



City of Santa Barbara
Transportation & Circulation Committee
Staff Report

DATE: June 21, 2017

TO: Transportation and Circulation Committee

FROM: Robert J. Dayton, Transportation Planning and Parking Manager

SUBJECT: Possible Sales Tax Measure for Infrastructure Needs

A key challenge for the community is addressing how to maintain safe and functioning streets and historic facilities to prevent them from falling into serious disrepair or closure. The City's basic facilities rely on general tax dollars and lack sufficient funding for regular maintenance or replacement.

Independent pavement engineers rated nearly half the City's roads as "poor, at risk, or failed." City engineers have estimated that an annual street budget of \$12 million could pay for the repaving work of all local roadways throughout the City over a 20-year period, including neighborhood streets. The price tag for the road and bridge repair work will increase significantly the longer we delay.

The City Council has been looking at a variety of ways to increase the funding for roads and vital infrastructure and programs. Over the past five years, the state has taken away over \$100 million dollars in local City funding through the elimination of redevelopment agencies. Due to the loss in state funds and the possible elimination of federal funds, the City must look for local funding sources that cannot be taken away.

On April 18, Council voted to initiate the procedural steps to place a measure to increase the sales tax on the November 2017 ballot. Draft ballot language will return to Council for discussion and possible approval in early July. At that time, Council will decide whether to officially place a sales tax increase on the ballot.

The State Constitution ensures that local funds stay local, as they cannot be taken by the state or federal government. Over a hundred California cities have voted to increase their sales tax to create a local revenue source.

At this meeting, staff will discuss a possible sales tax measure to repair streets and potholes, upgrade public safety infrastructure and aging facilities, and maintain essential services. As one of the City's key advisory committees, your input is needed on the City's infrastructure needs and whether to place a possible sales tax increase on the November ballot.

RD/mj