

# Measure D Post-Election Survey

Conducted March 13, 2017 - April 10, 2017

Results based on 126 responses

**Prepared by Palos Verdes Residents for  
Responsible Government**

**[www.pvrrg.org](http://www.pvrrg.org)**

# Background and Context

- Intent: to gain insights into the reasons why some people voted “no” to Measure D, and provide that to the City Council to assist in making modifications to Measure D
- Timing:
  - March 13, 2017 – April 10, 2017
- Method
  - Survey Monkey online poll
  - Announced in Nextdoor
  - Confidential – no attribution or IP address retained
  - Survey Monkey prevents any IP address from voting multiple times
- 126 Respondents – all but 2 said they were PVE residents
  - 124 said they voted, 2 said they did not vote
  - Measure D Voter Breakout is balanced
    - 59 voted yes
    - 64 voted no
    - 3 abstained

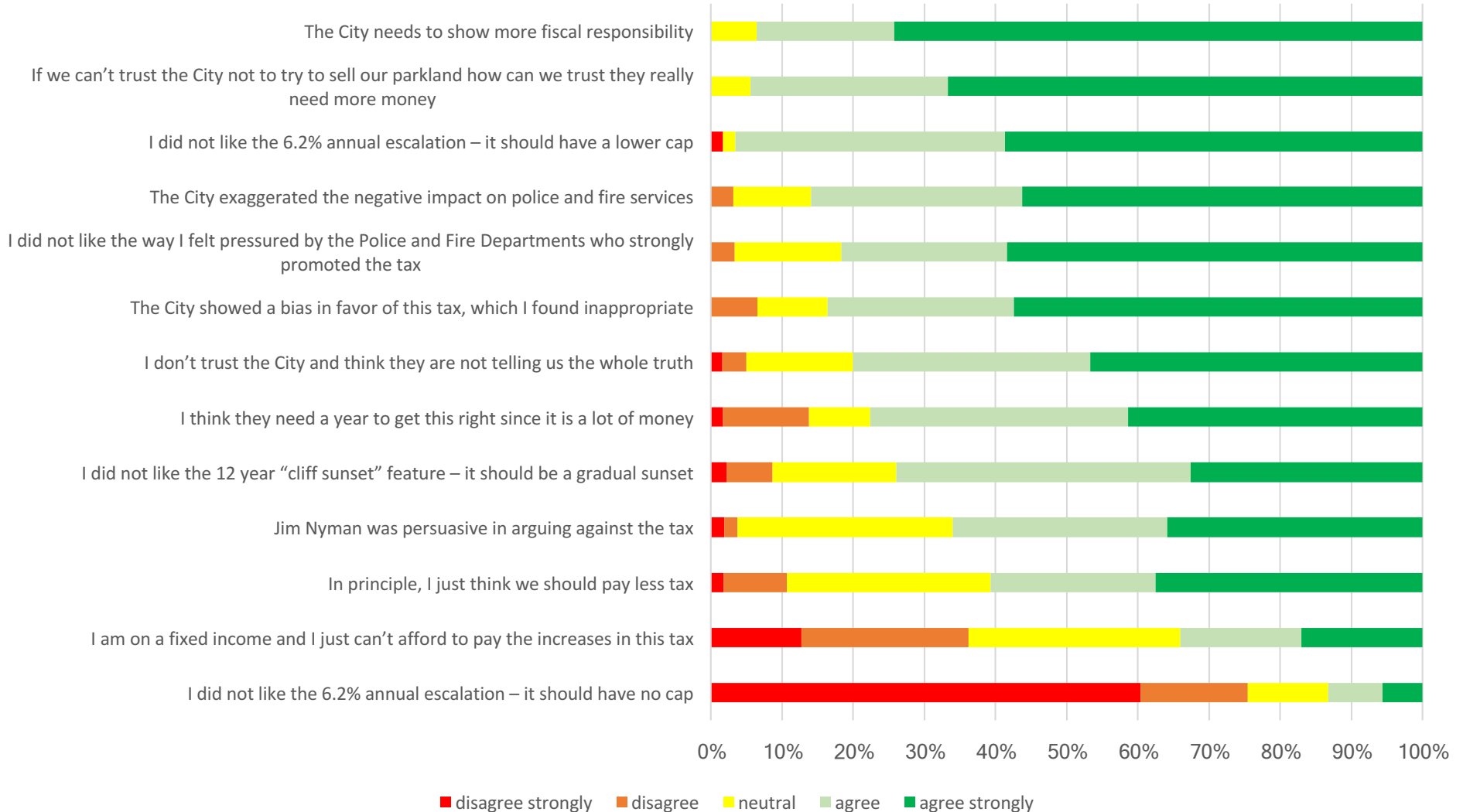
# A Revised Measure Could Pass

- *If a new Measure D used the growth in property taxes to bring down the parcel tax so that it goes away over some period of time that is less than 12 years, with no across the board cuts in Police and Fire, but holding growth in expenses to inflation, would you support this New Version of the Parcel Tax?*
  - 60% -- Yes
  - **9% -- No**
  - 31% -- Don't know – depends on the specifics

# Reasons for Voting "No"

4. If you voted against Measure D, what were your reasons (indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements)?

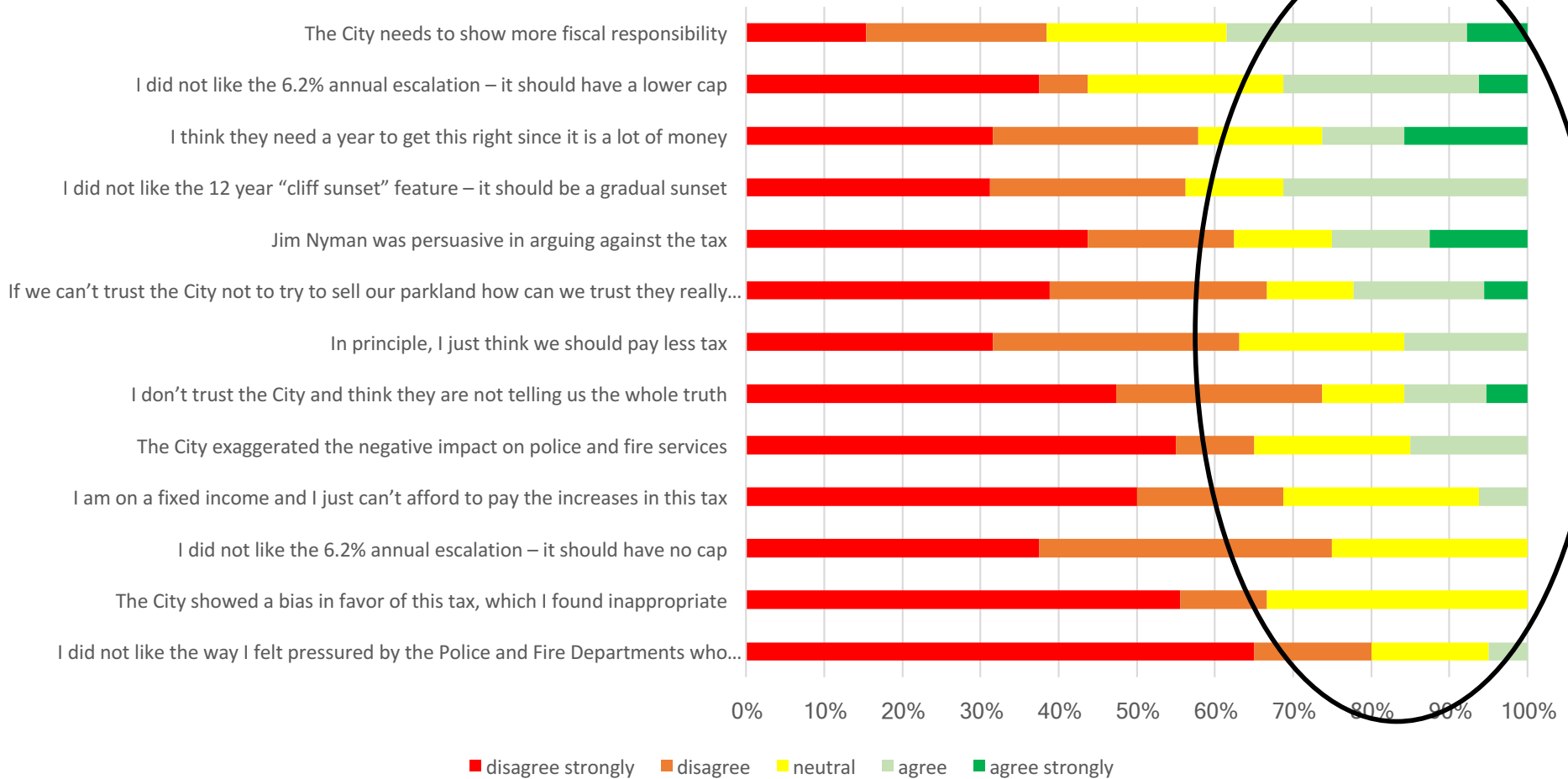
64 WHO VOTED "NO"



