



To: Sierra Madre City Attorney Aleks Giragosian
Sierra Madre City Manager Michael Bruckner

From: Lew Edwards Group (LEG) with FM3 Research

Date: 12/19/25

Re: Survey Summary

Thank you for the privilege of serving the Sierra Madre community's needs. This memorandum addresses our organization's analysis and interpretation of the FM3 Research Community survey conducted on December 1-10, 2025.

In contrast to larger nearby cities like Los Angeles, a strong percentage of Sierra Madre respondents (62%) believe the city is going in the right direction, with similar percentages -- (65%) giving City government strong performance ratings, no small feat in these challenging times – congratulations.

A local funding measure sponsored and directly placed by the City Council to address community health and safety needs in a 9 -cent per square footage parcel tax format does not meet the required two-thirds threshold for passage.

With long term planning and education, a city-placed measure could potentially be viable in a higher turnout Presidential election. Alternatively, an independently convened and funded community-based proponents' organization could opt to qualify a proponents' initiative, which would lower the threshold for passage to 50%+1.

The results of the FM3 Research survey are insightful and provide valuable feedback as the City continues its fiscal modeling, budget considerations, and long-term city planning and visioning.

Key Survey Highlights

Despite current state and federal developments and an anti-government environment, survey results show that Sierra Madre residents are satisfied with city services- and in particular, health and safety services – with a particular focus on firefighting.

- ✓ 58% of voters agree that the city needs additional funds to maintain services
- ✓ While a similar 57% believe the same is true of the local fire department, only 37% are aware that the police department is in need of additional funds.
- ✓ Voters find the Professional Firefighters Association (73%) and Police Officers

Association (67%) as highly credible, second only to local small business owners (87%) – who would be impacted positively by additional health and safety spending - as credible messengers citywide.

Local Service Priorities

The services of highest importance to your residents for their city – which center on the outcomes – not the funding mechanics- of services, including:

- Protecting safe clean water
- Maintaining brush clearing & wildfire prevention/ addressing the threat posed by wildfires
- Maintaining firefighter/paramedic staffing levels
- Maintaining the City's emergency reserve fund that is used to respond to natural disasters like wildfires, earthquakes, and major emergencies
- Keeping the Sierra Madre Fire Station open 24-hours a day, 7-days a week
- Maintaining local control 911 emergency response, fire protection, and public safety services
- Repairing potholes, streets, and sidewalks

Other information of interest to constituents – keep communications simple

- **(EATON FIRE/DISASTER PREPAREDNESS)** The Eaton Fire made it clear that maintaining Sierra Madre's full-time, professional Fire Department is critical for local disaster response. Unlike other foothill communities that contract with LA County, Sierra Madre firefighters are stationed here 24-7 so they can respond quickly and provide effective 911 services that save lives, protect homes, and help to stop brushfires from erupting out of control.
- **(LOCAL CONTROL)** As a small city, Sierra Madre must be independent and self-reliant—larger cities like LA get the bulk of money from the state. And, in an emergency, first-responders go to big cities first. Passing this measure will strengthen local control by keeping our tax dollars in Sierra Madre and the law prohibits them from being taken by the state or federal government.
- **(911 CALLS)** Over the past five years, 75% of all 911 calls in Sierra Madre are for medical emergencies such as heart attacks, strokes, and car accidents. When seconds matter in a life-threatening situation, this measure will ensure we continue to have enough on-duty local first-responders with the training and resources to provide fast and effective life-saving emergency services.

Should the City engage in continued planning of a City-Sponsored Health and Safety Measure, the term of the measure should be **until ended by voters**.

Consultant Conclusions

- While a city-sponsored Health and Safety parcel tax measure could be viable in the future, this concept tested at 54% on an informed ballot test – below the 66.6% threshold and is not recommended by LEG or FM3 Research for planning by the City at this time.
- Should an independently convened proponent's organization elect to attempt to qualify an initiative measure, the legally required threshold for passage would be a simple majority. In this scenario, the city would be legally prohibited from disseminating information about any qualified measure unless referenced in the context of an overall official ballot or Election information. Please note also that the efficacy of this measure could be affected by state propositions currently being circulated for qualification.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve the city.