



**For Immediate Release:**  
August 11, 2020

### **Unanimous Vote by City Council to Place a Utility Users' Tax as Measure WW on November Ballot**

On August 6, the City Council of Union City voted unanimously to place Measure WW, a temporary 5% utility users' tax, on the November 3, 2020 ballot. This decision comes after a City Council ad hoc sub-committee explored revenue options for the city, and a budget study session that revealed an approximately \$11 million budget deficit over the next four years.

Due to the expiration of local voter-approved funding measures and the impact of COVID-19 on sales tax revenues, hotel tax revenues, parking revenues and other revenue sources, Union City is facing significant revenue loss over the next four years. Significant cuts have been made prior to and in response to COVID-19, including closing an underutilized fire station, freezing all vacant positions, reducing library hours, eliminating community policing and school resource officers and using city reserves to help fund gaps. However, without additional revenue, the City Council will need to consider deep cuts to the city budget.

The proposed 5% utility users' tax would be levied on electricity, gas, video and telecommunication services. Seniors and low-income residents are eligible to receive an exemption from the tax. All funds are spent locally and cannot be taken away by the State. Measure WW would provide about \$6.1 million in additional funding that can be used to preserve essential city services.

Vice Mayor Emily Duncan and Councilmember Pat Gacoscos were designated by the Mayor and City Council to craft the ballot argument for Measure WW.

Vice Mayor Duncan and Councilmember Gacoscos jointly express:

“The City Council is committed to the city’s strategic plan goal of fostering fiscal health through disciplined long-term planning, cost control, heightened efficiency, increased revenue and cost recovery. We have been diligent in tightening our fiscal belt and maintaining a 20% reserve in the General Fund, and we are now diligently working to provide a revenue option that can fund our essential city services. These services include, but are not limited to, our 911 emergency response; aid for our senior residents during the COVID-19 pandemic; maintaining street and pothole repairs; and preserving youth violence prevention and drug and gang intervention programs that will keep our kids off the streets.”

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