# Some “Yes” Voters still had concerns

4. If you voted for Measure D, what were your reasons (indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements)?

24 WHO VOTED "YES"



# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- “Measure D was poorly written.”
- “There was no justification presented for the yearly 6.2% annual increase in the "fire tax". Inflation has been less than 3% for some time, why build in such a large annual increase? I agree that we need to pay extra for our excellent paramedic and fire department services, but it should be a more transparent process and negotiated on an annual or bi-annual basis using current financial models.”
- “The City should immediately start to reduce costs that aren't needed. This should be reviewed with the new City Council Members and new Treasurer ASAP. For example, some \$200K for the Paseo Del Sol turnaround that benefits only a couple residents and improperly built on Parkland should be eliminated. PVE needs to reduce unnecessary spending!”
- “I have lost all trust in the integrity of PVE elected/appointed officials, especially the city manager and police chief. I have been lied to, and lied about; I have watched as they have made decisions that put my town in the hands of people who do not have our best interests at heart. It's time for local focus, responsibility and accountability. I totally support PVE police department- I Do NOT support the current chief and his policing/resource allocation ‘priorities’”
- “2016 expenses greater than budget by \$2.5M - why? need answers! City needs to cut waste - # of city employees up, salaries up, etc! Oversight committee of concerned citizens needs to get message (website great) to the people - if I didn't know Jim Nyman I would have never known about PVrrg!”
- “Shorter term, with tax decreasing over time and tied to an index. Freeze all positions until the fire tax can be paid for without addition money from the property owners. Until then continue the tax at as low a rate as possible.”

# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- “No new taxes.
  - I think we don't get any value in paying for our own police dept, so why should we have our own fire dept etc? WE have lawlessness in Palos Verdes Estates. The city council is corrupt. The fact that they would engage in a deal to 'sell' public parkland to a shyster, who already absconded with encroaching and trespassing on the property is unforgiveable. He should be fined for 'unlawful taking' of property and vandalism of the park, for the previous 30 years!
  - Secondly, no one enforces the dog leash laws, so we can't go for walks around our beautiful town out of fear of dog bites (I have been bitten before).
  - Next, no one enforces the traffic speed limits. Everyone speeds normally over 10-15 mph over the speed limit, and nothing is done. Nothing. So we can't walk around the neighborhood for fear of being side-swiped and KILLED.
  - Next, no one enforces the 'clear vision' triangle, and the PVE municipal codes on MAXIMUM height of front yard fences (including green impenetrable walls of ficus), so everyone is 'fighting' their neighbors for views, for sunlight, for 'sighting' for traffic while exiting their driveway, and we all feel like we are living in a rat maze of 'closed' green walls in front of the houses.
  - Before we approve of additional taxes to do anything, we need to fix the current milieu of disrespect for our neighbors, traffic laws, PVE CC&R's and PVE codes.”

# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- “All critical services supplied by the City should be funded first. If there is not sufficient money to fund all city programs, the electorate should be asked if they want to tax themselves to fund those programs.”
- “The parcel tax should be per parcel only with no sq ft improvement tax component. It costs the same to roll fire paramedics to a parcel no matter what the size of the house. In theory a 10,000-SF house pays 6 times more than a 2000-SF house for the same service, this is an unconstitutional transfer of wealth”
- “City expenses are not transparent, nor are the city managers fiscally prudent. Until such time as they take proper control over the rampant spending and hiring, we will oppose any tax or other increases.”
- “We are spending a ridiculous amount of money on the city manager and assistant for this size city. Seriously out of line. Don't get me started on the parkland and the fire road. It's beyond wrong, reform is needed”
- “Very unseemly for city manager to talk about outsourcing the police dept. to the County Sheriff dept. because the city residents voted down Measure D -- the arrogance of our city officials sticks in my craw. Measure D was very pricey and the automatic escalators provided no incentives to reduce costs and taxes over the term of the tax. They treat the PVE property taxpayers like cash cows -- what happened to doing more with less, finding ways to save through efficiencies and other means. I wonder about the city's spending priorities.”



# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- “Why does PVE get less back from our county property taxes than other cities? Why isn't City Council pursuing this?”
- “My trust of our city government as well as government on a larger scale is at an all-time low. I want to keep our police and fire departments local and I think they should be compensated quite well for their jobs, but the city should be more responsible with allocating our tax dollars. Plus, the parkland issue doesn't help their case either. That opens a whole other can of worms with my concerns regarding PVHA and PVPUSD, but that's a different (albeit related) discussion. Thanks for all of your hard work with this.”
- “Save money by terminating the appeal of the Via Panorama suit and accepting the judgment. The practical effect of continuing the appeal is to use the taxes paid by all households in the city for the benefit of precisely one extremely favored household.”
- “Municipal salaries and benefits are outrageously high for such a small city with virtually no violent crime. Working for PVE is a highly coveted, plum job. The City should be able to attract top notch employees at much more reasonable pay levels.”
- “The city government need to govern from strength, something that will never happen. The city plays defense and defends the rights of cyclist and non residents. Therefore not valuing its tax payers, why pay for a service that does not exist. The insolent attitude of Jeff Kepley and Tony D are reason enough to tell the city to f\*\*k off. Go r\*pe the senile residents of PVE who are happy for anything they get.
  - Kenny Kao teaming up with the Fire Dept or vice versa totally turned me off.
  - It's not the money. It's that we have no trust that the money is needed and/or will be properly used.”

# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- “The Yes On D signs annoyed me tremendously with the plea “Save Our Police Department” when the proposal for the continuation of the tax was for the fire and paramedics.”
- “Tired of taxes, taxes, and more taxes. Outsource the Police services. We are too small of a city to support our own force.”
- “The statistics given on Nextdoor Lunada Bay concerning city expenses and their huge growth from 2013 were appalling.”
- “City is overstaffed (top heavy). If Measure D actually affects the police, then it sounds like the the city budget is a pool of funds, which is never a good idea in government.”
- “The 6%+ escalator was bad. The failure to address available city reserves was brazen. Calling this a Fire Dept issue was totally misleading. Fix those three.”
- “Why are we the only city with this parcel tax?”
- “D mainly benefits local police, who have too little to do already. Tired of their local speed traps, illegal traffic stops, illegal searches and illegal DUI checks, especially if you're not driving a fancy car. Scale back the force.”
- “Show us proof that you are getting us the best deal available. The mayor's statement seemed mostly general without quoting any numbers or discussing that what exactly is being covered by the cost of the annual payment. I felt more like I was at a used car dealer where they kept asking me what I wanted to pay per month. Tell us how you reduced admin costs, kept value to go to the firemen, kept 3rd party leases or hardware purchases to our benefit. I don't want more of this is a good cause and you should want to pay for it.”

# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- "The fact that no other city on the peninsula pays such a tax indicates we have a problem. Continuing to pay the tax is not a solution.
  - Also, the city is obviously using this money they would pay for police and fire services for other uses which is inappropriate. Their response that lacking the approval of Measure D would result in cuts elsewhere in city services is an admission they are using funds incorrectly."
- "I don't believe a small and safe city like PVE needs to maintain its own police department. Would it be more efficient and more economical just turn the city police to the LA county sheriff?"
- "The City should NOT sell our parkland. The City needs to balance it's budget better."
- "I do not trust the PVE government. They continue to be underhanded and make decisions without full disclosure and public input. The Parklands debacle is one big example of lies, cover up and spending public money to defend the indefensible. IE the appeal of judges decision. Additionally, the propaganda published under "official" titles re Measure D was unacceptable."
- "The inflation factor does not seem to include the change in building square footage in the City each year."
- "There was no presentation of how the City tried to minimize the base cost and increases."
- "No plan to reduce the overall fire risk to the City."
- "No effective documentation of what type of services were provided."

# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- “People with larger square footage should not be paying additional tax. That needs to be modified as well. A family of 5 rowdy boys in an 1800 sq ft house will utilize the police more than an older couple in a 3800 sq ft house.”
- “The annual cap should be no greater than 3.35% which is the historical increase. Poor negotiating on the part of the city!”
- “My personal experience with the City has been good, but I know of others who haven't. I do sympathize with the City on its having to sell parkland and am actually angry with PVPUSD for putting the City in this position. The City needs to have more transparency in this and in other fiscal matters.”
- “It is time for the City to come up with a responsible budget and if we are going to pay tax, I want appropriate services, including reasonable traffic control in Malaga Cove. The current situation is untenable.”
- “The City needs to be more fiscally responsible in controlling the growth in spending. This tax would have been unnecessary if expenses had been held at inflation for the last five or six years, and the growth in property tax receipts had been used instead to reduce this tax over time. I think there are many opportunities for the City to operate more cost effectively, and I'd like to see the City explore all options to reduce cost without impacting services in a negative way.”

# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- “People want PVEPD and are willing to fund the portion necessary to retain. However, there are concerns about efficiencies which need to be addressed to ensure long term sustainability of PVEPD. 99% of property taxes went to police last year and annual PD cost increases exceed the 7% annual property tax increases. This must be addressed. “
- “People believe the city is wasting money and, worse, spending it on initiatives that they do not want. This includes projects that change the character of the city and legal fees to sell parklands. This created a trust problem.”
- “The City needs to evaluate funding options, inclusive of efficiencies and unnecessary expenses. People do not believe such due diligence occurred for Measure D, giving the impression of unnecessary taxation.”
- “Upon completion of a trusted review of the necessary expenses and efficiencies, if there is still a gap in funding necessary for safety, then a tax(s) for just the gap should be addressed.”
- “If a tax is necessary, then it should include a plan, or at least an earnest attempt, to sunset the tax. The city never even tried; which looked bad”
- “Expenses that are not critical belong in a separate tax Measure.”
- “For the \$250,000 we currently pay the City Mgr, we can get a very successful CEO with the skills necessary to address our financial management, keep PVEPD and restore trust.”
- “PVE needs to renegotiate the Fire contract; 6.2% annual allowable increase; allowing the tax to double by term. The risk is high at this time of annual maximum given CALPERs instability.”

# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- “The city leaders should evaluate what it will take to seek equitable funding from the County.”
- “The city’s hiring spree is unnecessary and wasteful. Council needs to provide oversight to financial commitments by staff such as hiring, particularly in light of the PVE’s CALPERs liabilities. Council does not ask enough financial questions of Staff on Staff recommendations. Staff has is constantly violating the \$25K spending authority; without ramifications. • Residents seek financial transparency. The newly launched “Open Gov” would be of service to the residents with inclusion of even routine financial documents. Some examples are: invoices, payments, contracts, grants, etc.”
- “Resident committees seeking taxation need to engage the public to socialize recommendations; which can then be utilized in an acceptable proposed tax. The committee never engaged the community, there were no meetings, no engagement, no Q&A. The resident committees need to be diverse; including members on fixed incomes and those in larger houses who are being asked to pay more than an equitable share.”
- “Some residents felt that the City took them for fools and responded with a ‘No’ vote to discourage this behavior. Some examples of this; phone surveys from mysterious funders, breaking campaign finance law, expensive cable TV commercials, daily flyers using scare tactics, confusing lawn signs, fancy flyers, use of our safety heroes as political puppets.”

# Comments from those Who Voted “No”

- “The post-vote Council meeting revealed that ‘someone’ in a leadership role in the city told the PD that they were about to all lose their jobs; and now some are seeking alternate employment. This is a colossal failure in leadership and has placed our resident’s safety at risk. If the City Mgr told the police department that they were all about to be fired; then the Council needs to take immediate action.”
- “The Council does not appear to understand the residents’ concerns with financial management. Comments from Council members like ‘accusations about overtime’ and ‘abusive’ when referring to residents’ concerns; were divisive and prevents open discussions to resolve. Leadership is needed that listens to the issues and resolves using facts and then unites the community; rather than trying to get people to take sides.”
- “Ellen Perkins is the main author of the parklands sale and therefore should never have been on the citizens advisory committee due to a conflict of interest.”
- “How much did the City waste on redoing the LB Yarmouth entrance and the Grand Via Altamira entrance? I can't get a straight answer.”
- “The citizens advisory committee should be comprised of independent individuals and should be tasked to find ways to reduced OH and unnecessary costs. Most corporations use zero cost budgeting methods, which means each department must justify every dollar each year - no sacred cows - every expense starts back at zero. The City should do the same.”
- “Why does the police department have so many employ?”

# Comments from those Who Voted “Yes”

- “We do not want to lose our great police department and want to protect our Parks & Rec Dept.”
- “Measure D also keeps our property values in good shape. Folks should want to live in areas that have a quick response to emergencies.”
- “It appears that Measure D was labeled as a new tax, when rather it was a continuation tax. Additionally it was labeled as a "fire" tax and depicted many photos of fires and firemen, yet it affected our Police Department. Was it clear to residents that without a tax to support our PVPD there would be no PVPD and instead we would have police coverage by the county of LA PD? I think this aspect needs to be made clear to our residents. We love PVE because it is a safe community and many of the reasons it is safe is because of our PVEPD response time.”
- “I believe Measure D should have been promoted better as a means to keep our police dept”
- “Growth in property tax assumes values will continue to rise. It's anyone's guess how long this current market cycle will last, but it's practically a guarantee it won't be rising for 12 more years. While fiscal responsibility is great, I would encourage residents to avoid getting locked into the idea that these a special assessment can be eliminated in 12 years. I am happy to pay the extra "tax" as it helps ensure the great quality of life we live in PVE. Take a drive through any other neighbors and you will likely see a drop off in the safety and maintenance of those city streets and neighborhoods.”
- “This survey is a complete joke. You should be embarrassed to have shared this with your neighbors.”



