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## **Examining the Effectiveness of Measure V: The Sales and Use Tax in Salinas, California**

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EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MEASURE V

The Sales and Use Tax in Salinas, California

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## ABSTRACT

Cities are governed by common people, and people in all places have a common problem, that of making ends meet. For most everyone, our wants exceed our ability to pay and similarly, individuals are not unlike cities, made up of people who want to consume more services than revenues can support. Today, many cities are facing fiscal problems because the growth in the traditional tax base is proving insufficient with the desire for more services or the rising costs of existing ones.

This paper examines Measure V, the voter-approved ordinance in Salinas, California, that in 2006 increased the sales and use tax by one-half cent, and consequently, if the Measure has been effective in restoring vital public services to the residents of the City. To answer this question, financial documents were analyzed, key stakeholders were interviewed and City department directors were given an online survey. Those findings determined that departments did receive necessary funding, the citizen's oversight committee did fulfill its obligation to identify, prioritize and monitor the funding, and the City did implement Measure V successfully, resulting in the Measure's effectiveness to restore vital public services to the residents of Salinas, California.

In the midst of a budget crisis there are no simple solutions to municipal problems, but Salinas's local government regained its fiscal footing and restored essential services with its citizens' involvement to better serve a diverse and growing community.

## **Examining the Effectiveness of Measure V The Sales and Use Tax in Salinas, California**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Local government plays an important and growing role in the United States, delivering a wide range of vital services at the local level while undertaking many broad categories of functions. Some of these categories include: planning, coordination, service delivery, and regulatory activities. More explicitly, functions include: infrastructure and property services, recreation facilities, health services, community services, building services, administration of facilities, and cultural facilities. However, local government is also under increasing financial pressure that impedes its ability to provide for the incredibly complex needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century communities. Donald Axelrod (1995) stated in his book, *Budgeting for Modern Government*:

Between the economic blows of recessions; cutbacks in federal and state aid; external controls over taxing, spending, and borrowing; and an erosion of their tax base because of changing demographic and other social patterns, local governments in the United States, in the main, suffer from acute fiscal stress in performing their basic functions. (p. 185)

Consequently, in order to alleviate fiscal stress, more and more local governments are forced to propose sales tax initiatives that create increased revenue for their General Fund budgets.

Taxation measures should meet revenue objectives and implement principles of economic efficiency, and by meeting these goals, taxation measures contribute to the welfare of citizens, either directly or by providing the revenue base to finance government.

Just a few years ago, the Salinas Public Library system was on the brink of disaster. In September 2004, the City Council was facing severe budget constraints and voted to close all three branches. Fortunately, a fundraising campaign named Rally Salinas allowed the libraries to

continue operating on a very limited schedule, from a combined total of 180 hours to 27 hours per week, an alarming 85% service reduction. (Mora, 2005) In November 2005, and as a result of this dire situation, city business leaders led the successful crusade for Measure V, a one half-cent sales tax designed to restore vital public services, including the libraries, to city residents.

This research paper seeks to examine the effectiveness of Measure V, and to answer this main question: Has Measure V been effective in restoring vital public services to the residents of Salinas, California? To analyze this question, I present three sub-questions to make this determination:

- (1) Did departments receive necessary funding as proposed by budget allocation plans?
- (2) Did the citizen's oversight committee fulfill its obligation to identify, prioritize and monitor Measure V funding?
- (3) Did the city implement Measure V successfully?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

My research for this project included information gathered from numerous Internet search engines, the Measure V website, the City of Salinas website, State of California city websites, and various professional journals obtained from the city's public library system database and the Golden Gate University library system database. I also reviewed books on city financing and the graduate program's public administration textbooks.

This research first began in July 2006, when I interviewed Mr. Tom Keever, Finance Director for the City of Salinas, California. Mr. Keever explained that over a period of three fiscal years starting in April 2003, the Salinas City Council (Council) reduced programs and services funded by their General Fund budget, a total of 24% or the equivalent of \$15.3 million, in order to retain the City's financial solvency. The financial crisis was the result of the perfect fiscal storm, a combination of factors including State raids on local revenue, a weakened economy signaled by the decrease in sales tax revenue, increased charges levied by the County of Monterey, increased retirement costs, and increased employee health insurance costs.

Additionally, Mr. Keever stated that the necessary reductions impacted services throughout the city of 150,000 residents, including the elimination of 123 authorized positions and the dismissal of numerous employees. In addition to eliminating positions, there was the outright elimination of funding for the following services: libraries, recreation centers, paramedic program, school crossing guard program, fire safety training, and the graffiti abatement program. (T. Keever, personal communication, July 28, 2006)

### Local Government Funding

Information noted from The League of California Cities website ([www.cacities.org](http://www.cacities.org)) discussed how cities provide and sustain services for police and fire protection, libraries,

maintenance services, and parks and recreation. Local municipalities pay for these services with revenue from local taxes, fees, federal and state aid, and other sources. Three taxes; the property tax, the local sales tax and the vehicle license fee tax, have a significant role in local finance because they produce large amounts of general-purpose dollars that cities can use to pay for many programs and services.

#### Trends in Transactions and Use Sales Tax Measures

Over the past few years, general tax measures have been on the rise according to the California City Finance website ([www.CaliforniaCityFinance.com](http://www.CaliforniaCityFinance.com)). I gleaned statistics from year-end local revenue measures data and determined that over the last 12 years, California has submitted 112 General Transactions and Use Tax proposals for voter consideration. Of those 112 measures, 63 have passed, resulting in a 56% approval rate. Special Transactions and Use Tax measures, that are designated for a specific purpose and require 2/3 voter approval, have been much more common than the general sales tax, but the proportion of general tax measures has been steadily increasing.

#### State Budget Impacts

Professor Christopher J. Dowling, lectured in my Budgeting and Financial Management course, "Moreover, the intergovernmental reforms in recent years have caused a confrontational relationship between the states and federal government and even more disjointed partnerships between the states and local governments." (Dowling, 2006) And, according to The League of Women Voters of California ([www.ca.lwv.org](http://www.ca.lwv.org)), for more than a decade, the State has taken \$40 billion of local tax revenue from governments that use the money to provide essential services. In November 2004, this continuous raiding of funds resulted in the passage of Proposition 1A, Protection of Local Government Revenues, and made significant changes to



state authority over local finances. It is a bipartisan agreement between local governments, the California State Legislature and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger that prevents the State from taking and using funding that local governments need to provide services for law enforcement, health care, parks, and libraries.

The City of Salinas gives the State approximately \$3.7 million a year in property tax, an amount that is now essentially capped, creating no anticipated state budget impact for the current fiscal year. (City of Salinas Adopted Operating Budget, FY 2007-2009, p. 9)

#### County Budget Impacts

The City of Salinas Adopted Operating Budget, FY 2007-2009, stipulates there will be continuing raids on city resources by the County of Monterey. In the past 2 years, the County has levied unanticipated extra expenses by raising the costs of booking fees, 911 emergency communications fees and property tax collection fees, and there are no guarantees that the County will attempt to control its expenses.

#### The Catalyst of Measure V

By reading numerous newspaper articles from The Salinas Californian and The Monterey County Herald, it was reported that during Salinas's financial crisis, Salinas almost became the first City in the United States to close its libraries. This disastrous situation received national attention, and the American Library Association issued this resolution condemning the closures:

The closure of the Salinas library system would create tragic precedent, eliminating access to a resource which the people of the community themselves created and expressed a desire to sustain, which consequence therefore offends not only the ideals of library service but the principles of democracy. (Cabrera, 2005)

In February, 2005, the City's Mayor launched Rally Salinas, a grassroots fundraising effort to keep the libraries open, and to fund a ballot measure that would ensure a long-term stream of money for the libraries. Thanks to private donations, Rally Salinas raised \$800,000, and the city managed to keep the libraries open with reduced hours. (Vijayan, 2007)

While the library closures proved to be the catalyst igniting the efforts to promote the ballot measure, the coalition of supporting organizations struggled with whether to propose a tax specifically for the libraries, requiring a difficult two-thirds vote, or a general initiative only requiring a 50-plus percent vote. A general initiative would deposit monies collected into the General Fund to be expended at the City Council's discretion.

