

Measure “N” Public Safety Sales Tax

2025-2026 Adopted Budget

Measure N, a tax measure approved by voters in the City of Chowchilla in 2018, was designed to enhance public safety through dedicated funding for the police and fire departments. This report examines the impact of Measure N on public safety efficiency, its role in crime reduction, and emergency response, as well as the oversight mechanism ensuring proper use of these funds.

The best part about Measure “N”, is the fact that ALL money received, has been and will continue to be, spent solely on our own Police and Fire Services.

Measure N established a Public Safety Sales Tax, with revenues earmarked specifically for:



Hiring and Retention: Providing competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain skilled personnel in the police and fire departments.

Equipment: Funding the acquisition of necessary equipment and technology to enhance operational capabilities.

The measure was implemented to address critical needs within the public safety sectors and improve the overall efficacy of emergency response and crime prevention efforts.

Since its implementation, Measure N has had a significant positive impact on public safety in Chowchilla. Key outcomes include:

1. **Enhanced Staffing Levels:** The additional funds have allowed for increased hiring within both the police and fire departments. This has led to more officers and firefighters on duty, improving coverage and response times.
2. **Improved Equipment and Technology:** Investments in new equipment and technology have modernized operations. For the police, this includes advanced surveillance systems and vehicles equipped with cutting-edge technology. The fire department has benefited from updated firefighting gear and emergency medical equipment.
3. **Increased Efficiency:** With better resources and adequate staffing, both departments have reported improved efficiency in their operations. The fire department's improved response capabilities have led to more effective and efficient handling of medical emergencies and fire incidents.
4. **Crime Reduction and Emergency Response:** The enhanced capabilities of the police force have contributed to a noticeable reduction in crime rates. Similarly, response

times to emergencies are shorter, and the capacity to handle multiple incidents concurrently has improved.

To ensure that Measure N funds are used in accordance with its intended purposes, an Oversight Committee was established. This committee plays a critical role in maintaining transparency and accountability.

- **Committee Composition:** The Oversight Committee consists of five members appointed by the City Council. These members are selected for their expertise and commitment to public safety and fiscal responsibility.
- **Responsibilities:** The Committee reviews all expenditures and appropriations of the public safety sales tax revenues. It ensures that the funds are spent strictly in accordance with the Municipal Code's defined purposes, focusing on hiring, retention, and equipment for the police and fire departments.
- **Meetings:** Meetings are held as needed in the Council Chambers at City Hall. During these meetings, the Committee reviews financial reports, audits, and expenditure reports to ensure compliance with the measure's goals.

Measure N, enacted in 2018, dedicated a portion of sales tax revenue to enhance public safety in Chowchilla. Over the years, this measure has generated roughly \$16M in revenue and total expenditures spent were roughly \$13M. This report details the allocation of these funds, outlining specific expenditures for both the Fire and Police Departments, and evaluates the impact of these investments.

The allocation of funds was executed in alignment with the objectives set by Measure N, focusing on improving equipment, personnel, and infrastructure for both the Fire and Police Departments.

Fire Department Expenditures

1. **Fire Inspector:** Recruitment and salary support for a new Fire Inspector to increase the proactiveness of the Fire Department by helping businesses focus on fire safety and preplanning for fire emergencies. The fire inspector also works with the surrounding schools to provide fire prevention education.
2. **2nd Command Vehicle:** The Command Vehicle provides dual roles and is used as a fire inspection vehicle and a 2nd command vehicle.
3. **Phase 1 & 2 of the Fire House Expansion:** Significant investments in expanding and modernizing the Fire House. We added a large training room, which has hosted several mutual aid partner trainings, strengthening the overall areas response to emergencies. A fitness area for firefighters to improve their health and strength. Four Engine Bays to protect equipment that would otherwise be damaged by weather. We have taken the original training room and converted it into individual rooms for offices and living quarters to accommodate increased staffing and improve operational efficiency.



