

Most Measure C funds used for police and fire

Measure C was approved by Merced voters on Nov. 8, 2005. The half cent sales tax is intended to be used to help fund public safety and transportation projects in the City.

The sales tax went into effect April 1, 2006 and has been generating revenue for the City ever since.

The ballot measure also created a Citizens Oversight Committee (see related article) that recommends to the City Council how Measure C money should be spent and reviews expenditures.

Food, medicine purchases don't pay Measure C sales taxes

The money is discretionary, that is the City Council could spend it on any project it desired. However, the group that worked to get the sales tax passed stressed that they wanted to see the money spent on police officers, firefighters and safety-related transportation projects.

One project mentioned by the group was an underpass beneath the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad tracks. However, that project is NOT being funded with Measure C money.

Measure C funds undergo an annual independent audit

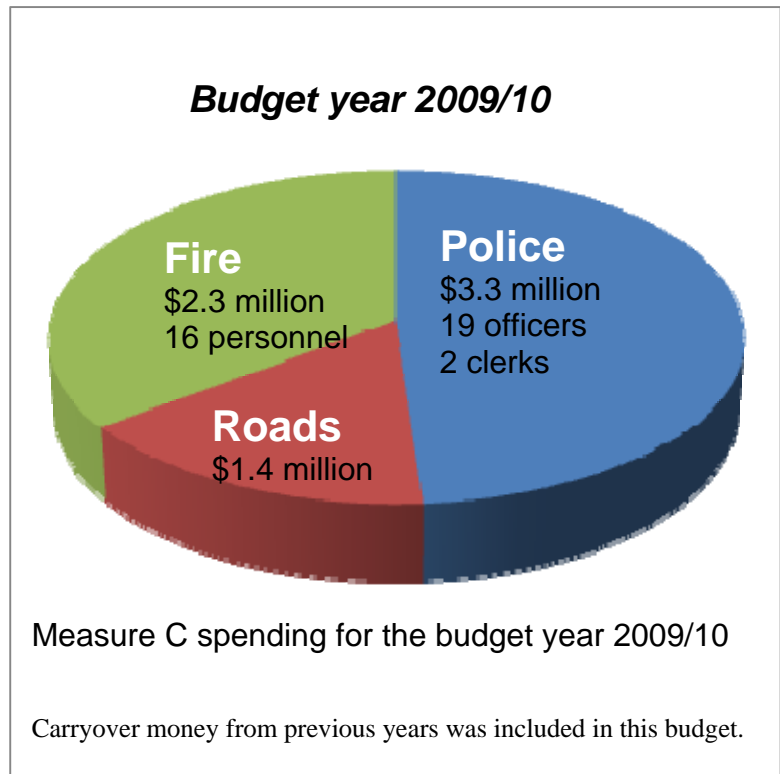
Most of the money has been spent on Police and Fire Department personnel.

The last budget year there were 19 police officers that were funded by Measure C funds, and two police clerks who support the officers with file work and other services.

Last year the Measure C money also paid for the salaries of 16 firefighters. The passage of Measure C allowed the City to staff Fire Station 55, the new station on Parsons Avenue in North Merced.

The sales tax revenue has also allowed the City to spend more than \$1 million to repair and maintain City streets.

Measure C is a sales tax, so



the more money people spend, the more revenue will come in. But when people are spending less, the Measure C funds drop.

The revenues from Measure C have been decreasing during the recession. The first full year in existence, Measure C raised \$7 million in revenues. The last budget year, 2009/10, Measure C brought in \$4.7 million.

Along with the Citizen's Oversight Committee, every year an independent audit is conducted to review the expenditures of the funds. All of the spending must be approved by the Council.

Both the Committee meetings and the Council meetings are open to the public.

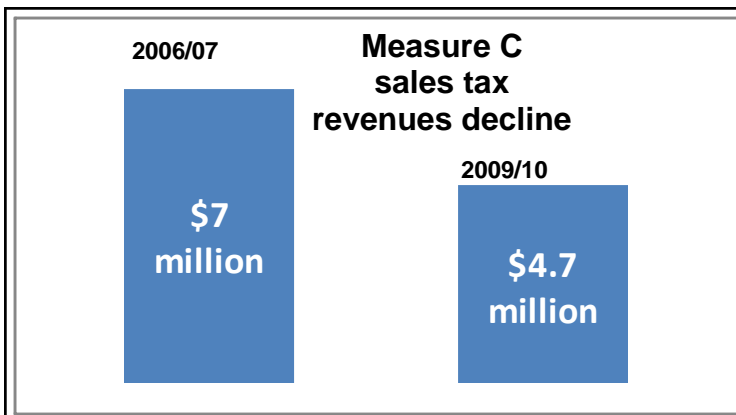
Who is watching over Measure C money?

Measure C included a citizen's watchdog committee to review the expenditures of the sales tax.

The group of nine City residents is appointed by the Council. Three people are selected from the three Police Districts in the City representing north, central and south Merced. There also are non-voting City employees.