At the Council's May 2005 meeting, members of the public expressed their concerns that the City must be able to provide adequate police, fire safety, street and park maintenance services, and that the libraries and recreation centers should remain open. The public asked that the Council consider placing a tax measure on the ballot so that revenue could be provided to restore vital services. Later that month, the Council received a report regarding its options for placing a tax measure before the City's voters to generate sufficient revenue to maintain minimal levels of service for the public welfare. Members of the community once again stated their support for such a measure, indicated that the community would suffer if services were further curtailed. (Stahl, 2005)

One complication that added to the Measure V process was that one year prior, the voters had rejected the same type of sales tax increase. Consequently, to hold a special election during a year when no Council members were running for office, the Council had to declare a state of emergency. The Council cited the City's budget cutbacks, along with the fact that it had spent more than \$10 million in budget reserves as reason enough for an emergency. The resolution

stated "Because of the threat to the public health, safety and welfare, an emergency exists in the city." (Cabrera, 2005) In July 2005, the Council adopted a resolution calling for an election to take place in November 2005, to ask City voters to approve a half-cent transactions and use tax. The proposed tax measure also directed the appointment of an independent committee with authority to both recommend the use of the tax revenue and provide oversight for the use of funds, and included a 10-year sunset provision. Robert B. Denhardt and Joseph W. Grubbs (2003) explained in their book, *Public Administration: An Action Orientation*, that sunset laws specifically have a marked life span so that a program is required to be accurately evaluated at some time in the future: "to assess the performance of agencies and to eliminate those that are not successful...sunset laws are based on the assumption that certain governmental programs should continue only after an evaluation of the program's effectiveness." (p.60)

#### The Ballot Measure

I retrieved a Measure V ballot from the Monterey County Election Department, and it read: "An ordinance of the voters of the City of Salinas imposing a general transactions and use tax to sunset in 10 years with annual review by an independent citizen's oversight committee." The measure would generate an estimated \$10 million per year for the City's General Fund budget, basing this dollar figure on historical collection trends. As Susan Riley and Peter Colby (1991) discussed in their book, *Practical Government Budgeting*, there is no tried and true formula for revenue projection: "Revenue estimation is more an art than a science. It depends upon future events, and most of them involve uncontrollable factors such as changing economic conditions and population growth or decline." (p. 79)

The argument in favor of Measure V was that the libraries were closing, street crime and gang violence were serious concerns and the streets needed repairs. The City had already

drastically cut City services because of State government raids on local funding. Their claim was that Measure V would restore vital services, including police, fire, libraries, street maintenance, recreation centers, and anti-gang and youth violence programs. In addition, a citizen's oversight committee would ensure the funds were spent as approved by voters on the vital services the City had lost, and every penny would stay in Salinas and could never be taken by the State. Measure V was considered an excellent proposal, it would cost only pennies a day, but the value of safe neighborhoods, libraries and other vital services was incalculable. (City of Salinas, Measure V Ballot Information)

The argument against Measure V stated the tax increase needlessly raised the tax rate and hurt poor families, it was like writing a blank check in supporting City mismanagement. In addition, the voters had already rejected the sales tax increase in the previous year, and now City officials were misusing their office by saying the City was in an emergency situation. The critics stated there was no emergency, City salaries were increasing for many employees, including upper management, and in a real emergency, they would not be accepting pay increases. (City of Salinas, Measure V Ballot Information)

#### V Sails to Victory

On November 8, 2005, the voters of Salinas passed the ordinance with a 62% approval vote, establishing a Temporary Transactions and Use Tax at the rate of one-half of one percent (0.50%) to be in effect for a period of 10 years. Initial collection of the tax began on April 1, 2006, and the first receipt of revenues occurred in July 2006. The tax approved by the voters was a general tax, and therefore, the City may use the revenue for any general governmental purpose, including police, fire safety, paramedics, libraries, crossing guards, graffiti abatement, anti-gang programs, and street and park maintenance. (Sanchez, 2006)

### The Oversight Committee

In order to ensure full compliance with the intent of the ordinance, Mr. Kever stated the tax proceeds from this ordinance would be separately received and accounted for in the City's financial reporting system. He is also responsible to report, at least quarterly, the use of tax proceeds to the Oversight Committee (Committee). The Committee will, in turn, report annually to the Council regarding the use of tax proceeds. (Kever, 2006)

This Committee is an essential provision in the voter-approved ordinance. The ordinance stated that: The Mayor and City Council shall each annually appoint one member of the public to serve as an oversight committee for the revenue that the City receives from the tax. The committee shall prepare an annual report on the revenue received and recommend the use thereof. The City Manager shall provide staff for the committee, and the Finance Director shall provide all relevant data regarding revenue from the tax and expenditure thereof. (City of Salinas Adopted Operating Budget FY, 2006-2008)

Since Measure V funding began in FY 2006, and for the purpose of this study, I will discuss both the FY 2006-07 and FY 2007-08 operating budgets. The process began with the first meeting of the Committee in January 2006 and ended with the Committee's recommendations for services in May 2006. In turn, the Council's unanimous acceptance of the Committee's recommendations was approved for the FY 2006-07 operating budget. The intervening time period, from January to May, included community meetings in each council district, separately sponsored community meetings, joint Council/Committee meetings, City department presentations of essential and preferred programs and service level recommendations, and numerous Committee meetings to consider and approve recommendations

for the use of funds accrued by Measure V. (City of Salinas Adopted Operating Budget, FY 2006-2008)

The following year, for FY 2007-08, the Committee's work was less difficult because the preliminary groundwork had been previously established. The recommended budget was fundamentally the same, and at its April 2007 meeting, the Committee approved the continuation of the original \$10 million operating budget allocations for FY 2007-08 with two exceptions. The Committee agreed to recommend the elimination of five police officer positions from the budget, and to add one librarian position. The police officer positions were eliminated because they had not been filled in FY 2006-07 and would likely not be filled if approved again in FY 2007-08. With the revenue from the police officer positions, the Committee recommended to set-aside \$400,000 for the Community Safety Initiative project, and \$113,200 for Contingencies. (Kever, 2007)

Measure V Allocations

Table 1 shows the approved annual appropriations and percentages given to each department in the respective fiscal year:

(City of Salinas Adopted Operating Budget, FY 2007-2009)

**Table 1 – Appropriations Funded by Department, FY 2006-07 and FY 2007-08**

	<u>FY 2006-07</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>FY 2007-08</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Library	\$3,600,000	36%	\$3,693,200	36%
Police	2,830,000	28	2,335,400	23
Parks & Recreation	1,145,900	12	1,146,400	11
Maintenance	834,100	8	920,800	9
Development & Eng	595,000	6	626,900	6
Community Safety	0	0	400,000	4
Fire	332,500	3	339,400	3
Administration	295,000	3	334,400	3
Finance	185,600	2	192,300	2
Legal	181,900	2	198,000	2
Contingencies			113,200	1
Totals	\$10,000,000	100%	\$10,300,000	100%
Percent Increase				3%

With the approval of the Measure V allocations, significant savings were forecasted during the first year due to the lag time necessary to complete the hiring process. In deciding these appropriations, it was necessary that one-time savings would be used for one-time capital outlay or capital improvement investments.

