

# The Extension of... Measure O



## *Frequently Asked Questions and Answers*

**Question: What is Measure O?**

**Answer:** Measure O is an Initiative that will appear on the upcoming November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, ballot. The specific ballot language is:

**“Shall the measure to support the continued operation of the City of Rio Vista’s general services, including police, fire, parks and other unrestricted general fund expenditures by enacting a three-quarter percent transaction and use tax for a period of five years commencing on April 1, 2022, that is projected to provide between \$1,149,000 and \$1,344,000 or revenue annually, be adopted?”**

**Question: Is Measure O a new tax?**

**Answer:** No. This is NOT a new tax; it’s a continuation of an existing revenue stream. In other words, the passage of Measure O will keep an existing sales tax in place; it is NOT a new tax.

**Question: Will the sales tax increase my taxes?**

**Answer:** No. This is a CONTINUATION of an existing tax; therefore, the tax base for Rio Vista residents WILL NOT INCREASE.

**Question: When was Measure O initially placed on the local ballot AND why?**

**Answer:** In the 2012, Rio Vista voters authorized a ¾-cent sales tax (Measure O) to be charged on purchases made in the City, with the exception of most groceries, prescription medicine, and items paid for with food stamps. It passed with 69.05% voter support.

The monies generated through Measure O were used to provide such critical services to Rio Vista residents as paramedic services (first responders to a medical

emergency and transport to a medical center or hospital, when needed)...along with such other City services as adequate fire and police protection, land-use planning, proper maintenance of the City's community and neighborhood parks, streets, and more.

This revenue stream is central to the *quality-of-life* for ALL Rio Vista residents, especially given the fact that there is no hospital, no medical center, nor even a medical doctor in the City. Thus, keeping adequate paramedic services in place is vital to ALL Rio Vista residents, especially for seniors and local youth.

Measure O was designed to sunset (terminate) in five years; however, in 2016, the revenue stream was extended by Rio Vista voters for another five years; it secured **81% YES vote**. While this revenue stream is in place, today, it is (once again) scheduled to "Sunset" (terminate); thus, unless it is kept in place for another five years by Rio Vista voters, it will terminate on March 31, 2022.

Therefore, City officials decided to place a Measure on the November 3, 2020 ballot, asking Rio Vista voters to, once again, REAUTHORIZE (continue) the tax for another five years.

**Question: Will the tax be charged on groceries and my medicines?**

**Answer:** No. The tax will **NOT be charged** on most groceries, prescription medicine, and items paid for with food stamps.

**Question: How long does the existing sales Measure O revenue stream remain in place?**

**Answer:** Collection of the existing sales tax began on April 1, 2017; it will terminate on March 31, 2022, unless extended by Rio Vista voters for another five years.

**Question: If Measure O is extended by local voters in the November 2020 election cycle, how long will the renewed sales tax remain in place?**

**Answer:** If authorized by Rio Vista voters in the November 2020 election cycle, collection of the renewed sales tax will begin on April 1, 2022 and will continue for five consecutive years. It will terminate on March 31, 2027.

**Question: How much money will Measure O generate each year?**

**Answer:** Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the yield from Measure O was estimated to be approximately \$1.1 to \$1.3 million annually; this will increase or decrease, over time, to reflect any change in population and/or if sales in Rio Vista increase or decrease, dramatically.

**Question: Can the State or Federal government come in and take this money away from the City?**

**Answer:** No. The sales tax provides funding that **CANNOT** be seized (taken away) by the State or Federal governments; rather, these monies will remain in Rio Vista to benefit local residents

**Question: Why a sales tax and not some other funding mechanism?**

**Answer:** Most local taxes are paid by property owners; a sales tax is paid by everyone who shops in Rio Vista, whether they are property owners, renters, or visiting the City from a neighboring community or beyond. Therefore, a sales tax is far more equitable (not limited to property owners).

In other words, Measure O will generate money from visitors to the City when they purchase gas, eat at local restaurants, shop, etc. And, people visiting Rio Vista or traveling through our community help pay for the impact of traffic, including highway accidents. These monies can be used to provide and enhance critical services being provided to Rio Vista residents through local government.

**Question: Why not make Measure O permanent?**

**Answer:** In the scientific survey prior to placing Measure O on the ballot in 2016, registered voters were asked if they would want to keep this sales tax in place, permanently. Three quarters (75%) of the respondents said NO.

