

Written materials relating to an item on this agenda that are distributed to the legislative bodies within 72 hours before the item is to be considered at its regularly scheduled meeting will be made available for public inspection at the City Clerk's Office, 300 West Third Street 4th Floor during customary business hours. Agenda reports are also on the City of Oxnard web site at www.oxnard.org.



AGENDA
OXNARD CITY COUNCIL
FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Council Chambers, 305 West Third Street
May 11, 2021
Regular Meeting - 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM
(TEMPORARY MEETING TIME CHANGE)

This meeting is held pursuant to the State Emergency Services Act, the Governor's Emergency Declaration, and Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 to allow members of the City Council or staff to participate via teleconference.

As a precautionary measure to help slow the spread of COVID-19, the City Council facilities are temporarily closed to the public. The public is encouraged to view the meeting from home on the City's website at Oxnard.org/city-meetings, Spectrum channel 10, Frontier channel 35, or YouTube at [Youtube.com/oxnardnews](https://www.youtube.com/oxnardnews). Video recordings are typically available online immediately following the meeting. *Please see the link for the Measure M pre-recorded presentation video for each agenda item below.

The public may provide comments to the City Council via email at cityclerk@oxnard.org no later than [2:00 p.m.](#) on the day of the meeting. Please identify the committee name, meeting date, and agenda item in the email Subject line.

A telephone option for public comments is also available at this time. Requests to speak must be submitted no later than [2:00 p.m.](#) on the day of the meeting. Use the form on the city's website to submit your request: Oxnard.org/city-meetings, or call the City Clerk's Office at (805) 385-7803, or email your request to cityclerk@oxnard.org.

*The City has filed pre-election and post-election lawsuits regarding the validity of Measure M. The judge has not yet ruled on the legal sufficiency of Measure M.

A. ROLL CALL, POSTING OF AGENDA, FLAG SALUTE

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

At this time, the legislative body will consider public comments for a maximum of thirty minutes. A person may address the legislative body only on matters not appearing on the agenda and within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body. Speaker requests shall be submitted as set forth on the first page of this agenda. Speakers are limited to three minutes. If the allotted 30 minute time period expires before all speakers have had the opportunity to speak, the remaining speakers will be given an opportunity to speak prior to adjournment of the meeting. The legislative body cannot enter into a detailed discussion or take action on any items presented during public comments at this time. Such items may only be referred to the City Manager/Executive Director/Secretary for administrative action or scheduled on a subsequent agenda for discussion. Persons wishing to speak on public hearing items should do so at the time of the hearing.

C. REPORTS

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you require special assistance to participate in a meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 385-7803. Notice at least 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to reasonably arrange for your accessibility to the meeting.

Agenda Item time estimates: (Presentation / Committee Discussion / Public Comment)

1. Fire Department

SUBJECT: Establishment of Ambulance Transportation Fees.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Finance and Governance Committee recommend that the City Council:

1. Conduct a public hearing to consider the establishment of ambulance transportation fees; and
2. Following the public hearing, adopt a resolution establishing ambulance transportation fees.

Please click the following link to view the required Measure M pre-recorded presentation video: <https://youtu.be/AZYy4eqZgfc>

Contact: Alexander Hamilton, (805) 385-7700

2. Finance Department

SUBJECT: Proposed City Council Policy for Internal Control Integrated Framework - Information and Communication.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Finance and Governance Committee provide feedback on a proposed City Council Policy for Internal Control Integrated Framework - Information and Communication and recommend City Council approve the proposed policy.

Please click the following link to view the required Measure M pre-recorded presentation video: <https://youtu.be/IPoYjyJp8Qk>

Contact: Kevin Riper, (805) 385-7475

3. Public Works Department

SUBJECT: Utility Rates Assistance Program (Project Assist) Update.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Finance and Governance Committee recommend that the City Council:

1. Adopt a resolution for the Utility Ratepayers Assistance Program (Project Assist) for Fiscal Year 2021-22 to assist eligible Oxnard residents and authorize staff to grant financial relief equal to a monthly \$15.00 maximum credit per utility bill charged to customers who meet the eligibility requirements discussed in this staff report; and
2. Authorize staff to direct up to \$145,000 from penalty fees charged to City utility customers who pay their bills late to fund the Utility Ratepayers Assistance Program (Project Assist) in Fiscal Year 2021-22.

Please click the following link to view the required Measure M pre-recorded presentation video: https://youtu.be/Pu_hTwXB2W0

Contact: Craig Beck, (805) 385-8055

D. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

E. ADJOURNMENT



**FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
AGENDA REPORT
REPORTS
AGENDA ITEM NO. C.1**

DATE: May 11, 2021
TO: Finance & Governance Committee
FROM: Alexander Hamilton, Fire Chief, (805) 385-7700, alexander.hamilton@oxnard.org
SUBJECT: Establishment of Ambulance Transportation Fees.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Finance and Governance Committee recommend that the City Council:

1. Conduct a public hearing to consider the establishment of ambulance transportation fees; and
2. Following the public hearing, adopt a resolution establishing ambulance transportation fees.

Please click the following link to view the required Measure M pre-recorded presentation video: <https://youtu.be/AZYy4eqZgfc>

BACKGROUND

Ambulance transportation fees and prehospital emergency medical services (EMS) cost recovery is a heavily misunderstood component of healthcare finance. Differing from most sectors of healthcare, EMS funding is provided by either general fund allocation or via user fees paid through ambulance transport, or by a combination of both.

Generally, first responder EMS is part of a fire department's annual budget. Unlike traditional healthcare, first responders providing emergency medical treatment on the scene of a 911 emergency cannot bill for services rendered at the point of care.

Ambulance transportation from the scene of an emergency is typically the only mechanism of cost recovery for EMS systems. In their infancy years ago, ambulance services providers required significant governmental subsidy to remain solvent. This was in large part due to lack of cost recovery from private insurance and misunderstanding of local insurance payer mix. Over time as the ambulance transport systems matured, the need for government subsidy has diminished greatly. Changes to governmental and private insurance allowable charges, improved billing practices, data driven understanding of payer mix, and change in delivery models proved effective in reducing these needs. One such example is the City of Glendale which required a \$2.1 million dollar general fund transfer until changes in 2010. By 2013 the Glendale ambulance program became self-sustaining.

Revenues generated by user fees can be reinvested into the local EMS system; with high call volumes and a favorable payer mix Oxnard is projected by AP Triton, the City's consultant for prehospital emergency medical services, can also be self-sustaining.

DISCUSSION

Fees for ambulance transport are paid by the users of the service after the care is rendered and transport has been completed. Depending on the type of ambulance provider, any positive net revenues generated by transport user fees are either reinvested into the system locally, or realized as profit such as is the case with private ambulance providers. In some jurisdictions, like Contra Costa County, the Fire District reinvested into their local EMS system to create a centralized dispatch system to coordinate all EMS and fire resource 911 dispatching. This enhancement was paid for directly through the use of transport revenues.

