



City Hall
520 J Street
Los Banos, CA 93635

Phone: (209) 827-7000
Fax: (209) 827-7010
www.losbanos.org

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**CONTACT: City Manager Steve Carrigan
(209) 827-7000 ext. 148**

LOS BANOS PLACES MEASURE ON BALLOT TO ADDRESS PUBLIC SAFETY NEEDS

LOS BANOS, CA – The Los Banos City Council voted unanimously Wednesday to place a measure on the November 2013 ballot to extend Measure A, an existing voter-approved mechanism adopted by voters to protect public safety services.

In 2009, Los Banos voters approved Measure A to maintain the current number of police officers and firefighters in Los Banos. However, Measure A will expire soon.

Extension of Measure A does not raise taxes and requires that all funds be spent for Los Banos firefighters, police officers and their equipment needs only.

“Our community continues to face significant challenges addressing public safety needs and priorities,” said City Manager Steve Carrigan. “Extension of Measure A is necessary to maintain the number of local police officers and firefighters/EMTs that fight crime and help keep our community safe, without raising taxes.”

Public safety priorities include maintaining emergency response, answering all 911 calls, preventing gang and youth violence, and preventing theft and property crimes.

“Most of the 911 emergency calls Los Banos firefighters receive are for medical emergencies,” said Los Banos Fire Chief Chet Guintini. “We need to keep fire stations open and maintain our 911 emergency response system so firefighters can respond quickly for those in need.”

Over the past 10 years, calls for service have increased 20% in Los Banos. The Los Banos Fire Department answered 2,034 calls for service in 2012. The Los Banos Police Department answered 25,094 calls for service in 2012.

“Crime is an ongoing issue for our community with gang and drug activity in surrounding cities filtering in and affecting our local neighborhoods,” said Los Banos Police Chief Gary Brizzee “If adopted by voters, extension of Measure A will help ensure that we have the necessary police officers on the streets to protect our community.”

There are over 600 documented gang members and associates in the City of Los Banos and over 18 active criminal street gangs.

“Unfortunately, much of the violent crime in our City is gang-related,” Chief Brizzee added. “Maintaining gang and drug prevention programs is vital to keeping our neighborhoods, schools and parks safe.”

A recently commissioned independent survey shows voters in the City of Los Banos support extending Measure A to continue to effectively address public safety needs. The survey, conducted April 29 through May 7 by the highly respected opinion research firm of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, shows 83% of respondents would support extending Measure A on the November 2013 ballot, which requires two-thirds approval.

Additional information is available at www.losbanos.org.

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