Table 2 shows the approved use of one-time funds for FY 2006-07:

(City of Salinas Adopted Operating Budget, FY 2007-2009)

**Table 2 – One-Time Funding Projects, FY 2006-07**

Maintenance.....	\$2,745,500
Sidewalk Maintenance	
Street Maintenance	
Landscape Maintenance	
Park Power Mower	
Park Pick-up Trucks (5)	
Street Trees	
Police.....	\$690,000
Patrol Vehicles (7)	
Crime Scene Investigation Vehicle	
Animal Control Trucks (2)	
Equipment	
Library.....	\$463,000
Planning and Improvements	
Computer Equipment	
Delivery Van	
Fire.....	\$455,000
Fire Engine	
Fire Mobile Command Vehicles (2)	
Administration.....	\$40,000
Recruitment Advertising	
<hr/> Total	<hr/> \$4,393,500



Table 3 shows the approved number of positions in FY 2006-07 for each department:

(City of Salinas Adopted Operating Budget, FY 2007-2009)

**Table 3 – Positions Funded by Department, FY 2006-07 and FY 2007-08**

	<u>FY 2006-07</u>	<u>FY 2007-08</u>
Library	39.5	40.5
Police	24	19
Maintenance	12	12
Parks & Recreation	4	4
Development & Engineering	3	3
Administration	2.5	2.5
Finance	2.5	2.5
Legal	1.5	1.5
Fire	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>86</b>

The number of positions carried over to the FY 2007-08 budget had two changes from the previous fiscal year. One change eliminated five sworn police officer positions because they had not been filled in FY 2006-07; the other change was an addition of one library position.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary research methodology focused on in-person and telephonic interviews with city officials and key personnel, who were essential stakeholders in the Measure V process.

Those exceptional individuals were: Mr. David Mora, City of Salinas City Manager, Mr. Tom Kever, City of Salinas Finance Director, Ms. Janet Barnes, City of Salinas, District 3 Councilmember, and Mr. Jack Briscoe, Chairman of the Measure V Oversight Committee. In addition to the interviews, I designed an online survey through software provided by Survey Monkey ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)). Subsequent to the survey design, I requested a peer review from colleagues to examine the survey for content and clarity, along with additional evaluation by Mr. David Mora and Mr. Tom Kever, before it was electronically administered to the City of Salinas department directors who had received Measure V funding. I determined that an electronic survey would be the most efficient way to retrieve the information due to the participants' busy schedules and ease of analyzing the data. There were eight questions on the survey; one multiple choice question, one "Yes" or "No" question, and six Likert-scale questions. The survey's purpose was to acquire each director's perspective about the Measure V process while assisting me in answering the paper's main research question: Has Measure V been effective in restoring vital public services to the residents of Salinas, California. Did the ordinance produce its intended or expected effect?

### Research Limitations

My research was limited because I had to rely on the cooperation of City department directors to take my survey. Since approximately 20% of those directors chose not to respond, conclusions and future proposed solutions are less certain. Because the library's financial situation was one of the salient factors in Measure V, their failure to respond possibly inhibits some of the findings and conclusions.

## RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This chapter will present and analyze the information identified from the Measure V electronic survey, administered to the department directors who received Measure V funding. It will also discuss the interviews with the four key stakeholders identified as: City Manager, City Finance Director, City Councilmember, and Measure V Oversight Committee Chairman.

### Survey Results:

The survey was e-mailed to each department director who had received Measure V funding. There were nine directors but only seven directors returned their survey for a 78% response rate. Each respondent was told the research was to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness of Measure V, and that the surveys would be confidential and used only to aggregate data (Appendixes A & B).

Question #1. The first question was administrative in purpose and asked which department director was filling out the survey. The surveys received were from these seven departments: Administration, Development and Engineering, Finance, Fire, Maintenance, Parks and Recreation, and Police; the Library and Legal departments did not return their surveys.

Question #2. How would you rate the City's efficiency in implementing the Measure V funding process? Most of the directors, 86%, rated the City's efficiency as Very Good. Comments made were "Considerable community and staff involvement in determining needs," and "The City's efficiency was very good in restoring services."

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
Number of Responses (Out of 9)				1	6
Percentage				14%	86%

Question #3. How would you rate the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding to your department? The majority of directors, 71%, rated the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding as Good. Directors made the following comments, "I believe the committee has been fair and balanced in making decisions that benefit the entire community," and "The department received adequate funding although the City is still in need of vital support services."

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
Number of Responses (Out of 9)				5	2
Percentage				71%	29%

Question #4. How would you rate your department's expansion or enhancement of services due to Measure V funding? Many directors, 71%, rated their department's expansion or enhancement of services as Good. Comments made were "Overall, we have restored a basic level of service but are hard pressed to move certain projects forward because of inadequate resources both in staffing and funding," and "We are prioritizing the use of the money to ensure residents are seeing the benefit of their ½ cent sales tax contribution."

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
Number of Responses (Out of 9)			1	5	1
Percentage			14%	71%	14%

Question #5. Have you received feedback from customers regarding your department's expansion or enhancement of services, Yes or No? The majority of directors, 71%, had received positive comments from customers. One comment made, "Yes, people are generally pleased and grateful," other comments could not be stated because they would be attributed to a specific department disregarding the confidentiality agreement.

	No	Yes
Number of Responses (Out of 9)	2	5
Percentage	29%	71%

Question #6. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for your department? Again, most directors, 71%, rated the implementation success for their department as Very Good. Two comments made, "I'm very proud of the money that was entrusted to us to improve the community and believe we have spent the money wisely," and "The implementation went fairly well, all departments cooperated, Human Resources did a terrific job."

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
Number of Responses (Out of 9)			1	1	5
Percentage			14%	14%	71%

Question #7. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for the City?

The majority of directors, 86%, rated Measure V's success for the city as Very Good. A few comments, "Overall, the community is pleased with the effort," "Lots of high visibility projects have been completed and the Libraries are fully operational," "I believe that this funding was used in order to benefit the Salinas residents, the funding really did make a difference."

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
Number of Responses (Out of 9)				1	6
Percentage				14%	86%

Question #8. How would you rate Measure V's change on the community? Once more, many of the directors, 57%, rated Measure V's change on the community as Very Good. Some comments made, "For now there is some awareness and appreciation for what it takes to dismantle services and then restore them," and "The community is aware of the benefits received in exchange of a higher tax," and lastly "Quality of life went up significantly with these funds. Libraries are open, after school programs are successful, streets/sidewalks/medians look better than they ever have, and these efforts were positively recognized through media outlets."

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
Number of Responses (Out of 9)				3	4
Percentage				43%	57%

To summarize, in every survey question, the department directors repeatedly rated each question with a Good or Very Good rating. This leads me to conclude that the directors had the utmost confidence in the manner in which city leaders and the Oversight Committee conducted the implementation of the Measure V funding process.

Personal Interviews:

I interviewed four individuals for this research project; Mr. David Mora, Salinas City Manager, and Mr. Tom Keever, Salinas Finance Director, were interviewed in person. Ms. Janet Barnes, District 3 Councilmember, and Mr. Jack Briscoe, Measure V Oversight Committee Chairman, were interviewed by telephone. Those interviews are transcribed in Appendix C.

Mr. David Mora, has been the City Manager for 17 years and attended all Measure V committee meetings. He believes the Measure V Oversight Committee has been responsive to each department's requests for funding, and reflects the preferences of city residents. He states that all departments have been given the needed funding to restore their basic essential services. He believes that Measure V has helped the City most by the full restoration of library services, and maintenance operations, such as street and sidewalk repairs.

Mr. Tom Keever has been the City's Finance Director for 4 years and is the acknowledged budgeting expert on Measure V since his department is involved in every aspect of the implementation process. He believes the Oversight Committee hears what the community wants and did a good job making choices and setting priorities for each department's requests for funding.