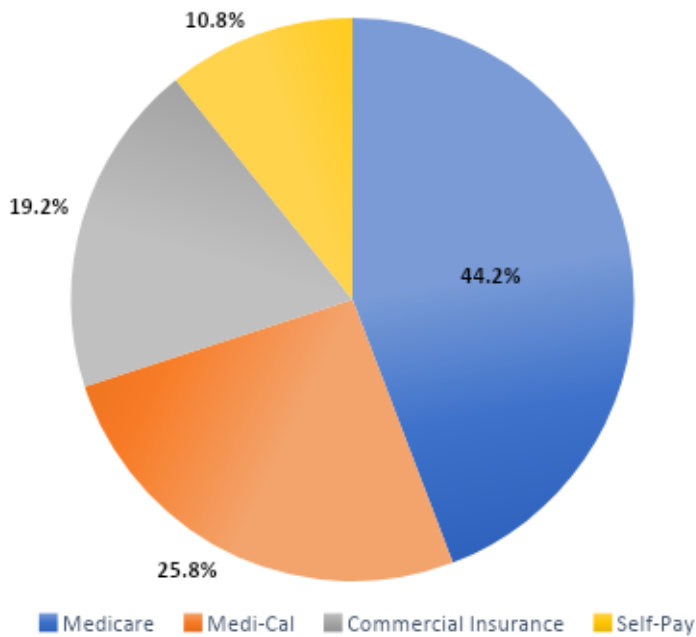
As previously reported, the Oxnard insurance payer mix is expected to provide for positive cost recovery. This is not the case for all municipalities in the state or even the nation. In some regions it is necessary for the ambulance providers to subsidize the rendering of emergency care through non-emergency interfacility transports. This provides solvency to an ambulance provider while the city or county enjoys the benefit of ambulance coverage. These types of ambulance systems are necessary when a region suffers from either low call volume, poor payer mix, challenging geography or any combination of the three.

AP Triton and the Fire Department believe that Oxnard is no such case. High call volumes combined with high density of calls and a favorable payer mix combine to produce significant cost recovery that can be invested directly into the City's EMS system while keeping transport base rates lower than most areas of the state. This favorable mix provides for solvency without the need for non-emergency transport or government subsidy. The recovery of these fees for reinvestment directly benefits the City's residents through increased ambulance coverage, a more flexible billing policy and local reinvestment through community based paramedic programs, and education.

Payer Mix

As discussed previously, the city of Oxnard benefits from what AP Triton describes as a favorable insurance payer mix. The payer mix coupled with other factors such as high call volume, geographic call density, proximity to receiving hospital, ambulance patient offloading time (APOT) and other factors will drive the City's potential cost recovery. This value in turn drives the potential for enhanced services or improved ambulance coverage by reinvestment of these user fees. Estimated payer mix for the city of Oxnard based on research through consultant AP Triton is displayed below.

<u>Cost Center</u>	<u>Percentage of Transports</u>	<u>Total Transports</u>
Medicare	44.2 %	5,533
Medi-Cal	25.8 %	3,229
Commercial Insurance	19.2 %	2,403
Private Pay	10.8 %	1,352
Totals	100 %	12,517



Fee Structure

As discussed earlier in the staff report the ambulance fee structure comprises the projected cost associated with the delivery of ambulance transportation and emergency medical services to the City. Costs are projected over five (5) years, and include the cost of the Falck Mobile Health Corp. agreement A-8317, third party billing services with Wittman Enterprises, LLC agreement A-8299, and Administrative/Supply expenditures in Table A. Administrative/Supply line is further broken down in Table B.

The City's Fire Department Suppression Division General Fund is already paying more than \$400,000 of the pre-hospital emergency medical service costs shown in the row "Admin/Supplies". That \$400,000+ of existing general fund expenditures is attributable to, and thus shown, as part of the program.

Table A

Cost Recovery Projections					
Cost center	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Collections@ 28.5%*	\$9,697,281	\$9,971,394	\$10,332,188	\$10,712,128	\$11,112,181
Falck Contact	\$7,143,621	\$6,789,068	\$6,405,947	\$6,595,983	\$6,688,999
Billing Services	\$315,161	\$324,070	\$335,796	\$348,144	\$361,146

Admin/supplies	\$2,094,952	\$2,211,823	\$2,329,050	\$2,452,490	\$2,582,472
Net cost recovery	\$143,547	\$646,433	\$1,261,395	\$1,315,511	\$1,479,564

*Medical CPI @ 5.3%

Table B

Admin/Supplies Cost Breakdown	
ALS Supplies (MO2209)	\$ 136,000.00
AP Triton Consulting	\$ 72,000.00
Capital Replacement = 10%	\$ 127,880.29
Community Paramedic	\$ 165,535.00
Contingency for Additional Ambulance Unit Hours (Disaster/Pandemic/Call Surge)	\$ 437,869.07
Dispatch Services	\$ 295,962.00
EMS Coordinator	\$ 160,894.00
Licensing for Documentation (ImageTrend)	\$ 37,782.00
Medical Director	\$ 100,000.00
Medical Supplies (McKesson/LifeAssist)	\$ 198,492.00
Replacement Lucas	\$ 20,000.00
Replacement Monitor	\$ 36,000.00
Stryker Lease Cost	\$ 186,537.64
Wellness Program	\$ 120,000.00
Total Cost	\$ 2,094,952.00

Ambulance Fee

The Oxnard ambulance transport rates were developed utilizing an estimated payer mix and call volumes provided by AP Triton Consulting, LLC and actual Oxnard ambulance transport data from 2017-2019. The estimates included in this discussion assume a compassionate care collections policy, a conservative 28.5% collections rate and do not include any supplemental government reimbursements. Average ambulance rates assume oxygen utilization for approximately 50% of calls with an estimated distance of 5 miles per transport. The Oxnard ambulance rates make no assumptions of year over year increases in call volumes.

Unlike typical healthcare billing, EMS billing is highly simplified. Itemized charges are limited and cost recovery for treatment or supplies used in the prehospital setting are very limited.

The City's proposed ambulance transportation fee closely mirrors the County of Ventura ambulance rate structure. In this structure the ambulance base rate is a single rate that includes all services and supplies with itemized charges for mileage and oxygen administration only.

