

City of Piedmont
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: July 19, 2004

FROM: Ann Swift, City Clerk

SUBJECT: **Consideration of a Direct Argument in Favor of the Municipal Services Tax on the November 2004 Ballot**

BACKGROUND

The deadline for direct arguments related to the Municipal Services Tax on the November 2, 2004 ballot is August 16, 2004. Council may take any of the following actions:

1. Authorize one or more council members to prepare and sign an argument on behalf of the city council, allowing other interested parties to sign the argument
2. Pass a resolution approving the text of an argument and have each member of the council sign it
3. Take no action

Although there is no limit to the number of signers for a ballot measure, only the names of the first five (5) signers will appear in the ballot pamphlet.

Draft text prepared by staff is attached and additional options may be presented at the city council meeting.

Should the council require additional time for consideration of this matter, a special city council meeting could be held on Monday, July 26, 2004. Council has cancelled the regular meeting of August 2, 2004 for lack of quorum.

DRAFT

Argument in Favor of the Municipal Services Tax

The City of Piedmont needs a Municipal Services Tax.

Since 1980 voters have approved a special tax every four years which ensures that Piedmont has excellent police, fire, and paramedic services; that Piedmont parks and playgrounds are safe and pleasant places for children and adults; and that all residents have access to library and other vital city services. It is time to make this commitment again.

The City Council has reduced expenditures and passed a balanced budget; has put money in the city's savings account, the General Fund Reserve; and has taken all prudent steps to make this city fiscally sound. Unfortunately, the State of California is planning to take an additional \$300,000 from Piedmont this year in addition to the \$1 million which it has taken since 1993. In the tough years ahead the city must expect further erosion of its revenue by the state and the only way to protect city services and avoid cuts in public safety is to pass the Municipal Services Tax now.

The City Council is unanimous in its support for this tax. They have pledged to control government costs and levy only the minimum tax amount needed. They have a history of keeping their word and have levied less than the maximum amount of tax in 4 out of the past 7 years.

Support local control, public safety and continued quality of life in Piedmont by voting YES.