

Your vote counts and will determine the future of Burbank

[Emily Gabel-Luddy](#)

On June 5, Burbank voters will decide three ballot measures: T, V and Y. Measures V and Y are important questions for voters to decide on how and when elections will be held for the city and our school district, but I want to focus on Measure T, voter authorization to continue transfer of funds from Burbank's Electric Utility to the city's General Fund.

Why is this ballot measure important?

For years Burbank has been recognized for the outstanding range of public services it was able to provide for residents and businesses while maintaining a AAA credit rating through sound fiscal management. This difficult balancing act has been upset by two separate issues that have also contributed to the city facing an anticipated \$27-million long-term annual deficit.

There was a court ruling that held that transfer of 7% of the City Electric Utility revenue to the General Fund did not comply with Proposition 26; and a Charter clarification is required. This ruling resulted in the loss to the General Fund of \$12.5 million.

This was an especially difficult loss because the annual transfer is a 60-year-old practice originally adopted by the voters in 1958.

Because public utilities like Burbank Water and Power don't pay property taxes or franchise fees that private utilities do in other cities, the voters approved a transfer fee of up to 7% of the Electric Fund Revenue to the General Fund in the City Charter to keep Burbank's General Fund whole.

This year's City Council cost cutting will save an estimated \$9 million

annually without reducing service levels, and the council will continue to look for cost savings that are reoccurring and sustainable.

But savings alone won't do the job. There is a growing list of essential infrastructure projects from repaving residential streets to the Central Library which cannot be deferred any longer. This list adds up to \$18 million a year for 25 years to clear three-quarters of the existing infrastructure maintenance backlog.

Despite actions taken by the City Council to reduce our deficit, we will be unable to avoid cuts to services or address our infrastructure deficit without additional revenue sources.

That is why my Council colleagues and I voted unanimously to put Measure T on the June 5 ballot in an effort to help secure Burbank's financial future. Measure T will have *no impact* on your electricity rates but will continue the \$12.5-million transfer to support essential services such as police, fire, parks, libraries and senior programs.

Visit burbankelections.com for additional information and don't forget to vote on June 5!

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