City of Oxnard Ambulance Fees

City of Oxnard Emergency Ambulance Advanced Life Support (ALS) Rate		
Service	Charge	Definition
Advanced Life Support Base Rate	\$ 2,161.72	Transport from the site of illness or injury or provision of ALS services.*
Mileage	\$ 60.00	Rate per mile from the point of pick up to the destination or hospital. **
Oxygen Administration	\$ 155.00	Charge for administration of oxygen and related supply or adjuncts.
*Medical CPI @ 5.3% per year		
**Mileage charge is prorated among patients if more than one is transported in the same unit.		
No charge is made for dispatch that is canceled or that results in no provision of prehospital care		

Medical Consumer Price Index (MCPI) calculations are projected at 5.3%. MCPI increases have historically outpaced United States CPI increases. Per the Bureau of Labor statistics, long term MCPI averages 5.26% with current average growth rate at 6.09%. Indexes such as Energy (Fuel) and Transportation (motor vehicle) CPI also contribute to the overall cost of delivering services.

Ambulance Base rates fluctuate between cities and counties. This fluctuation factors in the real cost of providing EMS services to a specific city, county or region. For comparison the City of Chula Vista and the County of Ventura's ambulance rates are included below.

City of Chula Vista Ambulance Rates

City of Chula Vista			
Base Rate	Average Mileage	Oxygen	Night
\$2,800	\$292.15	\$104.70	\$76.60

On March 23rd the Ventura County Board of Supervisors approved increases to Ambulance Base rates.

County of Ventura Ambulance Rates Effective July 1, 2021

Pursuant to Ventura County Ordinance Code Section 2423-3, the following constitutes the schedule of maximum rates that may be charged, effective July 1, 2021

EMERGENCY AMBULANCE ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT RATES

Charge	2021-22	Definition
Advanced Life Support Base Rate	\$2,253.00	Transport from site of illness or injury to hospital as the result of an emergency request or for provision of ALS level services during any request for service.
Mileage	\$60.00	Rate per mile from point of pickup to hospital. This charge is pro rated among the patients if more than one (1) patient is transported.
Oxygen Administration	\$155.00	Charge made to patient for administration of oxygen and related adjuncts.
No charge is made for dispatch that is cancelled or that results in no provision of prehospital care.		

When compared to the City of Chula Vista, The Oxnard ambulance base rates are lower by \$638.28, and do not include time of service fees, or first responder fees. Oxnard ambulance transport base rates are also \$91.28 lower than the County of Ventura. The County of Ventura reviews and adjusts rates annually for its contracts with its most recent annual base rate increase totaling \$415.00.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This agenda item supports Public Safety strategy. The purpose of the Public Safety strategy is to restore and modernize the delivery of public safety services to provide for the safety of our neighborhoods and health of our community.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The five year revenue projection for Ambulance Transportation Fees are as follows:

Fiscal Year	Projected Revenue
2021-2022	\$7,272,961*
2022-2023	\$9,971,394
2023-2024	\$10,332,188
2024-2025	\$10,712,128
2025-2026	\$11,112,181
Total	\$49,400,852

* 9 months of collections, due to projected 90-day lag between the start of operations (July 1) and actual billing and collection

Prepared by: Jaime Villa, EMS Coordinator

ATTACHMENTS

1. Ambulance transportation fees resolution
2. Ambulance Transportation Fee Resolution Exhibit A
3. Ambulance Transportation Fee Calculations
4. Ambulance Rate Slides

CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OXNARD

RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OXNARD ESTABLISHING
THE AMBULANCE TRANSPORTATION FEES.

WHEREAS, the City entered into a Joint Powers Agreement ("JPA") created by the County of Ventura (the "County") and all constituent cities in the early 1970s, implementing a coordinated and uniform system of regulating, licensing, and contracting for ambulance services wherein the County would jointly exercise the authority of each JPA member to regulate ambulance operations in their respective boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the City has contracted for ambulance services through the JPA since prior to June 1, 1980 through the present, and the City's entry into the JPA did not relinquish its Health & Safety Code Section 1797.201 rights; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 2020, pursuant to section 7 subsection c of the JPA, the City withdrew from the JPA by providing one hundred eighty (180) days' written notice to all pertinent parties; and

WHEREAS, the City's withdrawal from the JPA is effective on July 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, on April 20, 2021, the City entered into an agreement (A-8317) with Falck Mobile Health Corporation ("Falck") to provide ambulance transport services (the "Services"); and

WHEREAS, Falck will begin providing the Services on July 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the City may impose fees for certain services, including Ambulance Transportation Fees (the "Fees"); and

WHEREAS, Government Code sections 66016 through 66019 establish procedures for adopting the Fees; and

WHEREAS, the Fees must be adopted following notice and a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Government Code section 6062a, notice was published in Vida Newspaper on May 13, 2021 and May 20, 2021 setting forth the time and place of the public hearing for the adoption of the Fees; and

WHEREAS, the City Council conducted a duly noticed public hearing on May 25, 2021, at which time the public was invited to participate as part of the regularly scheduled meeting prior to adoption of this Resolution; and

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6. Severability. If any section, subsection, subdivision, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution or any part hereof is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this Resolution or any part thereof. The City Council hereby declares that it would have passed each section, subsection, subdivision, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase hereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more section, subsection, subdivision, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 18th day of May, 2021, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

John C. Zaragoza, Mayor

ATTEST:

Rose Chaparro, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Stephen M. Fischer, City Attorney

EXHIBIT A

City of Oxnard Emergency Ambulance Advanced Life Support (ALS) Rate		
Service	Charge	Definition
Advanced Life Support Base Rate	\$ 2161.72	Transport from the site of illness or injury or provision of ALS services.*
Mileage	\$ 60.00	Rate per mile from the point of pick up to the destination or hospital.**
Oxygen Administration	\$ 155.00	Charge for administration of oxygen and related supply or adjuncts.
*Medical CPI @ 5.3% per year		
**Mileage charge is prorated among patients if more than one is transported in the same unit.		
No charge is made for dispatch that is canceled or that results in no provision of prehospital care		

Cost Breakdown for Fees

The City of Oxnard ("City"), as a H&S Code 1797.201 provider, has the authority to establish their own rates for services provided by the City. However, the City must comply with Prop 26 which defines the difference between "fees" and "taxes". Unlike other fees a city may charge for, EMS falls under a different scenario as the reimbursement is based partially on preset government payor's rates that fall short of the actual cost. This is the case for all healthcare reimbursement across the country. As such, the City can cost shift the total cost of services less the government payors to the commercial insurance and non-insured payor categories.

The City has the option of using the County's approved rates, however, the County's rates, when applied to the City's cost of services, would exceed the cost and could be construed as a tax. Therefore, the City's rate is slightly lower than what the County has approved for their contract provider.

The cost of services for EMS includes the ambulance subcontract with Falck in the amount of \$7.1 million and City's costs which include the EMS division, Supplies, Monitors, Billing, and capital replacement plan.

All calculations have been rounded to the nearest dollar. The City, as a best practice, should consider depositing any additional revenues to a reserve fund.

