



## City of Grass Valley City Council Agenda Action Sheet

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**Title:** A Public Hearing to discuss Fire Resiliency and Vegetation Management concerns and consider a Resolution No. 2023-49 of the City Council of the City of Grass Valley calling a special election on November 7, 2023, to consider a transactions and use tax

**CEQA:** Not a Project.

**Recommendation:** That Council 1) conduct a public hearing regarding Fire and Vegetation Management, as well as a possible sales tax; 2) declare a fiscal emergency due to the lack of necessary funding for fire personnel and land management required to combat wildfires and extreme weather conditions as stated in Resolution No. 2023-49; and adopt Resolution No. 2023-49 of the City Council of the City of Grass Valley calling a special election on November 7, 2023, to consider a transactions and use tax.

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**Prepared by:** Timothy M. Kiser, City Manager

**Council Meeting Date:** July 25, 2023

**Date Prepared:** July 17, 2023

**Agenda:** Public Hearing

**Background Information:** The purpose of this gathering is to discuss Fire and Vegetation Management and the potential implementation of a general sales tax to support these areas. Additionally, the focus will be on addressing public safety risks that Grass Valley may face due to extreme weather events and wildfires.

During the hearing, three crucial topics will be discussed: Fire Resiliency, Vegetation Management, and Sales Tax. Fire Resiliency involves initiatives to improve the city's ability to handle fire incidents effectively. Proposed measures include increasing firefighter staffing and adding another fully staffed fire engine company. These efforts aim to enhance efficiency in operations, allow for simultaneous engagement in essential tasks, and provide resilience, flexibility, and adaptability during critical events. These measures are necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of our community in the face of fire-related challenges.

During the discussion, the topic of Vegetation Management will be emphasized as a crucial component in protecting our City against the devastating effects of wildland fires. This strategy encompasses a range of approaches, including fortifying the areas surrounding essential infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, and water treatment plants. The objective is to reduce fuel and vegetation loads throughout the City and its surrounding regions (sphere of influence), thereby safeguarding the City. Additionally, measures will be taken to prevent human-caused fires in the Wildland Urban Interface

(WUI), specifically those resulting from illegal camping activities. The discussion will also explore the creation of temporary refuge areas and other vegetation mitigations.

Finally, the discussion will center on a proposed ½ cent sales tax to fund fire resiliency and vegetation management. This would be in addition to the City's current sale tax (Measure E) that funds fire apparatuses (ladder truck, fire engines, etc.) and approximately a third of the current Fire Department. The proposed general Sales tax would generate approximately \$3.4 million and would sunset after ten years. If approved by the Council and voters, staff recommends the Council allocate 50% of the general tax revenue from the sales tax to Vegetation Management and 50% of the general tax revenue on Fire Resiliency.

If the City Council adopts the proposed Resolution, Council would be declaring a fiscal emergency and call for a special election on November 7, 2023, and to consider the following ½ cent transactions and use tax measure:

**Measure \_\_**

Shall the measure for such purposes as reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire and extreme weather by funding additional firefighters, vegetation management, and emergency evacuation planning, or for other general governmental uses, by adopting a general, 1/2-cent sales tax raising about \$3.4 million yearly, with annual audits and a citizens' oversight committee, effective for 10 years or until voters end it sooner, be adopted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
	No <input type="checkbox"/>

For the Council to call a special election on the proposed general sales tax for this November, it must declare the fiscal emergency and adopt the proposed resolution by a unanimous vote of the City Council. The proposed resolution and ordinance are attached for Council's review and consideration.

**Council Goals/Objectives:** The execution of this action attempts to achieve Strategic Goal #5 - High Performance Government and Quality Service.

**Fiscal Impact:** Fiscal Impact would be limited to paying for the Special Election, which could easily exceed \$100,000, but there are sufficient funds in City reserves if the City Council deems this issue to be a fiscal emergency.

**Funds Available:** Yes

**Account #:** General Fund Reserves

**Reviewed by:** Tim Kiser, City Manager

**Attachments:** Resolution 2023-49 and proposed Ordinance