, 2020, the community survey was not administered. City staff provided an update to City Council on April 28, 2020 and received direction to survey the community on the impacts of COVID-19 and the following revenue measures:

- A parcel tax, at varying levels per square foot, to address fire, emergency medical service, and public health needs.

- A parcel tax for wildfire prevention activities.
- An increase in the utility user tax by 2.5 percent to generate resources for a climate action fund.
- A tax on wholesale distributors of gas and diesel fuel to generate resources for a climate action fund.

In addition to the revenue measures listed above, the following is a list of other measures that are being considered for the November 3, 2020 ballot:

- Police Charter Amendment. This item was scheduled for the City Council meeting on April 14, 2020. The Council voted to place the item on the November 3, 2020 ballot.
- Tax / User Fee on ride share companies for prearranged rides originating in the City of Berkeley.
- Addressing the GANN limit. This is an item that has to be placed on the ballot every four (4) years that allows the City to continue to spend the proceeds of various taxes that were previously approved by the voters. The City last placed this item on the 2016 ballot and City Council will be asked to place this item on the ballot on June 2, 2020.
- Eliminate the requirement in the Charter (Article VII, Section 37a) that requires the following: “Any sworn member of the fire department who is hired subsequent to January 1, 1995, may not reside greater than a radius of forty (40) air miles from the boundaries of the City of Berkeley.”
- Revising certain sections of the Charter and Municipal Code to use gender neutral language (two measures – one for the Charter and one for the BMC).
- City Council salaries. This item initially appeared on the April 28, 2020 City Council Agenda and was continued to the City Council meeting on June 2, 2020.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the action requested in this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Lake Research Partners has implemented the community survey at the direction of City Council and city staff requires feedback and additional direction in order to draft ballot language if the City Council would like to place any revenue measures on the ballot.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSON

David A. White, Deputy City Manager, 981-7012

Attachment:

1: City of Berkeley Community Survey Questionnaire

ATTACHMENT 1

City of Berkeley Community Survey
Draft Questionnaire
Phone and Text to Online
May 2020

N=500 Likely Nov 2020 General Election Voters

Target Length: 15 minutes
Current length: 15 minutes

Hello. My name is _____. I'm calling from McGuire Research. We are conducting a public opinion survey and would like to ask you some questions. We are not selling anything, and won't ask you for a contribution or donation.

May I please speak with (VOTER NAME FROM FILE)? **ACCEPT NO SUBSTITUTES**

Q1. Before we begin, I need to know if I have reached you on a cell phone, and if so, are you in a place where you can talk safely?

- Yes, cell and can talk safely 1
- Yes, cell and cannot talk safely **[CALL BACK]** 2
- No, not on cell, but own one 3
- No, not on cell, and do not own one 4
- (Don't know/refused) **[TERMINATE]** 5

Q2. Could you please tell me your gender? **[DO NOT READ OPTIONS]**

- Male 1
- Female 2
- Non-binary/other 3

Q3. Although it is some time from now, what are the chances of you voting in the November 2020 general election for President, Congress, and other offices? Are you almost certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances about 50-50, are you probably not going to vote, or are you definitely not going to vote?

- Almost certain to vote 1
- Probably will vote 2
- 50-50 **[TERMINATE]** 3
- Probably not **[TERMINATE]** 4
- Definitely not **[TERMINATE]** 5
- Don't know **[TERMINATE]** 6

Q4. How much of an impact has the coronavirus pandemic had on you and your household – thinking about all of the effects, including financial concerns and physical and mental health, would you say the impact on your household has been very serious, fairly serious, moderate, minor, or no impact at all?

- Very serious..... 1
- Fairly serious 2
- Moderate..... 3
- Minor..... 4
- No impact..... 5
- (Don't know)..... 6

Q5. In your own words, what has been the single greatest challenge or difficulty for you and your household as a result of the coronavirus pandemic?

