



City Council

Consider Options for the Timing and Source of Funds for a Housing Levy and Public Safety Levy

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Title

Consider Options for the Timing and Source of Funds for a Housing Levy and Public Safety Levy

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

The Ad Hoc Committee on Housing Affordability has considered a range of options for the timing and source of funds for a housing levy and a public safety levy.

City Manager Recommendation:

Consider the options and provide staff with feedback and direction regarding the timing and source of funds for a housing levy and a public safety levy.

Report

Issue:

Whether to provide staff with feedback and direction regarding the timing and source of funds for a housing levy and public safety levy.

Staff Contact:

Steve Hall, City Manager, 360.753.8447

Presenter(s):

Steve Hall, City Manager
Mary Verner, Administrative Services Director

Background and Analysis:

Given the strong support for these measures, the City Manager seeks City Council guidance on how to bring these issues to the community for a vote. At the June 6, 2017, City Council Study Session, Stuart Elway from Elway Research presented the results of a recent resident opinion poll that the City commissioned. The survey asked residents to respond to a series of questions pertaining to housing and public safety. Mr. Elway reported that when asked, "in your opinion, what is the most significant issue facing the City of Olympia at this time?" 51 percent responded that homelessness was the biggest issue facing the City of Olympia. He also noted that there was strong support for the public safety package with nearly 8 in 10 respondents supporting the package. There was also strong

support for the housing package with 8 in 10 respondents also supporting it. Support is less vigorous when respondents were asked to consider both packages together.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Housing Affordability has been meeting regularly since March to consider options for a housing levy and public safety levy. The committee has identified two primary options for funding these activities. Options for the housing fund include an ad valorem property tax levy adopted following the declaration of a housing emergency as provided for in RCW 84.52.105 or a sales tax levy as provided for in RCW 82.14.530. Staff estimates that these two sources would generate approximately \$2.3 million per year. The public safety package may only be funded through an ad valorem property tax levy.

There is time to place at least one of these measures on the ballot for November if the City provides notice to the Thurston County Auditor by August 1. If approved by the voters, this would allow the tax to go into effect starting in January 2018 with revenues being received at the beginning of the third quarter of 2018.

These measures can be considered at any scheduled election including general and special elections that occur in November, February, April and August.

See the attached information sheet for additional information regarding timing and funding options.

Neighborhood/Community Interests:

Housing affordability and public safety are issues of community-wide interest.

Options:

1. Receive the report from the City Manager and provide feedback and direction regarding funding and timing options.
2. Do not receive the report from the City Manager and provide feedback and direction regarding funding and timing options.

Financial Impact:

None at this time.

Attachments:

Resident Opinion Survey Results
Funds, Timing and Revenue
Tax Options Comparison
Committee Meeting Summary
Draft Administration and Financial Plan