Ms. Janet Barnes has been on the Salinas City Council for 9 years. She states that the Council's goals and objectives directly reflect what the citizens want, for example, the Library receives the most money because people are expressing that is their first priority. She also thinks



the Oversight Committee is quite responsive in making sure the money is distributed appropriately.

Mr. Jack Briscoe is the Chairman of the Oversight Committee and has been on the committee since its inauguration, 2 years ago. Mr. Briscoe believes that the Committee allocates the money in an appropriate manner giving first consideration to the Library and Police because those are the two key areas where the public is most concerned. He thanks the City Manager, Deputy City Manager and Finance Director for their tireless efforts laying down the foundation of essential and non-essential services for each department. In addition, he compliments the city department directors for being realistic with their requirements so there is enough revenue to fund all essential services.

To summarize the interviews, each key stakeholder repeatedly states that all entities; city staff, Council members and oversight committee members actively worked together for the citizens and respond appropriately to restore vital public services to the residents of Salinas.

#### Good News Stories

While researching this paper, many good news stories have evolved from the implementation of Measure V monies. The most captivating story has to be the enormous progress the city's libraries have made, now considering ambitious strategies for growth, including renovations to existing libraries and planning a fourth branch in the future. Perhaps, best said by Mr. Bruce Alstrein, Executive Director of Americans for Libraries Council, "The City's potential to go from a crisis to an opportunity is perhaps the best in the country." (Calderon, 2006) Another good news story is the Mayor's Community Safety Initiative, which received \$600,000 from the general fund budget, but additionally received \$400,000 from the Measure V budget. This new alliance involves educators, business organizations, churches, and

social services working with local government and law enforcement agencies to develop anti-violence plans to focus on gang prevention/intervention programs. (Calderon, 2007)

### Key Findings

My research was ultimately to answer the question: Has Measure V been effective in restoring vital public services to the residents of Salinas, California? The survey and interview results show that Measure V has effectively restored vital public services to its residents. Essential services were restored in 2006-2007 after a 6-month process involving the community, the Measure V committee, City staff, and the City Council. Additionally, three sub-questions were considered in making this determination:

(1) Did departments receive necessary funding as proposed by budget allocation plans?

The results of the survey, interviews and reviewing numerous financial documents conclude that the departments did receive necessary funding as proposed by budget allocation plans.

(2) Did the citizen's oversight committee fulfill its obligation to identify, prioritize and monitor Measure V funding? The results of the survey, interviews and reviewing numerous Council and Measure V meeting minutes conclude that the oversight committee did fulfill its obligation to identify, prioritize and monitor Measure V funding.

(3) Did the city implement Measure V successfully? The results of the survey and interviews conclude that the City did implement Measure V in a very successful manner.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

After conducting the research on this project, I present the following policy recommendations to the City of Salinas executive staff members:

- Update the City's website to include a Measure V link under the topic area of Boards, Committees & Commissions. This would allow the public to access Measure V documents such as meeting minutes, charts and graphs relating to Measure V revenues and expenditures, newspaper articles about Measure V, and the Annual Measure V Assessment report.
- Create and distribute a city newsletter, on at least a quarterly basis, to better inform the community about the City's services, programs and activities dedicated to Measure V. This newsletter should also be made available on the City's website.
- Continue the public relations campaign to have Measure V-related newspaper articles that highlight programs and services funded by the Measure. In addition, continue the signage of completed projects, e.g., landscaped medians, and the labeling of new vehicles, e.g., parks and recreation trucks and the fire engine purchased with Measure V monies. Regular public relations exposure legitimizes the City's continuing work and enhances its reputation to show residents their tax dollars at work.
- Increase the City's tax base since Measure V's \$10 million budget sunsets in the year 2016. Salinas must improve its economic growth by boosting the City's economy with new businesses and agriculture that can eventually replace Measure V funding.

## CONCLUSION

Local government makes a difference in everyone's life, delivering essential services and making communities better places to live, and of great importance, is democratically accountable to its local area. Despite the City's well-publicized financial issues, Salinas has moved forward in a difficult situation, with sales tax revenue returning to solid footing. Local government must continually look forward to improve its services in an approach that fits busy, modern lifestyles. Also, it must deliver what matters most to people by building sustainable communities, places where people are proud to live and work. At the core of all local governments, the aim should be to create thriving, vibrant, sustainable communities which will improve everyone's quality of life. With the approval of Measure V, the local government and the residents of Salinas, California, implemented a resolution to develop an improved community where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

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# Measure V Survey

## 1. Your department is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.3%	1
Development & Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.3%	1
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.3%	1
Fire	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.3%	1
Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.0%	0
Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.0%	0
Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.3%	1
Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.3%	1
Police	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.3%	1
<i>answered question</i>			7
<i>skipped question</i>			0

## 2. How would you rate the City's efficiency in implementing the Measure V funding process?

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
City's Efficiency	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	85.7% (6)	4.86	7
Comments:							3
<i>answered question</i>							7
<i>skipped question</i>							0

3. How would you rate the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding to your department?

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
Department Allocation	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	71.4% (5)	28.6% (2)	4.29	7
						Comments:	3
						<i>answered question</i>	7
						<i>skipped question</i>	0

4. How would you rate your department's expansion or enhancement of services due to Measure V funding?

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
Expansion of Services	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	71.4% (5)	14.3% (1)	4.00	7
						Comments:	3
						<i>answered question</i>	7
						<i>skipped question</i>	0

5. Have you received feedback from customers regarding your department's expansion or enhancement of services?

		Response Percent	Response Count
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.6%	2
Yes (List positive or negative comments below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	71.4%	5
		Positive or Negative Comments:	4
		<i>answered question</i>	7
		<i>skipped question</i>	0

6. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for your department?

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
Success for Department	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	14.3% (1)	71.4% (5)	4.57	7
						Comments:	2
						<i>answered question</i>	7
						<i>skipped question</i>	0

7. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for the City?

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
Success for City	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	85.7% (6)	4.86	7
						Comments:	3
						<i>answered question</i>	7
						<i>skipped question</i>	0

8. How would you rate Measure V's change on the community?

	Very Poor	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Rating Average	Response Count
Change on Community	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	42.9% (3)	57.1% (4)	4.57	7
						Comments:	3
						<i>answered question</i>	7
						<i>skipped question</i>	0



survey title:

**Measure V Survey**

Displaying 1 of 7 respondents

**Response Type:** Normal Response

**Collector:** New Link (Web Link)

**Custom Value:** empty

**IP Address:** 192.70.238.14

**Response Started:** Fri, 11/30/07 8:16:43 AM

**Response Modified:** Fri, 11/30/07 9:43:31 AM

**1. Your department is:**

Finance

**2. How would you rate the City's efficiency in implementing the Measure V funding process?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

City's Efficiency

X

*Comments:* Considerable community and staff involvement in determining needs

**3. How would you rate the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding to your department?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Department Allocation

X

*Comments:* The Department got funding for two and one-half positions

**4. How would you rate your department's expansion or enhancement of services due to Measure V funding?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Expansion of Services

X

*Comments:* Measure V funds will provide the services of a Web Master that will improve our web site effectiveness and usefulness.