_____ [RECORD VERBATIM – PROMPT FOR SPECIFIC CONCERN]

Q6. Before we were asked to shelter in place in mid-March, what was your employment status – were you: **[READ IN ORDER]**

- Employed full-time 1
- Employed part-time..... 2
- Unemployed..... 3
- Retired 4
- Homemaker or stay at home parent..... 5
- Full-time student 6
- On disability 7
- (Other) 8
- (Don't know)..... 9

Q7. [IF EMPLOYED (Q6 = 1 – 2)] I am going to read some ways in which people’s work lives have been affected by the coronavirus. Please tell me which of the following apply to you, you can give multiple responses: **[READ AND RANDOMIZE 1-7. ALLOW MULTIPLE RESPONSES]**

- I have been laid off or furloughed 1
- My hours at work have been reduced 2
- I am required to work from home by my employer..... 3
- I am taking paid time off 4
- I am taking unpaid time off 5
- I am a small business owner and my business is currently closed..... 6
- I am a small business owner and my business is currently open 7
- (Other: [OPEN END]) 8
- (My work life has not changed) 9

Q8. Now thinking about the monthly income of your household, including everyone in your home, and income from all sources including paid work, retirement, and deferred compensation, how much has your household income changed since we were asked to shelter in place in mid-March? Would you say that it has increased significantly, increased somewhat, there has been no change, decreased somewhat, or decreased significantly?

- Decreased significantly 1
- Decreased somewhat 2
- No change 3
- Increased somewhat 4
- Increased significantly 5
- (Not sure)..... 6

Q9. Now thinking about your expected household income over the next year, how likely is it that you will be able to pay your rent or mortgage on time every month for the next year? Would you say that is very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?

- Very likely 1
- Somewhat likely 2
- Not very likely 3
- Not at all likely 4
- (Don’t know)..... 5

Q10. Again thinking about your expected household income over the next year, how likely is it that you will be able to pay for your other basic needs, like food, healthcare, utilities, and other essentials for the next year? Would you say that is very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?

- Very likely 1
- Somewhat likely 2
- Not very likely 3
- Not at all likely 4
- (Don't know)..... 5

Q11. At this time, do you think the City of Berkeley should focus solely on responding to the coronavirus pandemic and providing basic city services, or do you think that the city should pursue other goals as well, such as supporting small businesses, increasing affordable housing, and addressing homelessness and the environment?

- Solely coronavirus outbreak and basic services 1
- Pursue other goals as well 2
- (Neither)..... 3
- (Not sure)..... 4

Q12. Now I'm going to read you some different areas where investment in the City of Berkeley may be needed in the next few years. Please tell me how important you feel it is for the City of Berkeley to address each of the following: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not important at all. If you are not sure how you feel about a particular item, please say so. **[RANDOMIZE]**

AFTER EACH: And would you say that extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important. If you are not sure how you feel about a particular item, please say so.

Column:

- Extremely important 1
- Very important..... 2
- Somewhat important 3
- Not too important 4
- Not important at all..... 5
- (Don't know)..... 6

- a. Climate change and sustainability
- b. Fire safety and emergency medical response, including training for first responders, additional ambulances, paramedics, and modernizing the 9-1-1 dispatch system
- c. Wildfire prevention, including vegetation management, an outdoor warning system, fire safety, and evacuation planning
- d. Improving response to public health emergencies such as the coronavirus pandemic, including contact tracing, vaccines, testing, education and health information
- e. Affordable housing and homeless services

Now, I'm going to read some ballot measures that may appear on the ballot in Berkeley this

November. Here's the first one.

[ROTATE Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16 WITH Q17, Q18; Q14, Q15, Q16 ALWAYS FOLLOW Q13 IN ORDER; ALSO ROTATE Q17 WITH Q18]

Q13. [FIRE AND EMERGENCY ESSENTIAL] Shall the City of Berkeley enact a fire and emergency tax of 8 cents per square foot of building on property owners, estimated at 150 dollars per year on an average home, generating 6.4 million dollars annually, to fund essential local firefighter and paramedic emergency response, including new ambulances, additional hiring and training for firefighters and paramedics, and upgrading or replacing safety equipment, including vehicles, facilities, and modernizing the 9-1-1 dispatch system?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure, or are you undecided?