Cost Center	Cost for services
Contracts and Supplies	\$1,033,753
EMS Administrative Staff	\$822,609
Cardiac Monitors @ 5 yrs.	\$116,254
Capitol Replacement Plan	\$127,880
Falck Contract	\$7,143,621
Total Cost of PHEMS	\$9,244,118
Rates for Services	
Base Rate	\$2,161.72
Mileage / 5mi.	\$60 / \$300
Oxygen / @ 50% usage	\$155 / \$77.5
Average billed amount	\$2,539.22 per transport
Financial Estimates/Projections	
Total transports @ 13,500	\$34,279,470
Collections @ 28%	\$9,598,252
PHEMS Cost	\$9,244,118
Billing services @ 3.25%	\$311,943
Net Collections	\$42,191

AMBULANCE TRANSPORT RATE AND FEE SCHEDULE

Alexander Hamilton, Fire Chief

That the Committee recommend that City Council:

1. Receive a presentation and public comments regarding proposed new fees for ambulance transport services;
2. Adopt the resolution for Ambulance Transportation Fees entitled “A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OXNARD ADOPTING THE AMBULANCE TRANSPORTATION FEES”.

That the that City Council:

1. Receive a presentation and public comments regarding proposed new fees for ambulance transport services;
2. Adopt the resolution for Ambulance Transportation Fees entitled “A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OXNARD ADOPTING THE AMBULANCE TRANSPORTATION FEES”.

How are Emergency Medical Services funded?

General Fund & Measure O

- Fire Department suppression budget
 - Pays for First Responder (FR) Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Paramedic Services

User Fees

- Commercial, and government insurance plans
 - Pays for ambulance transport and some limited “treat no transport”

Commercial Ambulance services trace their history to the late 1940s and early 1950s.



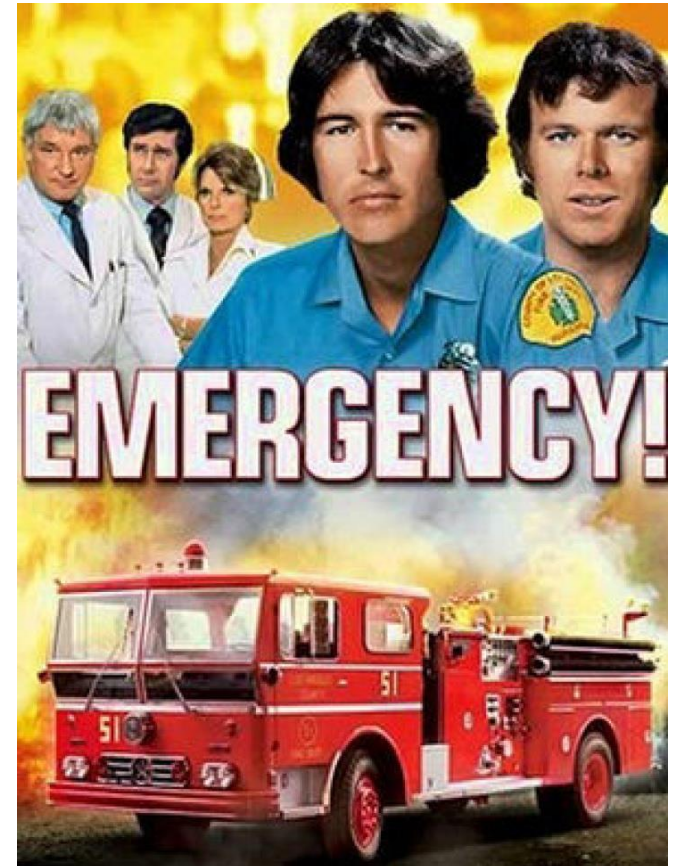
Mortuary Companies



Hospital Based



- Uniform standards for ambulances and cost recovery did not begin to take shape until the early 1970s.
- Over time EMS matured, leading to improvements in cost recovery.



Fees for ambulance transport are paid by the users of the service after the care is rendered and transport has been completed

Ambulance rates are determined by evaluating several factors, some of the larger influencing factors are:

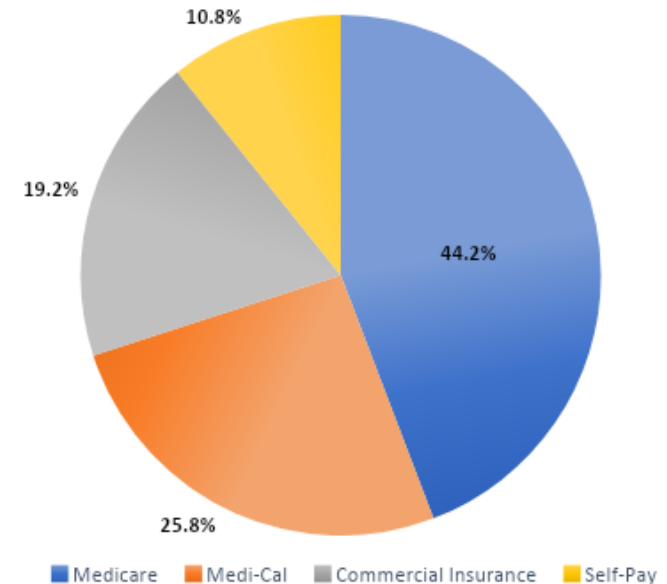
- Payor mix
- Call volume
- Service level desired

The payor mix is the ratio of insurance types held by the residents within a community

- Reimbursement per transport varies greatly based on insurance type.
- Typically commercial insurances have the highest levels of reimbursement.

Payor mix within Oxnard is favorable

<u>Cost Center</u>	<u>Percentage of Transports</u>	<u>Total Transports</u>
Medicare	44.2 %	5,533
Medi-Cal	25.8 %	3,229
Commercial Insurance	19.2 %	2,403
Private Pay	<u>10.8 %</u>	<u>1,352</u>
Totals	100 %	12,517



The ambulance fee structure comprises the real and projected cost associated with the delivery of ambulance transportation and Emergency Medical Services to the City.

Costs are projected over five (5) years, and include:

- Falck Mobile Health Corp. agreement A-8317
- Wittman Enterprises, LLC agreement A-8299
 - Administrative/Supply expenditures

Five Year Projection

Cost Recovery Projections					
TABLE A					
Cost center	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Collections@ 28.5%*	\$9,697,281	\$9,971,394	\$10,332,188	\$10,712,128	\$11,112,181
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Billing Services	\$315,161	\$324,070	\$335,796	\$348,144	\$361,146
Admin/supplies	\$2,094,952	\$2,211,823	\$2,329,050	\$2,452,490	\$2,582,472
Net cost recovery	\$143,547	\$646,433	\$1,261,395	\$1,315,511	\$1,479,564

- The City's Fire Department suppression division General Fund is already paying more than \$400,000 of the pre-hospital emergency medical service costs shown in the row labeled "Admin/supplies".
- That \$400,000+ of existing General Fund expenditures is attributable to, and thus shown as part of the ambulance program.
- Administrative/Supply line is further broken down in Table B.