**5. Have you received feedback from customers regarding your department's expansion or enhancement of services?**

No

**6. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for your department?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Success for Department

X

*Comments:*

**7. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for the City?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Success for City

X

*Comments:* Lots of high visibility projects have been completed and Libraries are fully operational

**8. How would you rate Measure V's change on the community?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Change on Community

X

Comments: The community is aware of the benefits received in exchange of a higher transaction and use tax. the cost-benefit analysis is favorable to the community

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survey title:

**Measure V Survey**

Displaying 2 of 7 respondents

**Response Type:** Normal Response

**Collector:** New Link (Web Link)

**Custom Value:** empty

**IP Address:** 192.70.238.14

**Response Started:** Fri, 12/7/07 3:01:27 PM

**Response Modified:** Fri, 12/7/07 3:03:32 PM

**1. Your department is:**

Fire

**2. How would you rate the City's efficiency in implementing the Measure V funding process?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
City's Efficiency					X
Comments:					

**3. How would you rate the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding to your department?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Department Allocation				X	
Comments:					

**4. How would you rate your department's expansion or enhancement of services due to Measure V funding?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Expansion of Services					X
Comments:					

**5. Have you received feedback from customers regarding your department's expansion or enhancement of services?**

Yes (List positive or negative comments below)

Comment: happy there are paramedics on all engines now

**6. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for your department?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Success for Department					X
Comments:					

**7. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for the City?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Success for City					X
Comments:					

**8. How would you rate Measure V's change on the community?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
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Change on Community

X

Comments:

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survey title:

**Measure V Survey**

Displaying 3 of 7 respondents

**Response Type:** Normal Response

**Collector:** New Link (Web Link)

**Custom Value:** empty

**IP Address:** 192.70.238.14

**Response Started:** Fri, 12/7/07 4:11:12 PM

**Response Modified:** Fri, 12/7/07 4:31:10 PM

**1. Your department is:**

Development & Engineering

**2. How would you rate the City's efficiency in implementing the Measure V funding process?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

City's Efficiency

X

*Comments:* With regard to the DES Department, the Department benefited with funding for streets/sidewalks, Code Enforcement activities, and increased staffing in our Traffic Section. The sidewalk repairs and street resurfacing work has been completed for this year, and funds have been expended. A smaller concrete repair project is expected to be let in February 2008. The Code Enforcement enhancements included hiring one new Code Enforcement Officers and a Senior Code Enforcement Officer to supervise the team. To date (December 2007), we have fully trained all team members, attended numerous public outreach events, secured radio time to explain Code Enforcement and safe living practices to the community, and have significantly increased the number of Code Enforcement cases addressed/compeleted over the past year. The Traffic Team enhancement included hiring a new Engineering Technician who designed a new traffic signal located near a Middle School, which is currently under construction and will enhance pedestrian safety. She has also completed a Suggested Routes to School program that will be distributed to the schools in 2008, addressed several high-accident issues in the City, and is working to secure the StreetSmarts program to better educate local residents of traffic safety.

**3. How would you rate the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding to your department?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Department Allocation

X

*Comments:* I believe the committee has been fair and balanced in making decisions that benefit the entire community, and ensuring all services are addressed with this "new" funding source.

**4. How would you rate your department's expansion or enhancement of services due to Measure V funding?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Expansion of Services

X

*Comments:* See above. We are prioritizing the use of this money to ensure residents are seeing the benefit of their 1/2 cent sales tax contribution, and that quality of life enhancments/improvements are made..... and the community understands they were made possible by Measure V funding.

**5. Have you received feedback from customers regarding your department's expansion or enhancement of services?**

Yes (List positive or negative comments below)

*Comment:* Residents have generally been very happy with the improvements; with most compliments coming from the sidewalk repairs and median island upgrades. Most of the improvements were done to provide the enhancement, ensure future "problems" (i.e. additional upheavals, failed pavement)are minimized, and that these improvements lessen our future maintenance efforts (median upgrades were designed to minimize water use, and plants require lesser levels of maintenance, etc.).

**6. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for your department?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Success for Department

X

*Comments:* I'm very proud of the money that was entrusted to us to improve the community, and believe we have spent that money wisely and efficiently to ensure the public reaped the benefits of their contributions.

**7. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for the City?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Success for City

X

*Comments:* I believe that all Departments focused on using the funding made available to us, and that this funding was used in order to benefit the Salinas residents. This funding really did make a difference.

**8. How would you rate Measure V's change on the community?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Change on Community

X

*Comments:* Quality of life went up significantly with these funds. Libraries are open, after school programs are successful, streets/sidewalks/medians look better than they ever have, and these efforts were positively recognized through media outlets.

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survey title:  
**Measure V Survey**

Displaying 4 of 7 respondents

**Response Type:** Normal Response

**Collector:** New Link (Web Link)

**Custom Value:** empty

**IP Address:** 192.70.238.14

**Response Started:** Mon, 12/10/07 9:24:24 AM

**Response Modified:** Mon, 12/10/07 9:27:05 AM

**1. Your department is:**

Police

**2. How would you rate the City's efficiency in implementing the Measure V funding process?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

City's Efficiency

X

Comments:

**3. How would you rate the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding to your department?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Department Allocation

X

Comments:

**4. How would you rate your department's expansion or enhancement of services due to Measure V funding?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Expansion of Services

X

Comments:

**5. Have you received feedback from customers regarding your department's expansion or enhancement of services?**

No

**6. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for your department?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Success for Department

X

Comments:

**7. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for the City?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Success for City

X

Comments:

**8. How would you rate Measure V's change on the community?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Change on Community

X

survey title:  
**Measure V Survey**

Displaying 5 of 7 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response

Collector: New Link (Web Link)

Custom Value: empty

IP Address: 192.70.238.14

Response Started: Wed, 12/12/07 4:10:41 PM

Response Modified: Wed, 12/12/07 4:14:34 PM

1. Your department is:

Maintenance

2. How would you rate the City's efficiency in implementing the Measure V funding process?

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
City's Efficiency				X	
Comments:					

3. How would you rate the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding to your department?

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Department Allocation				X	
Comments:					

4. How would you rate your department's expansion or enhancement of services due to Measure V funding?

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Expansion of Services			X		
Comments:					

5. Have you received feedback from customers regarding your department's expansion or enhancement of services?

Yes (List positive or negative comments below)

6. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for your department?

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Success for Department			X		
Comments:					

7. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for the City?

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Success for City				X	
Comments:					

8. How would you rate Measure V's change on the community?

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Change on Community				X	

survey title:  
**Measure V Survey**

Displaying 6 of 7 respondents

**Response Type:** Normal Response

**Collector:** New Link (Web Link)

**Custom Value:** empty

**IP Address:** 192.70.238.14

**Response Started:** Thu, 12/13/07 4:30:03 PM

**Response Modified:** Sat, 12/22/07 10:59:18 AM

**1. Your department is:**

Recreation

**2. How would you rate the City's efficiency in implementing the Measure V funding process?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
City's Efficiency					X

Comments:

**3. How would you rate the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding to your department?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Department Allocation					X

Comments:

**4. How would you rate your department's expansion or enhancement of services due to Measure V funding?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Expansion of Services				X	

Comments:

**5. Have you received feedback from customers regarding your department's expansion or enhancement of services?**

Yes (List positive or negative comments below)

Comment: Residents are happy that recreation centers received funding to reopen and/or provide additional hours for our youth.

**6. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for your department?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Success for Department					X

Comments:

**7. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for the City?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
Success for City					X

Comments:

**8. How would you rate Measure V's change on the community?**

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
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Change on Community

X

Comments:

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survey title:

**Measure V Survey**

Displaying 7 of 7 respondents

**Response Type:** Normal Response

**Collector:** New Link (Web Link)

**Custom Value:** empty

**IP Address:** 192.70.238.14

**Response Started:** Thu, 12/13/07 4:29:38 PM

**Response Modified:** Thu, 12/13/07 4:51:40 PM

**1. Your department is:**

Administration

**2. How would you rate the City's efficiency in implementing the Measure V funding process?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

City's Efficiency

X

*Comments:* The City's efficiency was very good in restoring services.