4. **Turnout Gear for Firefighters:** Updated firefighting gear, ensuring firefighters have the necessary protection and equipment for their duties.
5. **New Fire Engine:** Purchase of a new fire engine, enhancing the department's response capabilities and equipment inventory.
6. **Volunteer Fire Department Pay Per Call Stipend Increase:** Increase in stipends for volunteer firefighters, aimed at reimbursing volunteers a nominal fee for their personal expenses like fuel, vehicle wear and tear, ruined clothing, personally purchased equipment, and overall appreciation for their 24-7 dedication.
7. **Yearly \$100k Towards Capital Reserves for a New Fire Engine:** Allocation of \$100,000 annually to build capital reserves for future purchase of another fire engine, ensuring long-term readiness and equipment sustainability.
8. **Forcible Entry Door:** Gives the firefighters repeated training on how to do forcible entry on several types of doors.
9. **Extractor and Dryer:** For removing cancer causing particulates.
10. **Calibration Equipment:** Gives the ability to calibrate our gas detectors.



Police Department Expenditures



Thanks to Measure "N", the police department has been given an amazing opportunity. This funding allows us to purchase much needed equipment, ensuring that modern technology is integrated into our community policing efforts. These new items have provided not only modern safety equipment but also individual positions. As a result, our officers have been able to improve their proactivity and enforcement skills. These critical upgrades have led to the apprehension of violent criminals and dangerous weapons. Our agency has recovered numerous dangerous weapons that, in the hands of criminals, could have taken

many lives. Below is a list of some of the many important pieces of equipment and personnel that the Chowchilla Police Department has been able to obtain through Measure "N".

1. **Three Full-Time Police Officers:** Hiring of three additional full-time officers to bolster law enforcement presence and coverage in the community.
2. **Two CSO/Dispatchers Including a Code Enforcement Officer:** Recruitment of additional Community Service Officers (CSOs) and dispatchers, including a Code Enforcement Officer, to improve community services and dispatch efficiency.
3. **Secured Parking and Fence:** Installation of secure parking facilities and fencing around police department properties to enhance security and protect assets.
4. **Plumbing Upgrade to the Police Department:** Improvements to the plumbing infrastructure within the police department to ensure old piping, does not continue to leak and cause serious damage to important operational equipment and electronics.
5. **Animal Shelter Upgrades:** Enhancements to the animal shelter to improve conditions for animals and efficiency of shelter operations.
6. **Cameras Installed at Various Parks:** Installation of surveillance cameras in parks to enhance public safety and monitor park activities.
7. **Entry Robot:** Allows officers to send a controlled, tracked robot into a location to safely check it for any dangers. This greatly reduces the risk of injury to officers and the community.
8. **Updated Sights on All Patrol Rifles:** Upgrading sights on patrol rifles to improve accuracy and effectiveness of law enforcement operations.
9. **Drones:** Purchase of drones for aerial surveillance and assistance in various operational scenarios.
10. **In-Car and Body Cameras:** Deployment of in-car and body cameras to enhance accountability and the ability to capture interactions.
11. **Patrol Vehicles:** Purchase of new patrol vehicles to ensure a reliable and effective fleet for law enforcement.
12. **Updated Dispatch/911 Center Software:** Implementation of new software in the dispatch/911 center to improve emergency response capabilities and efficiency.

13. **Employee Retention Program:** Development of an employee retention program to support and retain skilled personnel within the police department.
14. **License Plate Readers Installed Throughout the City:** Installation of license plate readers to enhance vehicle tracking and law enforcement capabilities.
15. **Light Boards for Events:** Acquisition of light boards for use at community events, contributing to public engagement and safety.
16. **Speed Feedback Traffic Signs:** Two new traffic speed signs were installed on Ventura Ave. to assist in controlling the speed of motorists on that roadway. These signs utilize radar and allow for individual drivers, to see their speeds and alert them, should they exceed the posted speed limit.
17. **Communications Upgrade:** Upgrades include new mobile and portable radios, an Eventide recorder, and the initiation of a new communications tower project at Ed Ray Park. These improvements will enhance the communication capabilities between Police, Fire, and the public safety dispatch center.



Measure N has significantly strengthened public safety in the City of Chowchilla by improving staffing levels, equipment, and operational efficiency for both the police and fire departments. The oversight mechanism in place ensures that the funds are utilized appropriately and transparently, aligning with the measure's objectives. This rigorous oversight helps maintain public trust and ensures that the tax revenue continues to contribute effectively to the city's public safety needs.



The continued success of Measure N will depend on the ongoing commitment of both the City Council and the Oversight Committee to uphold the standards and objectives set forth by the measure. The positive impacts observed thus far highlight the effectiveness of dedicated funding in enhancing community safety and emergency response capabilities.