Breakdown of Admin/Supplies

Table B	
Admin/Supplies Cost Breakdown	
Wellness Program	\$ 120,000.00
Medical Director	\$ 100,000.00
Medical supplies (McKesson/LifeAssist)	\$ 198,492.00
ALS supplies (MO2209)	\$ 136,000.00
Licensing for Documentation (ImageTrend)	\$ 37,782.00
Dispatch Services	\$ 295,962.00
Replacement Lucas	\$ 20,000.00
Replacement Monitor	\$ 36,000.00
Cap replacement = 10%	\$ 127,880.29
Community Paramedic	\$ 165,535.00
Stryker Lease Cost	\$ 186,537.64
EMS Coordinator	\$ 160,894.00
Contingency for Additional Ambulance Unit Hours (Disaster/Pandemic/Call Surge)	\$ 509,869.07
Total cost for Admin/Supplies	\$ 2,094,952.00

Ambulance rates are developed utilizing the projected call volumes, payor mix, and desired service levels

Projected Oxnard cost recovery assumes the proposed base rate, plus five average transport miles and oxygen utilization on fifty percent of all calls.

City of Oxnard Emergency Ambulance Advanced Life Support (ALS) Rate		
Service	Charge	Definition
Advanced Life Support Base Rate	\$ 2161.72	Transport from the site of illness or injury or provision of ALS services.*
Mileage	\$ 60.00	Rate per mile from the point of pick up to the destination or hospital.**
Oxygen Administration	\$ 155.00	Charge for administration of oxygen and related supply or adjuncts.
*Medical CPI @ 5.3% per year		
**Mileage charge is prorated among patients if more than one is transported in the same unit.		
No charge is made for dispatch that is canceled or that results in no provision of prehospital care		

When compared to a similar city as and the County of Ventura, Oxnard ambulance base rates and itemized fees are less expensive.

Agency	Base Rate	Avg. Mileage	Oxygen	Night
City of Chula Vista	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 292.15	\$ 104.70	\$ 76.60
County of Ventura	\$ 2,253.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 155.00	
City of Oxnard	\$ 2,161.72	\$ 60.00	\$ 155.00	

The new Oxnard ambulance rates are projected to produce cost savings

Base Rates	
Ventura County	Oxnard
\$2,253.00	\$2,161.72
Projected savings per transport \$91.28	

- The Oxnard rate structure includes an annual Medical Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase of 5.3%. Current rate growth is 6.09%
- Rates also account for a compassionate care billing policy
- Cost recovery **does not** rely on supplemental government reimbursement

Projected five year net revenues available for EMS reinvestment

Fiscal Year	Projection
2021-2022	\$122,547
2022-2023	\$656,433
2023-2024	\$1,261,395
2024-2025	\$1,315,511
2025-2026	\$1,479,564



QUESTIONS



**FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
AGENDA REPORT
REPORTS
AGENDA ITEM NO. C.2**

DATE: May 11, 2021
TO: Finance & Governance Committee
FROM: Kevin Riper, Chief Financial Officer, (805) 385-7475, kevin.riper@oxnard.org
SUBJECT: Proposed City Council Policy for Internal Control Integrated Framework - Information and Communication.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Finance and Governance Committee provide feedback on a proposed City Council Policy for Internal Control Integrated Framework - Information and Communication and recommend City Council approve the proposed policy.

Please click the following link to view the required Measure M pre-recorded presentation video: <https://youtu.be/IPoYjyJp8Qk>

BACKGROUND

The City Council recognizes the need to eliminate or reduce risk based on reasonable standards and level of effort. Proper internal controls must be developed and implemented to safeguard assets and ensure the City achieves its operational objectives. The responsibility to develop those controls must be established and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

DISCUSSION

There are nine recommended policies associated with the Internal Control - Integrated Framework (ICIF). Each policy is associated with one of the five Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) components.

On September 1, 2020, the City Council adopted the ICIF and the first four implementing policies under the COSO Control Environment component:

- 1) FPOL 1.01 Adoption of Internal Control - Integrated Framework
- 2) FPOL 1.02 Adoption of Internal Control Oversight Responsibilities
- 3) FPOL 1.03 Finance and Governance Committee Duties and Responsibilities
- 4) FPOL 1.04 Assignment of Authority and Responsibility for Achieving Operational, Reporting and Compliance Objectives

On January 5, 2021, the City Council adopted the fifth implementing policy under the COSO Risk Assessment

component:

5) FPOL 1.05 City Council's Risk Assessment Responsibilities

On March 2, 2021, the City Council adopted the sixth implementing policy under the COSO Control Activities component:

6) FPOL 1.06 City Council's Development and Implementation of Internal Controls

The next COSO component is Information and Communication, with a corresponding proposed implementing policy FPOL 1.07 City Council's Commitment to Transparent and Complete Information and Communication. This seventh implementing policy defines the City Council's internal control activities as they relate to the information and communication of internal controls. The draft policy reaffirms the City Council's commitment to hold management accountable for providing full and transparent financial information to the public.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This agenda item supports the Organizational Effectiveness strategy. The purpose of the Organizational Effectiveness strategy is to reinforce, stabilize, improve, and strengthen the organizational foundation of the City in order to build a modern, high-functioning City government that effectively and efficiently supports the operating departments in providing high-quality services and programs for our residents and businesses.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

Prepared by: Kevin Riper, Chief Financial Officer

ATTACHMENTS

1. FPOL 1.07 Commitment to Transparent and Complete Information and Communication v.2
2. 5.11.21 FGC - ICIF - Information and Communication Presentation v.2

	City of Oxnard Finance Policy		
TITLE Commitment to Transparent and Complete Information and Communication			PAGE 1 of 3
NUMBER FPOL 1.07	VERSION 1.0	DOCUMENT OWNER Kevin Riper	EFFECTIVE DATE 6/15/2021
PROCEDURE OWNER Kevin Riper	TITLE Chief Financial Officer	(Signature)	DATE 5/11/2021

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1.1 The City Council is committed to providing full and transparent financial information to the public.
- 1.1.2 The City Council expects management to implement an information and communications framework that supports operational, reporting and compliance objectives. The products of the City's information and communication systems are expected to be of sufficient quality and usefulness to enable the successful implementation of the Internal Control – Integrated Framework (ICIF) and provide reasonable assurance to the Council that its goals and the City's operating, reporting and compliance objectives will be achieved.
- 1.1.3 The City Council directs the City Manager to implement the necessary communications protocols and information sharing processes within the organization and to elected officials and the public.
- 1.1.4 The City's business communications shall conform to the standards established by the City Council through policies documented in the Personnel Rules and Regulations and the City's Administrative Manual.
- 1.1.5 Elected and appointed officials and all employees shall demonstrate ethical behavior, competence, courtesy and respect in daily actions.