**3. How would you rate the Oversight Committee's allocation of funding to your department?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Department Allocation

X

*Comments:* The Department received adequate funding although the City is still in need for vital support services. We are still deficient in adequate management and supervisory positions because either the position was not funded or the difficulties in attracting talent to approved positions which remain unfilled.

**4. How would you rate your department's expansion or enhancement of services due to Measure V funding?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Expansion of Services

X

*Comments:* Overall, we have restored a basic level of service but are hard pressed to move certain projects forward because of inadequate resources both in staffing and funding.

**5. Have you received feedback from customers regarding your department's expansion or enhancement of services?**

Yes (List positive or negative comments below)

*Comment:* Yes, people are generally pleased and grateful. We still are a community in need and simply stated we cannot offer the service levels other communities provide. Eventually the public will demand the higher level of service.

**6. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for your department?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Success for Department

X

*Comments:* The implementation of Measure V went fairly well. All departments cooperated. HR did a terrific job.

**7. Overall, how would you rate Measure V's implementation success for the City?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Success for City

X

*Comments:* Overall the community is pleased with the effort. However we still do not have the resource base necessary to provide the



community with first class amenities.

**8. How would you rate Measure V's change on the community?**

Very Poor (1)      Poor (2)      Acceptable (3)      Good (4)      Very Good (5)

Change on Community

X

*Comments:* For now there is some awareness and appreciation for what it takes to dismantle services and then restore them. When you cut crossing guards, close libraries and recreation centers...people do feel the change. When you re-open people notice the difference.

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## Interview with Mr. Kever & Mr. Gutierrez, July 28, 2006

Mr. Tom Kever has been the Finance Director for 3 years and before that he was the Accounting Officer for 22 years.

Miguel Gutierrez is the Accounting Officer and has been in the department for 18 years.

What role does your office play in this Measure V process?

It's a significant role in the Measure V process. The Measure V committee is tasked with two things: 1) To make recommendations to the City Council for use of the Measure V funds and once that takes place then it becomes 2) one of oversight to review how we actually spent Measure V funds.

Miguel and I went to all the committee meetings and the way that process worked, we had a whole series of community meetings, public meetings asking the community what they wanted Measure V funds spent on and it was no surprise, it was pretty basic, police, fire, recreation programs, after-school programs. Then, staff – all the department heads, made presentations to Council and the Measure V committee on what they'd lost and the minimum required restoration that they needed to provide basic services and in a perfect world what their staff would need to be. So, that all happened and then we met with the Measure V Committee several times going over staff's recommendations on the use of Measure V. The Measure V Committee unanimously approved most of the staff's recommendations. They were basic and they were reasonable and also department heads came into the Measure V committee meetings and talked to the Committee, and then Council approved the Measure V committee's recommendations. So, Miguel and I are there for all of that, we do all of the salary forecasts, we put the numbers together, we put the presentations together, and so that's our role, really is budget preparation and presenting the financial information. The other thing I have to add to what Tom just said is that the committee didn't have an easy task because we cut \$15 million in the process of cutting and we had to re-establish only \$10 million.

There were about five reasons that came together all at once that created this mess. One, the economy slowed and we did not get any growth in our sales tax, which funds about 30% of our general fund budget. Additionally, the stock market took a big downturn which caused our retirement rates to increase dramatically – the cost of CALPERS, California Public Employees Retirement System, and that affected everybody throughout the state, including the State of California. So, the State, because they could, to balance their own budgets, started taking property tax away from local governments. The State gets about 13% of our property tax revenue and then they use that to fund education, etc., so they played a lot of games with the property tax and then on top of that, that all hit the county hard so they started increasing their fees as much as they could for 911 communications systems, kind of increasing anything they could you know it rolls downhill. And finally the icing on the cake was the continued increase in health insurance costs. So those were the big five reasons that all happened at once.

We ended up cutting 24% of the general fund budget, eliminating 123 positions out of our 500/600 positions and that occurred over a period of 3 years. We began the process

early, we were never in danger of running out of money. Employee-related benefits (salaries, health insurance and retirement) account for 80% of our budget. I also want to mention because people get touchy about retirements, and how rich it is, but really the lion's share on retirement costs is for public safety, police and fire, because they have a formula this is 3% at age 50. So then you have to ask yourself, do police and fire earn that, deserve that, well I guess that's a public question, but when they get much past 50 they can't really do their job. The city pays 30% of pay every year to fund retirement. From the city's perspective and we took a lot of criticism on this, but it's a state standard, we can't do anything about that retirement system locally, not that I would even suggest we should, it's a statewide issue, Gov Schwarzenegger tried, and he gave it up because it was a losing battle.

The Measure V tax was effective April 1, 2006, and the State Board of Equalization collects it and administers the tax, and then they transmit their first payment to us in July. So, all the Measure V restorations are occurring July 1<sup>st</sup>, so we really don't have a cash flow lag because we waited a quarter before actually hiring people. But, we do have reserves that we can invest to pay for general fund services. A more appropriate revenue source is that we have to do that for is property tax. We get Measure V money every month, but property tax we only get paid twice a year, we have to wait until December and property tax is a lot of money. A lot of cities issue bonds called tax anticipation notes, and it's just geared toward property tax because everyone has to wait until December to get their property tax. We have sufficient reserves where we don't have to do that. We don't have huge reserves and we had just gone through most of it before Measure V but a couple of things happened to build our general reserve fund back to 5%, which is about \$3½ million. Sales tax improved and started growing and that was really primarily caused by increased fuel prices, because 13% of our sales taxes come from fuel-related products. But, the big one was the increase in property tax due to the continuing buying and selling of our very expensive real estate. The real estate boom has finally slowed way down and some of us were expecting for it to happen sooner than it did. So those two things really helped us.

We always have a balanced budget. The city's policy is to balance our budget to ongoing revenues to ongoing expenditures. Measure V funds are truly general fund money, we just account for them in a separate fund because it's clearer for everyone, we keep a separate set of books for that money.

The Measure V Oversight Committee really listened to the public and they took that to heart and that is what is reflected in the Measure V budget in my opinion.

Finance received \$186,000 and what we cut over the 3-year period were two account clerks that ran the front counter, our webmaster computer position, a computer operator, and a purchasing clerk. So what we're restoring with Measure V funds is a Senior Account Clerk that helps make up the two that we lost. A combination webmaster position/library systems analyst to work on the library systems and to keep our web page up. And then lastly, we're hiring a computer operator to take on a whole bunch of lower level tasks. So we're hiring staff, we're restoring 4 of the 6 that we lost. Three were

from Measure V funds and the Council approved from the general fund budget an additional Senior Accountant.

The city spends \$417 per person to provide needed services (compared to \$1,400 per capita in Monterey). The figure is calculated by taking the general funds revenues and dividing by the number of residents. Everybody's got a different tax base. Monterey has a huge hotel/motel tax base because of their tourist industry and they have a high property tax base because their property values are higher, I think would be the two differences between us and Monterey. And Monterey has 30,000 people, we've got 150,000. We are the lowest per capita in the county and Measure V gets us up to \$548. We only bring that out just to show that we don't have an inflated budget because the truth of the matter, although we're biased, is that we're an efficient organization.

60% of our budget goes to public safety where I've heard that Monterey is at 30%. And that is because we are a different city than Monterey, we have a gang problem and therefore we have a mix of expensive city employees.

As soon as Measure A didn't pass and we started moving in to close the libraries people started coming to the City Council meetings and voicing their concerns. I think it's just a matter of communicating to the public and winning public trust.

