

City of Des Moines
Public Information Office
PRESS RELEASE



Residents Support City of Des Moines Local Option Sales Tax Referendum

For Immediate Release:

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DES MOINES, IOWA – Tuesday, March 05, 2019 – In December 2018, the Des Moines City Council members listened to their residents who encouraged them to call for a local option sales and service tax referendum. Today, residents took this opportunity and voted yes; passing Public Measure A.

"It is really going to be a game changer for the City of Des Moines," said Mayor Frank Cownie. "This revenue will help enhance the quality and economic well-being of our community. This positive outcome affords the City the opportunity to enhance our ability to improve streets, storm water infrastructure, public safety, and neighborhoods."

The City Council is eager to begin implementation of the local option sales and service tax policy that was passed on Dec. 17, 2018. The City will act immediately, next week, on March 11, 2019 when Council will vote on a budget that includes a \$.60/\$1,000 levy rate reduction. This will bring the tax rate to \$16.64; the lowest the levy rate has been in eight years.

Other changes that residents will expect to see in the upcoming years:

- **Street Improvements:** Revenue will be used to accelerate the five-year street maintenance improvement plan, targeting streets like Hickman Road, Fleur Drive, Pennsylvania Avenue, and East Court Avenue.
- **Flood Prevention:** Revenue will be used to improve storm water infrastructure to reduce the impact of future flooding.
- **Neighborhood Improvements:** Revenue will be used for neighborhood projects like the Blitz on Blight; removing blighted properties across the city and improvements to streets, sidewalks and parks.
- **Public Safety:** Revenue will be used for fire station improvements, modernizing public safety equipment, expanding training, and continued funding of firefighter positions from a federal grant that has expired.

The City is expected to hold a public hearing in the upcoming months to give residents an opportunity to hear progress on how the City is utilizing the funds. All expenditures will be subject to regular audit, public comment, and review.

About the City of Des Moines

The City of Des Moines: Iowa's capital city and local government servicing more than 217,000 residents, 51+ neighborhoods, over 4,000 acres of parkland and 81 miles of trails. The City of Des Moines stands to be a financially strong city with exceptional city services, fostering an involved community in a customer friendly atmosphere. Visit <http://www.dmgov.org/>, Facebook <http://facebook.com/DesMoinesGov> and Twitter @DesMoinesGov for more information.