2.0 SCOPE

The policy applies to the City of Oxnard organization and benefits the City of Oxnard community by creating standards and expectations for information and communication based on ethical practices, competency and accountability that require courtesy and respect consistent with the City's Personnel Rules and Regulations.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1. The City Council recognizes the importance of effective, accurate and comprehensive financial information for informed decision making. The community and the City organization expect the City Council to provide policy leadership supportive of ongoing and transparent communication regarding the City's financial health and long-term sustainability. Failure to identify and address financial reporting and compliance issues can

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result in significant financial losses, create potential liabilities, or force unplanned use of resources.

Information and communication is critical to implement the ICIF and to achieve the City's strategic goals. Timely and accurate information is critical to the City's ability to adapt to changes in law, to effectively implement the ICIF, and ensure compliance with governmental accounting standards. This requires leadership and a culture that encourages trust, and values open and honest communication. Effective communication based on courtesy and respect is expected of all elected officials, employees and managers.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Transparent	Easy to perceive or detect.
Internal Control – Integrated Framework (ICIF)	A system of internal control designed to address three main categories of internal control objectives which are 1. Operations 2. Reporting and 3. Compliance.

5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
City Council	Exercise its oversight duties, working with the City Manager, City Attorney and other officials, to obtain and use relevant, quality information to support the functioning of internal control.
Finance and Governance Committee (audit committee)	As defined in FPOL 1.03 Internal Control – Finance and Governance Committee Duties and Responsibilities as it relates to the Finance and Governance Committee's responsibilities.
City Manager	Responsible for carrying out policies along with managing the organization and ensuring accountability for performance of all employees under his or her direction.

CITY OF OXNARD REFERENCES

FPOL 1.01 Adoption of Internal Control – Integrated Framework
FPOL 1.02 Adoption of Internal Control Oversight Responsibilities
FPOL 1.03 Internal Control – Finance and Governance Committee Duties and Responsibilities
FPOL 1.04 Assignment of Authority and Responsibility for Achieving Operational, Reporting, and Compliance Objectives

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FPOL 1.05 City Council's Risk Assessment Responsibilities
 FPOL 1.06 Development and Implementation of Internal Controls

6.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Summary of Changes	Reason for Changes
1.0	New policy	New policy

Proposed City Council Policy for Internal Control Integrated Framework - Information and Communication

Finance and Governance Committee

Kevin Riper, Chief Financial Officer
May 11, 2021

That the Finance and Governance Committee provide feedback on a proposed City Council Policy for Internal Control Integrated Framework - Information and Communication and recommend City Council approve the proposed policy.

- Policies Associated with the Internal Control - Integrated Framework (ICIF)
- Adoption of a Policy for Information and Communication of Internal Controls

Policies Associated with the Internal Control - Integrated Framework (ICIF)

COSO Category	City Council Policies
A. Control Environment Adopted 9/1/20 Previously in place	1. Adoption of Internal Control - Integrated Framework 2. Adoption of Internal Control Oversight Responsibilities 3. Finance and Governance Committee Duties and Responsibilities 4. Assignment of Authority and Responsibility for Achieving Operational, Reporting and Compliance Objectives 5. Performance Evaluations of City Manager and City Attorney
B. Risk Assessment Adopted 1/5/21	6. City Council's Risk Assessment Responsibilities
C. Control Activities Adopted 3/2/21	7. Development and Implementation of Internal Controls
 D. Information and Communication	8. Commitment to Transparent and Complete Information and Communication
E. Monitoring Activities	9. Creation of a Monitoring System

- Implementing policy defines City Council's internal control activities as they relate to the information and communication of internal controls.
- Draft policy reaffirms the City Council's commitment to hold management accountable for providing full and transparent financial information to the public.

Timeline	Task
Spring 2021	Engage consulting firm to perform a comprehensive risk assessment
Fall 2021	Bring last 8 th and Final ICIF policy to F&GC and City Council (Monitoring Activities)

That the Finance and Governance Committee provide feedback on a proposed City Council Policy for Internal Control Integrated Framework - Information and Communication and recommend City Council approve the proposed policy.



**FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
AGENDA REPORT
REPORTS
AGENDA ITEM NO. C.3**

DATE: May 11, 2021

TO: Finance & Governance Committee

FROM: Craig Beck, Interim Public Works Director, (805) 385-8055, craig.beck@oxnard.org

SUBJECT: Utility Rates Assistance Program (Project Assist) Update.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Finance and Governance Committee recommend that the City Council:

1. Adopt a resolution for the Utility Ratepayers Assistance Program (Project Assist) for Fiscal Year 2021-22 to assist eligible Oxnard residents and authorize staff to grant financial relief equal to a monthly \$15.00 maximum credit per utility bill charged to customers who meet the eligibility requirements discussed in this staff report; and
2. Authorize staff to direct up to \$145,000 from penalty fees charged to City utility customers who pay their bills late to fund the Utility Ratepayers Assistance Program (Project Assist) in Fiscal Year 2021-22.

Please click the following link to view the required Measure M pre-recorded presentation video: https://youtu.be/Pu_hTwXB2W0

BACKGROUND

Project Assist is the City of Oxnard's rate assistance program for eligible solid waste, water and wastewater utility customers. This program was initially approved by City Council in May 2017 and has since been renewed annually. Project Assist grants financial relief equal to a monthly \$15.00 maximum credit per utility bill charged to customers who meet the eligibility requirements. Eligibility for Project Assist is determined by the applicants' acceptance into the Southern California Edison (SCE) or The Gas Company's California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) programs. Table 1 reflects the annual funding and participation rates for Project Assist.

Table 1

Fiscal Year	Participants	Utility Rate Assistance	Utility Penalty Fees
FY 2017-18	392	\$29,450	\$1.14 million
FY 2018-19	548	\$50,580	\$1.34 million

FY 2019-20	531	\$77,490	\$1.01 million
FY 2020-21*	750	\$120,435	\$0.00 (through February 2021)

*Actual data for 10 months

Since its inception, the availability of the program is capped by the total amount of funding approved by Council each year and applicants are screened on a first-come, first-served basis. Customers can file applications via email or through the U.S. Mail any time throughout the program year. Prior to the Covid pandemic, applications were submitted in person. This method is suspended and remains unavailable until further notice.

Approximately 12 hours per month of staff time is used in Project Assist to manage, process the applications, establish the credit billing process, and assign the discount rate to each eligible customer. Year 5 of this program will be implemented July 1, 2021.