The Committee members meet two months after the end of each quarter.

For more information, go to the City website or call the City Clerk's Office at 388-7100.



Merced City Council

Mayor Bill Spriggs
 Council Members:
 Bill Blake
 John Carlisle
 Michele Gabriault-Acosta
 Noah Lor
 Josh Pedrozo
 Mary-Michal Rawling

Contact the City Council by email at Citycouncil@cityofmerced.org, by calling 385-6834 or writing to Council members at the Civic Center address below.

Council meetings

The Council usually meets on the first and third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers in the Civic Center, except when there is a Monday holiday, such as President's Day this month. The agenda is posted online at www.CityofMerced.org.

Contacting us

The Web site, www.CityofMerced.org, contains City Council information, the Muni Code, General Plan and other information. Contact the Newsletter at newsletter@CityofMerced.org, call the Public Information Office at 385-6232 or write:

Merced Civic Center
 Attn: Public Information Office
 678 W. 18th St.
 Merced CA 95340

The Civic Center is open Monday-Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., except holidays.

Call us

City Council	385-6834
City Manager	385-6834
City Attorney	385-6868
City Clerk	388-7100
Airport	385-6873
Code Enforcement.....	385-6861
Finance	388-7900
Inspection Services	385-6861
Personnel.....	388-7100
Planning Department.....	385-6858
Public Works (7:30-4:30) ...	385-6800
After hours	385-6905
Parks/CommServices	385-6855
Utility payments.....	388-7289

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911

Fire Department..... 385-6891
 Police Department 385-6912

Ask the City: You didn't pick up my garbage!

Ask the City is an ongoing column answering questions that have been submitted to us by mail, email or phone. Readers can submit their questions to the addresses in the column on the left.

Hey, you didn't empty my garbage can! Come out and empty it.

Call often received by the staff in Public Works Department

Sometimes our trucks fill up in the middle of a route,

and after they return from the landfill they don't pick up at the right spot.

Usually, the problem is that the containers were not down at the curb in time.

The refuse trucks are equipped with a GPS tracking device tied into a communication system.

When a driver goes by a house that doesn't have containers at the curb, he enters it into the computer and it notes the time and location.

We understand that sometimes people forget to

put the refuse containers out, so we will come back once a year to empty them at no charge. After that, it costs \$25 to pay for the cost of sending a truck to empty it.

The other major reason we get those calls is because the drivers are on a holiday schedule. For example this month with Presidents' Day, pickup for the entire City is delayed by one day.

During holiday weeks we explain that the driver will be picking up everybody's trash the next day.

City offices close to commemorate President's Day

The offices of the City of Merced will be closed Monday, Feb. 21 in honor of President's Day.

The regular City Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 22.

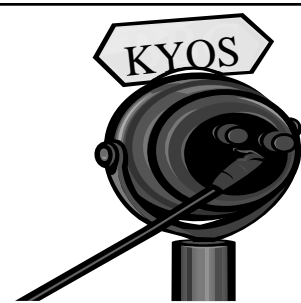
Trash collection will be delayed one day due to the holiday. Residents with Monday pickup will have refuse collected Tuesday. The regular Tuesday collection will be Wednesday, etc.

Learn about the Community

Community Conversations is a public service program on KYOS. The hour-long show focuses on community, education and government news affecting residents throughout Merced County.

It airs on KYOS, 1480 AM, at 7 p.m. Saturday and at 3 p.m. Sunday.

The show is put together by the Merced County Office of Education, the City of Merced



Public Information Office, the University of California, Merced, KYOS, in association with the County of Merced and Merced College.

For past shows go to www.mercedcommunityconversations.com.

Think Green

Easy ways to reduce your fuel costs immediately

Here are ways to reduce your vehicle fuel costs from the California Energy Commission.

- ✓ Avoid aggressive driving and starts. All vehicles lose fuel economy at speeds above 55 mph. Driving 65 instead of 75 mph reduces fuel cost by 13%. Driving 55 would save 25%.
- ✓ Using the air conditioner increases fuel cost 13% to 21%. If it's cool enough, use the flow-through ventilation instead of rolling down the windows or using the AC.

- ✓ Using a loaded roof rack increases fuel consumption. Carry the load inside your vehicle if you can. Remove unnecessary weight.
- ✓ Today's vehicles are designed to warm up fast. Avoid idling when you can; idling is 0 miles per gallon.
- ✓ Regular maintenance as prescribed by the vehicle owner's manual will help your vehicle achieve its best fuel economy. Some overlooked maintenance items, such as a dirty air filter and under-inflated tires, can in-

- crease your fuel cost up to 13%. When replacing your tires, get the same make and model as the tires that were on your vehicle when it was new.
- ✓ It's been estimated that if all Californians properly inflated and aligned their tires, we'd save 300 million gallons of gasoline a year!
- ✓ Drive your most fuel-efficient vehicle whenever possible. Consider purchasing a hybrid-electric, a diesel vehicle, or even a motorcycle to save fuel.