[IF YES/NO]: And do you support/oppose this measure strongly or not so strongly?

[IF UNDECIDED]: Well, to which side do you lean?

- Yes - strongly 1
- Yes - not so strongly 2
- Lean yes 3
- Undecided..... 4
- Lean no..... 5
- No - not so strongly 6
- No - strongly 7
- (Don't know)..... 8
- (Refused)..... 9

Now I am going to ask you a different version of this same measure.

Q14. [FIRE AND EMERGENCY PLUS PUBLIC HEALTH] Shall the City of Berkeley enact a fire and emergency tax of \$0.17 cents per square foot of building on property owners, estimated at 325 dollars per year on an average home, generating 14 million dollars annually, to fund local firefighter and paramedic emergency response, including new ambulances, additional hiring and training for firefighters and paramedics, upgrading or replacing safety equipment, including vehicles, facilities, modernizing the 9-1-1 dispatch system, and expand funding so that the City can better respond to public health emergencies such as the coronavirus pandemic, including expanded funding for contact tracing, vaccines, testing, education and health information?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure, or are you undecided?

[IF YES/NO]: And do you support/oppose this measure strongly or not so strongly?

[IF UNDECIDED]: Well, to which side do you lean?

- Yes - strongly 1
- Yes - not so strongly 2
- Lean yes 3
- Undecided..... 4
- Lean no..... 5
- No - not so strongly 6
- No - strongly 7
- (Don't know)..... 8
- (Refused)..... 9

Now I am going to ask you another version of this same measure.

Q15. [COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND SAFETY] Shall the City of Berkeley enact a fire and health and safety tax of 26.3 cents per square foot of building on property owners, estimated at 500 dollars per year on an average home, generating 21.4 million dollars annually, to fund local firefighter and paramedic emergency response, including new ambulances, additional hiring and training for firefighters and paramedics, upgrading or replacing safety equipment, including vehicles, facilities modernizing the 9-1-1 dispatch system, expand funding so that the City can better respond to public health emergencies such as the coronavirus pandemic, including expanded funding for contact tracing, vaccines, testing, education and health information, and to fund wildfire prevention, fire safety, an outdoor emergency warning system, and evacuation planning?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure, or are you undecided?

[IF YES/NO]: And do you support/oppose this measure strongly or not so strongly?

[IF UNDECIDED]: Well, to which side do you lean?

- Yes - strongly 1
- Yes - not so strongly 2
- Lean yes 3
- Undecided..... 4
- Lean no..... 5
- No - not so strongly..... 6
- No - strongly 7
- (Don't know)..... 8
- (Refused)..... 9

Now I am going to ask about a different measure related to wildfire services.

Q16. [WILDFIRE TAX] Shall the City of Berkeley enact a wildfire prevention parcel tax of 2.5 cents per square foot of building on property owners, estimated at 47 dollars per year on an average home, generating 2 million dollars annually, to fund wildfire prevention, fire safety, an outdoor emergency warning system, and evacuation planning?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure, or are you undecided?

[IF YES/NO]: And do you support/oppose this measure strongly or not so strongly?

[IF UNDECIDED]: Well, to which side do you lean?

- Yes - strongly 1
- Yes - not so strongly 2
- Lean yes 3
- Undecided..... 4
- Lean no..... 5
- No - not so strongly..... 6
- No - strongly 7
- (Don't know)..... 8
- (Refused)..... 9

Q17. [CLIMATE ACTION FUND OIL AND GAS] Shall the City of Berkeley create a Climate Action Fund to provide incentives for Berkeley residents and businesses to reduce global warming emissions? Money for the Climate Action Fund would come from a tax on wholesale distributors of gas and diesel fuel, for measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollution, including increasing electric vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and other clean transportation options, increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy use in homes and businesses, and investing in clean and reliable back-up power for emergency services facilities and other general municipal services?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure, or are you undecided?

[IF YES/NO]: And do you support/oppose this measure strongly or not so strongly?