The only way that we can outgrow this is if over the 10-year period we do not add any additional city services, and maybe we could outgrow this. It could be done but there's such a need in this community for city services. What you would have to do is keep putting money into one-time expenditures and not increase city services at all in the 10-year period, maybe reduce city services and maybe we could outgrow the \$10 million Measure V. We are going to put together a plan to show Council how we could do that, but in all reality what I think is going to have to happen is that the community is going to be asked again if they want to extend the Measure V tax. Essentially, services could not be added over the 10-year period and that's just simply not realistic because we've got a growing community and a whole growth area with a lot of development going on. We've only added \$10 million of the \$15 million services we've cut. Could it be done? Yes, would it be serving the community's best interest, I don't believe so. But whatever we do, we've definitely have to plan for this, it's either going to be a new campaign to 2 years prior to the sunset or it's going to have to be a long-range plan.

We can do anything, we were prepared to live without Measure V at all, although the community wasn't happy about that because we weren't going to have libraries and we weren't going to have a lot of things. But we can do that, that's doable, it's not rocket science to do a budget, it's ugly and nobody likes it but it can be done. It's all about not providing a level of services the community wants because you have to start that process way before the end of the 10 years but right now we're just trying to restore those services so it's a little bit too soon to talk about.

## Interview with Mr. Kever & Mr. Gutierrez, November 28, 2007

Mr. Tom Kever has been the Finance Director for 4 years and before that he was the Accounting Officer for 22 years.

Miguel Gutierrez is the Accounting Officer and has been in the department for 19 years.

What has been your role in the MV implementation process?

Our role is meeting with the Measure V Committee (MVC) on a quarterly basis and we view expenditures. Our primary role is to report to them Measure V revenues collected and Measure V expenditures and we review that with them, because part of their duty is not only recommendations to City Council but also compliance issues, are we using the funds for what we said we would use them for. And then, as far as the finance department goes, we have hired a senior accountant clerk, a webmaster and a computer operator, and we've got those filled. We also determine the cost for personnel and other types of supplies exactly so we can buy with that -- so we start the budget and we monitor the expenses which are presented to the committee.

The MVC hosted a variety of community meetings, and solicited input from the community, this was for the 06-07 budget, staff made presentations to the MVC describing the cuts that were made, the minimum required service levels that they needed restored and in a perfect world, what would be their preferred service levels. So, we went through all that, the MVC took that all in, and then met over a period of three or four meetings where staff did come in and say this is what I'm requesting from MV. The MVC didn't accept all of it, but they did develop a recommendation to Council, which they did in 06-07 and Council approved it. The 07-08 process was quite different because of all the work they'd done the year before, there wasn't any additional MV funding except for modest growth which would just keep up with modest salary inflation. All the programs were carried over intact. It was a lot easier this year -- so it was a status quo MV budget only because of all the groundwork that was done the year before. There was one exception to that, and that was the five police officer positions allocated to MV were eliminated and the savings from those positions have been set aside for the Mayor's community safety initiative, which is yet to unfold. They eliminated those five positions because we have never had all of our police positions filled in the police department. The police department traditionally carries about 20 vacancies, but I think they're improving now. They removed those five positions in the MV budget because we always use the general fund portion for the police budget to hire police first. So, we concluded that the chances of ever filling the five MV positions, because those would be the last five, would be nearly impossible to fill. So, those funds were set aside, \$400,000 was set aside for the community safety initiative, so that's 07-08.

We only get \$10M for MV, those are ongoing expenditures, but in the first year we knew this was going to happen, and it did happen, because it takes time to fill positions and implement programs. So, the MVC was able to recommend to Council and Council approved \$4.4M of one-time capital improvements. And then, in 07-08, we're still assuming \$637,000 worth of unspent MV funds which got everything pretty much implemented, staff hired, but there's always turnaround and we always carry about a 5%

vacancy throughout the city (vacancy factor), so the MVC recommended to Council and Council approved spending \$637,000 on street rehab and sidewalk and tree repairs.

We're still not like before because we gave up \$15M and replaced \$10M, and with some property tax growth, we added about another \$1M to the budget, so we're still behind but we're a lot better off.

The community safety initiative is broader than just police; it's going to include networking all the agencies to use a variety of services like the Sunrise House, and making an effort to prevent violent crime.

Do you think the Oversight Committee (OC) has been responsive to each department's requests for funding?

I truly think that the OC is truly leaning first to the libraries, so if you have to put a degree, they will certainly have been responsible to the libraries, and that was the main engine driving the MV funding. And there are some departments that probably didn't get close to what they needed. They told me no for some things, they didn't rubber stamp staff's requests. They spent a lot of time discussing it, they said no to certain things, they said yes to certain things, and made sure the library got what they needed. They did a pretty good job with listening to the community, the after school programs, that's a new thing for the city to be involved in, but the OC heard what the community wanted and they did a good job making choices and setting priorities.

First, the OC approves their recommendations and then Miguel and I take that to Council and then Council approves the budget. So, the MVC is advisory. But, they also oversee the MV money and we provide the OC with financial reports. We're only going to spend the money on exactly what Council approved and any savings, the MVC takes a look at that and will reallocate it as necessary. The process is very efficient.

Have you received feedback from residents?

It's huge, library services alone, after school programs I think have been huge, sidewalk repair, so people can actually see the results.

Has the housing market slowdown affected property tax revenues?

The housing market slowdown definitely affects property tax. In 05-06 and 06-07 we saw over 12% growth in our property tax, and that really comes about since we don't have a lot of new development, the buying and selling of existing properties at higher prices and then they're reassessed. With the slowdown, we're expecting a 6½ % increase, half of what it was this year, and next year I don't know what to expect. I think my forecast assumes 5% or 4% which might be a little aggressive. What we're really talking about is how much growth we'll receive. We don't expect to see a decline, although it has declined in the past slightly. And would that affect Measure V? It might, MV is based on consumer spending, so the economy in general affects consumer spending and also I think when the real estate market was booming we saw a lot of refinancing, people taking money out to remodel their homes and buying things from Home Depot, buying cars, so it will indirectly affect consumer spending and MV, but we

still expect a 3% growth. But the economy is going south a little bit right now. The \$10M is our base; it could decline in a recession.

How do you think MV funding has most helped the City?

I truly think that just the image of the city has been improved tremendously. I think people now have the perception that the residents care about services and they're willing to pay a little more to fund these types of programs, and certainly the image of the city is looking better with things that are beautified (medians, sidewalks), and having the libraries open and all the services restored, I think we truly look like a healthy, financially community. And even just going through the whole MV process, from the MV campaign to the community meetings, I think a lot of people in Salinas have a better image of city government. You do ultimately have to have a good image in the voter's minds for them to spend their money on your services.

We do a 2-year budget, but Council only approves the first year and the second year is for projecting and forecasting purposes.



## Interview with Mr. Mora, Dec 4<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Mr. David Mora is the Salinas City Manager and has held the position for over 17 years.

What has been your role in the MV implementation process?

The City Manager's role is putting together the budget for consideration, and implementing whatever the Council ultimately approves. I am a regular attendee of all the MV committee meetings.

Do you think the Oversight Committee (OC) has been responsive to each department's requests for funding?

I think they've considered each department and they've had to set priorities. They haven't been totally responsive because there's not enough money. I think they did get into a position where everything that was identified by each department as first priority was actually funded.

Have you received feedback from residents?

It's been very little specific, in terms of that kind of feedback. I think everyone understands that the libraries are open because of Measure V, and we are at a point where we are now back to full restoration to the hours we had before. Plus, we've hired a Library Director who's looking into new programs. We have partnered with the school district for the after-school programs which have been slower in starting. The city has had after school programs but what we've got now is more of a partnership with the school district. There is certainly evidence of maintenance operations, and the major work, for instance like medians, we've tried to label with signs as MV work. That's an impact that people can see in terms of improved maintenance. There are a number of pieces of equipment that have been acquired that have been labeled with MV funding so that whether they're parks trucks or fire department command vehicles, whatever it might be, that it is labeled as such. We are probably at this point now at 85%-90% full on the positions associated with MV, which is really the norm because we are very rarely at 100% of vacancies filled. So, FY07-08 is actually the first full year of implementation because 06-07 was associated with a lot of start-up. Best evidence of that was the libraries where we really weren't up to full restoration of hours until probably late this summer.

