

Measure No. 34-295

Ballot Title

Increase Tigard Neighborhood Police Patrols Through Local Option Levy.

Question: Shall Tigard increase patrol officers and add school resource officer with five-year operating levy, \$0.29/\$1,000 assessed value, beginning 2020? This measure may cause property taxes to increase more than three percent.

Summary: Despite significant increases in population, the minimum patrol staffing has remained the same over the past 25 years. Patrol staffing is 3 to 4 officers per shift citywide. This is insufficient to cover each of the City's 5 patrol districts.

Patrol staffing is not keeping up with demands for service. From 2010-2018, police officer staffing decreased 4% while the population increased 13.6% and calls for service increased 27%.

A 2019 independent performance audit recommended the addition of 8 new officers and an additional school resource officer.

Passage of this measure would enable the Tigard Police Department to:

- Hire 8 additional patrol officers to respond to increased calls for service, multiple emergencies at the same time, and community patrols.
- Add 1 school resource officer to enhance student safety.
- Train all sworn officers in advanced crisis intervention and de-escalation to address increased mental health crises.

The cost of this levy on a typical Tigard home with an assessed value of \$280,000 (\$447,000 market value) would be \$81 per year, or \$6.75 per month.

Estimated revenues for each year of the levy:

2020-21: \$1,980,000
2021-22: \$2,050,000
2022-23: \$2,130,000
2023-24: \$2,200,000
2024-25: \$2,280,000

Explanatory Statement

The Tigard City Council is asking voters to consider a five-year operating levy to fund police services.

Why does Tigard need additional police officers and advanced training?

Over the last 25 years, Tigard's population has grown by nearly 19,000 people. However, minimum staffing levels for patrol are the same today as they were in 1995. The number of patrol officers on shift are not enough to keep up with calls for service. Almost half the time, 3 officers are on duty per shift to patrol and respond to all calls in the City's 5 patrol districts.

Over the last year, calls for person and property crimes have decreased, while societal calls, including responding to people experiencing mental health crises or homelessness, have increased over 22%. Currently, only 16% of sworn officers have advanced crisis intervention training. This levy would provide training for all officers to better respond to societal calls.

Why hasn't funding kept pace with the need?

Police services are funded with general fund dollars, with property taxes making up 50% of that fund. Police services account for 54% of that fund, library services 21%, parks maintenance 9%, and general city services the remainder. Tigard has one of the lowest property tax rates in Washington County. Since 1990, the effect of state property tax law is to restrict property tax increases to 3% a year, while City costs go up at a higher rate of 3.5 to 4%. Costs will double over the next 20 years, approximately, and property tax revenues will not keep pace with the costs of maintaining police services.

What will the levy fund?

- Add 8 police officers to respond to increasing emergency calls and patrol neighborhoods.
 - o Maintain higher minimum patrol staffing to provide faster response times to 911 calls, provide more citywide coverage, and allow the police to handle more than one emergency at the same time.
 - o Develop stronger connections to the community by interacting regularly with residents, schools, and businesses to proactively address livability concerns.
- Add one school resource officer (SRO).
 - o Increase the number of SROs for quicker response to safety issues.
 - o Staff 1 SRO at each of the middle schools and the high school.
 - o Increase SRO presence at school events.
- Provide advanced crisis intervention and de-escalation training for all sworn officers.
 - o Develop officers' skills to respond to the increased number of calls involving mental health crises.
 - o Train officers by providing information, tools, and resources to use in interactions with those in crisis.
- Provide additional support staff to manage additional evidence and records, support data-informed policing, communications, and human resources.

What did the citywide performance audit say about police operations?

In 2019, an independent auditor conducted a performance audit of City operations. That auditor recommended the City hire 8 additional patrol officers and 1 school resource officer to address service demands and comply with policing best practices.

For additional information, including a calculator to see the effect on your property taxes if passed, please visit www.tigard-or.gov/tigard_levy.

Submitted by:
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City of Tigard