[IF UNDECIDED]: Well, to which side do you lean?

- Yes - strongly 1
- Yes - not so strongly 2
- Lean yes 3
- Undecided..... 4
- Lean no..... 5
- No - not so strongly 6
- No - strongly 7
- (Don't know)..... 8
- (Refused)..... 9

Now I am going to ask you another version of this same measure.

Q18. [CLIMATE ACTION FUND UTILITY USERS TAX] Shall the City of Berkeley create a Climate Action Fund that would be funded by an increase in the Utility Users Tax from 7.5% to 10%, that would generate 4 million dollars annually for measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollution, including increasing electric vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and other clean transportation options, increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy use in homes and businesses, and investing in clean and reliable back-up power for emergency services facilities and other general municipal services?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure, or are you undecided?

[IF YES/NO]: And do you support/oppose this measure strongly or not so strongly?

[IF UNDECIDED]: Well, to which side do you lean?

- Yes - strongly 1
- Yes - not so strongly 2
- Lean yes 3
- Undecided..... 4
- Lean no..... 5
- No - not so strongly 6
- No - strongly 7
- (Don't know)..... 8

(Refused)..... 9

Finally, I would like to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes only.

Q19. [T] In terms of local politics, do you consider yourself progressive, liberal, moderate, or conservative?

Progressive..... 1
 Liberal..... 2
 Moderate..... 3
 Conservative..... 4
 (Don't know)..... 5
 (Refused)..... 6

Q20. [T*] From which one of these sources do you get most of your news about Berkeley? **[RANDOMIZE 1-10]**

East Bay Times or Berkeley Voice 1
 Berkeleyside 2
 The San Francisco Chronicle or SFGate..... 3
 The Daily Californian..... 4
 City of Berkeley website, email, or social media..... 5
 Other print newspapers..... 6
 Other online news sites..... 7
 Radio 8
 Local television news 9
 Social media like Facebook, Twitter, or Nextdoor..... 10
 (Don't know/refused)..... 11

Q21. [T*] What is the last year of schooling that you have completed? **[DO NOT READ]**

1-11th grade 1
 High school graduate 2
 Non-college post H.S. 3
 Some college 4
 Associate's degree..... 5
 College graduate..... 6
 Post-graduate school 7
 (Don't know/refused)..... 8

Q22. [T] Do you have any children 18 years of age or younger living at home with you?

Yes 1
 No..... 2
 (Don't know/refused)..... 3

Q23. [IF Q22=YES] [T] Are any of your children currently enrolled in Berkeley public schools?

- Yes 1
- No 2
- (Don't know/refused) 3

Q24. [T] Do you own your own home or do you rent?

- Own 1
- Rent 2
- (Other) 3
- (Don't know/refused) 4

Q25. [T] How long have you lived in Berkeley? **[DO NOT READ, RECORD WITHIN RANGE]**

- Less than two years 1
- Two to five years 2
- Five to ten years 3
- Ten to twenty years 4
- More than twenty years 5
- All your life 6
- (Don't know/refused) 7

Q26. Just to make sure we have a representative sample, could you please tell me whether you are from a Latino, Hispanic, or Spanish-speaking background?

- Yes, Latino/Latina/Hispanic 1
- No, not Latino/Latina/Hispanic 2
- (Don't know/Refused) 3

Q27. [ASK ALL] [T*] And please tell me which one, or more than one, of these racial or ethnic groups you identify with.

[RANDOMIZE/READ CHOICES]

[ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES]

[IF "OTHER" OR "BIRACIAL" OR "MULTI-RACIAL":] Well which two or three of these do you identify with the most?

- White or Caucasian 1
- Black or African American 2
- Latino/Latina or Hispanic 3
- Asian American or Pacific Islander 4
- Native American 5
- Middle Eastern 6
- (Other) 7
- (Don't know/Refused) 8

RECORD PARTY REGISTRATION AND AGE FROM FILE

THIS COMPLETES OUR SURVEY. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME, AND HAVE A PLEASANT (DAY/EVENING).