# Comments from those Who Voted “Yes”

- "Your energies are misdirected here. If you want to vent frustration, then take it up with the County. PVE gets far less per property tax dollar back from the County than the three other PV cities.
  - No amount of demanding a sunset from PVE will change that fact and you will just be passing the buck to future generations.
  - Perhaps an outreach education effort to voters would be a better use of energies rather than demanding PVE operate with significantly less revenue per capita compared with other PV neighbors.
  - Don't get me wrong---the overpriced manager needs to go along with the other cronies on the Council and the PVHA, but that's no reason to destroy City finances. "Why not make this a flat tax on every property as we all get the same benefits ie police and fire, it should not be a percentage tax but a flat monthly or yearly fee."
- "Why not make this a flat tax on every property as we all get the same benefits ie police and fire, it should not be a percentage tax but a flat monthly or yearly fee."
- "I think the wording on the ballot was confusing and did not properly explain the consequences of a yes or no vote. Nor did it say anything about the parcel tax effecting the police in any way."
- "I like things as they are. The city provides excellent service and I don't mind paying for it."
- "I believe the PVE Police and PV Fire Dept. are top notch and some of the BEST in the country. They have my full support! Residents of PVE are foolish to think otherwise. We have the best in the City, County, State, and U.S. We are privileged to have the current police and fire depts. that we have."

# Comments from those Who Voted “Yes”

- “Less than 10% of registered voters blocked Measure D and our police Department will be forced to take the hit. How short sighted and shame on us”
- “This survey reads like a push poll. Jim Nyman was really spreading disinformation about the cost and no one from the no camp clearly articulated an alternative. “
- “Hopefully with the new council members there may be more accountability and transparency from the council. Change is greatly needed.”
- “I find it absolutely RIDICULOUS that the residents of PVE would vote against this tax. I can't remember the exact amount, but it was under \$400/year for this tax. It seems unbelievably cheap and shortsighted to not be willing to pay that to keep excellent emergency services. I am really upset that people are this stupid.”
- “We support PV police and fire!”
- “Unfortunate that so much misinformation was disseminated about the tax.”
- “We've lived in PVE for 44 years, and 7 years before that in what is now RPV, so remember the days before paramedics. We will always vote to keep them.”
- “Frankly, we do not pay our police, fire fighters and paramedics enough! they contribute more to our well being than any real estate agent, financial advisor, or other self-serving professional type. We should be willing to pay whatever is required to support them and provide them with the latest and best equipment. This is a very wealthy community. Come on! And why does it require 2/3 vote???”

# Comments from those Who Voted “Yes”

- “I like our Fire and Police Departments and am happy to subsidize them!”
- “I do not believe the method described in question 5 is possible. The existing method was good in that it held growth to below the growth of expenses (which was greater than inflation but less than the maximum potentially required by the County).”
- “The questionnaire is structured to support a predetermined conclusion and therefore lessens its validity unfortunately. I support your intentions and effort but encourage you to understand how your own bias undermines your effort. It's tough to avoid that mistake but you should try. “
- “I would like adjustments made to the new version. But no change in our Police and Fire Departments.”
- I have an idea let's vote to take away our first responders! What better way to secure our own safety and stability in uncertain economic future.
- Why does question #4 only want to know how I feel if I voted against "D"? Why don't you want to know why I voted for "D". I voted for "D" because I had a fear that the "vote no group" would not have a better plan in place, I love PVE, and don't want to see either the fire or police services cut. I thought it was better to vote "yes" and then work to cut fat, as well as work to replace city members that I feel have done a disservice to the city. I don't think the measure was well written -- many people didn't know if it was fire or police services that would be cut if the measure was defeated. Many do not trust the city leaders. Transparency has been lacking. There was also distrust generated by the phone survey from the Ensign Group in Salt Lake City; who funded that? Confused over why the fire department was supporting a candidate for council. Also, I think the 6.2% annual increase was too high. There was a committee that studied "D" and made the recommendation to vote "Yes" but who selected this committee; who were these people? To pass a measure, both the "yes" and "no" groups will need to work together.