How do you think MV funding has most helped the City?

I think the obvious area is libraries, but it certainly has helped us with maintenance, it's given us the ability to keep the gang task force in operation, the after-school recreation programs. There are other things done with MV funds that are a bit hidden, for instance, MV funded a Human Resources technician, and that allows us to hire people. It filled out funding for the paramedic program. So, I think there are a number of things out there that people have on their minds relative to services that we've been able to restore for our residents.

We've budgeted a newsletter but the newsletter is not the highest priority because it is not a direct service for residents. But hopefully within the calendar year, we can begin to get the newsletter out on a 4 times a year basis.

What's the long-term solution after MV sunsets in 10 years?

It isn't far away because it has to be assessed. I think going into this, the game plan is along the lines of the first 2-3 years have to be focused on putting everything back together and unfortunately it does take that much time, especially when you're dealing with the civil service system and trying to hire people. We've got to get everything in place so that by the end of the second year we can give a comprehensive report to the community as to here is what MV has done and everything is in place. That's the first thing that has to be done. Then you begin with a period of evaluation because over the 10 years, some of those services may change. Priorities may change in the community and I think that's where the MVC really does have a continuing oversight responsibility to maintain quality of service that is truly responsive to our residents. At the same time, the city does have an economic development initiative that is focused on trying to increase our revenue base that is not funded by MV but that is happening in a parallel track. The challenge is, will that growth activity be able to generate sufficient revenue to 1) replace MV and 2) take care of new needs as they're going to arise. It's going to be an ongoing assessment but it does sunset. So, if consideration wanted to be made relative to the continuation, it definitely has to go back to the voters.

## Interview with Mrs. Janet Barnes, Dec 10, 2007

Janet Barnes is the District 3 Councilmember for the Salinas City Council. She has been a councilmember for 9 years.

What has been your role in the MV implementation process?

The Oversight Committee goes by the City Council's goals and objectives and then they start molding it and making recommendations to allocate where the money should be distributed so we end up being the ones to approve it but it goes through a process. The committee gives us periodic reports and if there are other concerns that we have, that we don't think are being addressed, then we let people know what that would be, the people who are representing us and that's how it's been working.

My main role in this process is to make sure that whatever the committee is deciding to allocate goes to the places where it should. Fortunately, the City Manager attends the meetings, and he lets the committee know where the weak areas are and which areas need to be enhanced and so far they've been quite responsive and to make sure the money gets distributed appropriately.

Each councilmember chooses a person for the Oversight Committee. They are chosen by an application process, so people apply and we look over the applications and then choose the person we think is best qualified.

Do you think the Oversight Committee (OC) has been responsive to the residents?

Our goals and objectives directly reflect what the citizens have told us during our campaigning and community meetings and the needs of basically everything that was cut is what we are trying to restore. The committee is a consensus process and everyone works together and eventually they get where they need to be. The library got the most money because people were expressing that's what their first priority was.

How do you think MV funding has most helped the City?

It has restored the libraries back to full strength and in addition it has allowed us to expand the Community Safety Initiative as well as the after school programs.

## Interview with Mr. Jack Briscoe, Dec 13, 2007

Mr. Jack Briscoe is a businessman who was appointed by the Mayor to be this year's Chairman of the Measure V Oversight Committee. He has sat on the committee for 2 years.

Please explain how the committee gets its recommended budget to the City Council:  
We got a great deal of help from the city staff; the City Manager, Deputy City Manager and the Finance Director did a lot of work to lay out up front what each department wanted. They gave us two levels, this is my wish list and this is what I really can't do without. We went through that and tried to satisfy as many of the departments as we could, so that was the process we went through in the initial year. The first pass was the hard part, actually after we set the first year, the money was basically spent on salaries and then from there, all we had to negotiate was for the money left over. The committee and the city worked pretty well together, there was a little bit of contention in the first year just because people wanted money for their own things, but we tried to give everybody a fair share, although by the time we got to the Maintenance department, there was less than there should have been for them. But, they ended up with more than their share of the one-time funds so it really worked out fairly for everyone.

How did the committee identify and prioritize those department's programs and services?  
We attended a joint City Council Measure V meeting and got presentations from all of the departments. We went through one department at a time starting with the Library, and basically funded the Library fully and then on through each department and mostly gave them everything they wanted as far as the essentials lists were concerned. I have to compliment the city departments for being realistic, they didn't go overboard and put a lot of things on their essentials lists, so that made our job easier and there was enough money to mostly cover everything.

Were the departments fairly funded in proportion as to how the public wanted the money to be spent?

We went through Libraries and Safety first, those were the two key things the public wanted, those were the concerns including Police and Fire under Safety. The after-school programs got what was asked for, and actually they were under-funded to begin with and then we went back later and decided to move some money out of Safety because the City hadn't been able to hire police officers. They still had positions that needed to be filled with General Fund money, so we took those police positions away from Measure V funding with the provision that they would be added back in when the City caught up with their hiring process.

Have you received feedback from residents on how the funding is affecting the City?  
Quite a lot, people are real happy about the labeling that's been done on the sidewalks and median strips with the signs. That was a good public relations thing to do. I've heard quibbles about the Library staff believing they deserved more money, but that's not my belief. I think if anything we over-funded the Libraries.

How did you get involved with the Measure V Committee?

I got on the Measure V committee by my involvement with COPA (Community Organizations for Public Action). We worked very hard to not only pass Measure V, but also to get it on the ballot. Part of our deal with the Mayor then was that we wanted some representation on the Measure V committee. So the first year, we had me and Sally Torres, who was the Chair for the first year – we were both strong COPA members and then she left the committee this year. When I leave the committee, we'll ask the Mayor to appoint another COPA person so we continue to have a voice on the panel. I've agreed to the Mayor to come back at least for the next year and after that we'll see.

How is the Oversight Committee's recommended budget presented to the City Council?  
It's presented by Mr. Keever and Mr. Mora, and they've been awfully helpful to us in trying to make those decisions.

Does the committee meet throughout the year?

The committee meets at least quarterly with the Finance Department to review the quarterly inputs as to how much was raised and how much was spent and where, so we keep tabs on what's going on.

Mr. Briscoe discussed the latest about the After-School programs: Since the programs had not been consistent among the four school districts, we just started convening an Education Committee, of which I'm a part of with many city council members. We also have representatives from each of the school districts. We're trying to standardize what after-school programs should work and make it more uniform across all school districts. Although I must say that at the first meeting I was impressed with the breadth of programs that the schools have already set up. But, part of the difficulty with that, is the City working with the four school districts.

How do you think Measure V has most helped the City?

I think it's perked the City's pride up a lot with some of the sidewalk and street work that's been done. The image is much better, having the Libraries back has helped in a lot of areas, I'm real impressed with the new Library Director, Ms. Martinez, she's right on with some of the things she's trying to do with the Library. The libraries are totally supported by Measure V. Another thing that the Measure V is starting to contribute on is the Community Safety Initiative that the Mayor started. It's an attempt to make Salinas a City of Peace mostly be prevention and intervention of gang members. Prevention starting in the real early ages and intervention by catching gang members as they develop. That program is still being decided exactly what all the approaches are, \$400,000 has been set aside from Measure V money to start up the program and it's a number of different agencies working together, city agencies, county agencies and nonprofit agencies.