DISCUSSION

For Fiscal Year 2021-22, staff is requesting to direct \$145,000 from late penalty fees to the Project Assist Program. A \$145,000 allocation for Year 5 would allow for approximately 800 eligible utility customers to participate in the program.

Upon initial approval of Project Assist in 2017, Council requested staff to return annually with an update on the program. Program outreach has relied on a multi-faceted social media approach including utility bill inserts, City website posting, press releases and word-of-mouth. Project Assist participant demographics are diverse and range from age 18 to 101. If customers participate in the program one year and remain eligible for the next year, they are still required to submit an application. This is to ensure that participants remain eligible each program year.

In the current Fiscal Year 2020-21 (Year 4), staff saw an increase in applicants after three (3) utility bill inserts in August 2020, November 2020 and February of 2021. Additionally, the COVID pandemic has further affected the local economy and likely has contributed to an increase in customers applying for the program. Below are some statistics related to applications for Fiscal Year 2020-21 (Year 4):

- Project Assist has accepted 750 Oxnard residents during the first 9 months from July 2020 through April 2021
- Applicants have increased by 219 over the prior Fiscal Year 2019-2020 during the first ten months - a 29% growth
- New applicants account for 42% while returning enrollees account for 58%
- Approximately 30% applied via U.S. Mail

MUNICIPAL RATE EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Staff tracked one other jurisdiction in California that is currently using penalty fees to fund a utility rate assistance program. The City of Ventura directs \$50,000 annually from penalty fees to fund a residential Water Customer Assistance Program. They have 498 participants with a cap of 600. The discount is dependent on the size of the meter at the property. Discounts are 50% of the cost shown on the water bill as a service charge up to approximately \$100 annually.

Port Hueneme, City of Camarillo, City of Davis, and City of Tracy have utility rate assistance programs but are not funded by late payment penalty fees. The City of Port Hueneme funds their utility rate assistance program from an interest rate revenue fund. The City of Camarillo funds their utility rate assistance program from a voter approved special assessment fund. The City of Davis funds their utility rate assistance program from a roundup amount donation option from a utility bill fund. The City of Tracy funds their utility rate assistance program from their general fund. Staff did not find a jurisdiction that has plans to enhance their utility rate assistance program due to Covid pandemic.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This agenda item supports the Quality of Life strategy. The purpose of the Quality of Life strategy is to restore and increase quality services and programs that enrich Oxnard's diverse community, promotes safe neighborhoods, encourages community engagement, and supports our residents in their efforts to improve their quality of life.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of approving the Utility Rates Assistance Program (Project Assist) for Year 5 in FY 2021-22 is \$145,000 from late penalty fees plus staff resources to continue to operate the program. During Fiscal Year 2019-20, which included the first 3 ½ months of the Covid pandemic, the Department of Billing & Licensing collected a total of \$1,002,039 in delinquent fees and charges on behalf of the three utility enterprise funds (solid waste, water and wastewater). Of that amount, no more than \$145,000 was allocated toward Project Assist. Penalty fees can be used for Project Assist in fiscal years other than the one in which they were collected. No budget adjustment is necessary.

Prepared by: Todd Vasquez-Housley, Environmental Resources Division Manager, Brian Yanez, Assistant Public Works Director

ATTACHMENTS

1. Project Assist Resolution
2. Project Assist Powerpoint

CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OXNARD

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OXNARD ADOPTING A
RATEPAYERS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-22

WHEREAS, the City of Oxnard provides water, wastewater, and solid waste services to residents and businesses within the community; and

WHEREAS, clean water and good sanitation are essential to public health and safety and improve the quality of life of residents; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to assist eligible low-income utility customers with financial assistance to help pay their monthly utility bills; and

WHEREAS, ratepayers must meet the certain eligibility criteria to receive the financial assistance from the City; and

WHEREAS, the City may fund a ratepayers assistance program using late fee payments; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted a ratepayers assistance program in 2017 and now desires to extend this assistance available to eligible ratepayers for Fiscal Year 2021-22.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Oxnard resolves:

1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct.
2. Adoption of Program. The Ratepayers Assistance Program (Program) that is further explained in Exhibit A, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference, is hereby adopted. The City Manager is authorized to take all administrative actions necessary to implement the Program and to make non-substantive modifications that may be necessary for the Program's operation.
3. If any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution or exhibit thereto is determined to be invalid, illegal or unconstitutional by a decision or order of any court or agency of competent jurisdiction, then such decision or order will not affect the validity and enforceability of the remaining portions of this Resolution. The City Council declares that it would have adopted the Resolution, and each exhibit, section, sentence, clause or phrase thereof, regardless of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases be declared invalid or unconstitutional.
4. CEQA. According to Section 15378 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) defines a "project" as "the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment." The term does not apply to general policy and procedure making that does not have the potential for resulting in a direct, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect, physical change in the environment. The Program is a policy and procedure making that does not have the potential for resulting in a direct, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect, physical change in the environment as it does not build, install,

demolish or otherwise affect land use. Since this is not considered a “project” under CEQA, no further environmental review is required.

5. Upon the effective date of this resolution, Resolution No. _____ is hereby repealed

PASSED AND ADOPTED this ____th day of _____, 2021, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

John C. Zaragoza, Mayor

ATTEST:

Rose Chaparro, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Stephen M. Fischer, City Attorney

EXHIBIT A

Ratepayers Assistance Program (Program)

1. Program Description. The City shall provide the Ratepayers Assistance Program (Program) to eligible ratepayers in the form of financial assistance to be applied directly to the ratepayers' monthly bill.

The proposed financial assistance amount is subject only to the restrictions of adequate Program funding.

Funding. Approve a Rates Assistance Program for Utility Bills to assist Oxnard residents and authorize staff to grant financial relief equal to \$15.00 of the monthly City of Oxnard utility bill charge for customers meeting the eligibility requirements described herein effective July 1, 2021; Authorize staff to direct \$145,000 annually from penalty fees to fund the Utility Rate Assistance Program for Utility Bills Fiscal Year 2021-22 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022) to assist residential customers.

2. Notices. Community outreach efforts will be used to notify the public about the Program and the positive impact it will have on the community by helping to ensure the eligible ratepayers have access to this vital resource.

3. Application. Eligible ratepayers wishing to participate in the Program must complete a written application and declaration of eligibility. Based on this application, City staff will determine whether the ratepayer is eligible to participate in the Program.

4. Eligibility. Funds shall only be applied to utility accounts with the City on behalf of ratepayers who meet all the following criteria.

5. Each household or single ratepayer may be eligible for financial assistance equal to \$15.00 of the monthly utility charge for customers who qualify for financial assistance.