**Question: How satisfied are Rio Vista voters with the level of fire protection in Rio Vista?**

**Answer:** According to a scientific survey of Rio Vista voters, conducted in February 2020, 95% of respondents said they are SATISFIED with the level of protection presently being provided to Rio Vista residents; in fact, 79% said they are EXTREMELY SATISFIED.

**Question: How satisfied are Rio Vista voters with the level of paramedic services presently being provided to the community?**

**Answer:** According to a scientific survey of Rio Vista voters, conducted in February 2020, nearly ninety percent (88%) of respondents said they are SATISFIED with the level of paramedic services presently being provided to Rio Vista residents; in fact, 70% said they are EXTREMELY SATISFIED.

**Question: How satisfied are Rio Vista voters with the level of police services that are presently being provided?**

**Answer:** According to a scientific survey of Rio Vista voters, conducted in February 2020, nearly three-quarters (73%) of the respondents said they are SATISFIED with the level of police services presently being provided to the community.

**Question: How satisfied are Rio Vista voters with the level of services presently being provided to seniors?**

**Answer:** According to a scientific survey of Rio Vista voters, conducted in February 2020, over two-thirds (67%) of the respondents said they are SATISFIED with the level of services presently being provided to seniors who reside in Rio Vista.

**Question: How satisfied are Rio Vista voters with the overall *quality of life* they experience as a Rio Vista resident?**

**Answer:** According to a scientific survey of Rio Vista voters, conducted in February 2020, nearly ninety percent (89%) of respondents said they are SATISFIED; in fact, 75% said they are either extremely or very satisfied with the *quality of life* they experience as a Rio Vista resident.

**Question: Will Measure O expenditures be monitored?**

**Answer:** YES. City Council adopted a Measure “O” Funds Monitoring Policy that requires the City’s Finance Director to provide, quarterly, a report of Measure O revenues (received) and expenditures made, to date. Further, an annual audit is required and will be posted to the City’s website.

**Question: How will City officials get the message out to voters regarding Measure O on the November 2020 ballot?**

**Answer:** Communication is VITAL, especially when it comes to informing the residents on the impacts on the *quality of life* for Rio Vista residents if Measure O is allowed to terminate vs. being extended by local voters for another five years. City officials believe that Rio Vista voters need to be positioned for making an “informed” decision regarding whether to vote Yes or No on the extension of Measure O.

Toward that end, the City is making a concerted effort to discuss this matter with local voters and the community-at-large; this public outreach effort consists of: (1) providing a link on the City’s web page to a comprehensive discussion of why City officials are placing Measure O on the November 2020 ballot; (2) initiating a comprehensive social media effort where these issues will be presented to the community through (i) *Facebook*, (ii) *Twitter*, (iii) *Nextdoor*, and (iv) *YouTube*; (3) the City will be sending Rio Vista voters a direct mail piece in which this matter will be discussed in appropriate detail; and (4) on-line discussions with such City officials as the Fire Chief, Jeff Armstrong, through *Facebook Live*.

**Question: Can I directly talk to my representatives and pose my questions/concerns regarding Measure O?**

**Answer:** YES! This can be done by calling City Hall OR through the social media. The City will also be setting up several ‘live’ chats with such City officials as the Mayor and the Fire Chief; as well as through *Facebook Live*, which will give you the opportunity speak directly with these individuals and pose questions in ‘real time’.

**Question:   Where can I find more information and reading materials on Measure O?**

**Answer:**   Please go directly to the City’s website <http://riovistacity.com/> and click the tab ‘Measure O’. All articles and related materials, including links to social media pages, can be found there. Also, the Q&A will continue to be updated.

**Question:   What are your social media links?**

**Answer:**

**TWITTER:**

<https://twitter.com/cityofriovista>

**FACEBOOK:**

<https://www.facebook.com/RioVistaCity/>

**INSTAGRAM:**

[https://www.instagram.com/rio\\_vista\\_fd/](https://www.instagram.com/rio_vista_fd/)

<https://www.instagram.com/vistacagov/>

**NEXTDOOR:**

<https://nextdoor.com/city/rio-vista--ca/>

**Question:   Where is my polling place?**

**Answer:**   If voting in person and you don’t know your polling place, please contact the Solano County Registrar of Voters’ office to inquire: (707) 784-6675).

