

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: TONY GOSSNER, FIRE CHIEF  
FIRE DEPARTMENT  
SUBJECT: COUNCIL POSITION ON A PROPOSED ONE-HALF PERCENT  
(0.5%) SALES TAX MEASURE ENTITLED "SONOMA COUNTY  
WILDFIRE PREVENTION, EMERGENCY ALERT, AND  
RESPONSE TRANSACTIONS AND USE TAX ORDINANCE"

AGENDA ACTION: MOTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Fire Department that the Council, 1) review the information presented by the County Supervisors and Chief Gossner on December 3, 2019, to determine Council's position on the upcoming County Tax Measure, and 2) by motion, choose one of the following positions:

- a) Support the County Tax Measure
  - b) Remain Neutral on the County Tax Measure
  - c) Oppose the County Tax Measure.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Based on the presentation by County Supervisors David Rabbitt and Lynda Hopkins and Fire Chief Gossner on December 3, 2019, Council is asked to arrive at a decision on the Council's position regarding the proposed County Tax Measure.

BACKGROUND

County Supervisors Rabbitt and Hopkins and Chief Gossner presented information to Council on December 3, 2019. The presentation included discussion and questions and the decision was made to bring this item back to Council on December 17, 2019, for further discussion and to provide an opportunity for Council to take an official position on the upcoming County Tax Measure. The Measure is intended to improve the County response to wildfire emergencies and to better protect its residents. Through this Measure, the County proposes to adopt a retail transactions and use tax ordinance that will establish a local funding source for wildfire prevention, emergency alerts, vegetation

## SONOMA COUNTY PROPOSED SALES TAX MEASURE

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management, fire suppression and firefighting services provided by the County of Sonoma and the fire agencies throughout the incorporated and unincorporated territory of the County.

### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

City Council received a presentation from County Supervisors and Chief Gossner on December 3, 2019, concerning this County tax proposal.

### ANALYSIS

The County Supervisors and Chief Gossner presented a thorough analysis to the Council on the proposed County Tax Measure on December 3rd. The Measure is intended to improve local fire prevention and protection by establishing a one-half of one percent sales tax increase and will provide approximately \$51,000,000 annually to be allocated in accordance with expenditure plan limits, with annual audits and citizen oversight.

### FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact to the City by arriving at a position decision on the tax measure. However, if the tax measure passes, fiscal impacts of this proposal will be to increase funding to the County of Sonoma by approximately \$51,000,000. The financial benefits to the City of Santa Rosa are projected to be:

\$3.4 million per year for alerts, warnings, sirens, vegetation management and wildfire prevention and preparedness response which includes 22 positions.

\$152,000 per year for equipment and facilities for three fire stations.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project 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, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

### BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

### NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – County Ordinance
- Attachment 2 – County Expenditure Plan
- Attachment 3 – County Resolution Calling Special Election Sales Tax Measure

CONTACT

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