TWO WAYS TO QUALIFY

1. If a person in the household receives benefits from any of these programs:

- Medi-Cal / Medicaid
- Medi-Cal for Families A & B
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
- CalWORKs (TANF)¹ or Tribal TANF
- Head Start Income Eligible - Tribal Only
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- CalFresh (Food Stamps)
- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Includes Welfare-to-Work

2. Total median income for all persons in your household meets the following income guidelines:

1-2	\$33,820
3	\$42,660
4	\$51,500
5	\$60,340
6	\$69,180
7	\$78,020
8	\$86,860

*Includes current household median income from all sources before deductions.

For each additional person in the household \$8,840 will be added. These income guidelines will be updated annually based on the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) eligibility criteria for a low-income family.

Total household income is from all revenues, from all household members, from whatever sources derived, including but not limited to: wages, salaries, interest, dividends, spousal and child support payments, public assistance payments, Social Security and pensions, rental income, income from self-employment and all employment-related non-cash income.

If a customer is recently unemployed, the household income will be calculated from the date of unemployment. All other provisions on determining income, described above, still apply.

Conditions for Participation: Eligibility in the CARE (California Alternative Rates for Energy) Program with Southern California Edison or Southern California Gas

- The utility bill must be in the name of the ratepayer and the address of the ratepayer must be the primary address.
- The customer cannot be claimed as a dependent on another person's income tax return other than a spouse.
- A customer must recertify an application when requested.
- A customer must notify the City of Oxnard within 30 days if no longer qualifies for assistance.
- A customer may be asked to verify eligibility for CARE, the ratepayers' assistance program.

Verification of eligibility can be any of the following forms of documentation:

- a. Proof of Residency: rental or lease agreements; mortgage statements; property tax bills.

- b. Proof of Age and Identification: Current California driver's license, passport or other government-issued identification.
- c. Proof of Income and Head of Household Status: Federal income tax returns.
- d. Proof of Accountholder Status and Usage: Most recent utility bill.
- e. Must reside in the applicable single-family residential structure, or a condominium or townhome unit or apartment or mobile home park and be the residential utility account holder of record for utility services at the date of application or the designated head of household of the applicable residential location;
- f. Must meet City water usage qualifications by using less than an average of 9 hundred cubic feet (HCF) of water per month over the prior twelve months or from the date of initiation if account is less than twelve months;

6. Verification. City staff may verify Program eligibility through the following forms of documentation:

Proof of Residency: California driver's license or other government issued identification; lease agreements; mortgage statements; rent/mortgage receipt; homeowners insurance; property tax bill; employment records; utility bill.

Current California driver's license, passport or other government-issued identification.

Proof of Income and Head of Household Status: Federal income tax returns.

Proof of Account Holder Status and Usage: Most recent utility bill.

7. Only one discount shall be applied per household.

8. First-come, first-served. The City will apply existing funding for this Program on a first-come, first-served basis. The City cannot guarantee that at any time there will be adequate funds for all eligible applicants.

9. Annual Review. The Program and all applications shall be reviewed on an annual basis for continued funding resources and each ratepayer's eligibility standards.

Utility Rates Assistance Program (Project Assist) Update

Finance and Governance Committee
May 11, 2021

City Council
June 1, 2021

Jay Duncan, Call Center Manager
Public Works Department, Environmental Resources Division



That the Finance and Governance Committee recommend that the City Council:

1. Adopt a resolution for the Utility Ratepayers Assistance Program (Project Assist) for Fiscal Year 2021-22 to assist eligible Oxnard residents and authorize staff to grant financial relief equal to a monthly \$15.00 maximum credit per utility bill charged to customers who meet the eligibility requirements discussed in this staff report; and
2. Authorize staff to direct up to \$145,000 from late penalty fees charged to current City utility customers who pay their bills late to fund the Utility Ratepayers Assistance Program (Project Assist) in Fiscal Year 2021-22.

PROJECT ASSIST

- The program is for eligible solid waste, water and wastewater utility customers
- Initially approved by City Council in May 2017 - renewed annually
- \$15.00 maximum credit per utility bill charged to customers who meet the eligibility requirements
- Eligibility is determined by the applicants' acceptance into the Southern California Edison (SCE) or The Gas Company's California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) programs

Table 1 - Annual Funding and Participation in Project Assist

Fiscal Year	Participants	Utility Rate Assistance	Utility Penalty Fees
FY 2017-18	392	\$29,450	\$1.14 million
FY 2018-19	548	\$50,580	\$1.34 million
FY 2019-20	531	\$77,490	\$1.01 million
FY 2020-21*	750	\$120,435	\$0.00 (through February 2021)

*Actual data for 10 months

- Since its inception, the availability of the program is capped by the total amount of funding approved by Council each year
- Applicants are screened on a first-come, first-served basis
- Customers can file applications via email or through the U.S. Mail any time throughout the program year
- Prior to the Covid pandemic, applications were submitted in person - suspended and remains unavailable until further notice
- Year 5 of this program will be implemented July 1, 2021 if approved by Council

- Staff is requesting to direct \$145,000 from late penalty fees
- \$145,000 allocation would allow approximately 800 eligible utility customers
- Program outreach has relied on a multi-faceted social media approach - utility bill inserts, City website posting, press releases and word-of-mouth
- Demographics are diverse and range from age 18 to 101

- Customers must apply each program year - ensures participants remain eligible
- Increase in applicants after three (3) utility bill inserts in August 2020, November 2020 and February of 2021
- Appears that COVID pandemic has further affected the local economy and likely has contributed to an increase in applicants

Fiscal Year 2020-21 Statistics

- Accepted 750 applicants for the first 10 months from July 2020 through April 2021
- Applicants have increased by 219 over the prior program year - a 29% growth
- New applicants account for 42% while returning enrollees account for 58%
- Approximately 30% applied via U.S. Mail

MUNICIPAL RATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Ventura

- Directs \$50,000 annually from penalty fees to fund a residential Water Customer Assistance Program
- 498 participants with a cap of 600
- Discount is dependent on the size of the meter at the property
- Discounts are 50% of the cost shown on the water bill as a service charge up to approximately \$100 annually

Port Hueneme - Funds through an interest rate revenue fund

Camarillo - Funds through a voter approved special assessment fund

City of Davis - Funds through a roundup donation option from a utility bill fund

City of Tracy - Funds through their general fund

- FY 2021-22 (Year 5) a total of \$145,000 of late penalty fees will be used to fund the program
- Fiscal Year 2019-20, encompassed 3 ½ months of the Covid pandemic, the Department of Billing & Licensing collected a total of \$1,002,039 in delinquent fees and charges on behalf of the three utility enterprise funds (solid waste, water and wastewater)
- Penalty fees can be used for Project Assist in fiscal years where they are not accrued. No budget adjustment is necessary



QUESTIONS