



## CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

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**TO:** City Council

**DATE:** June 22, 2026

**DEPARTMENT:** City Manager's Office

**PREPARED BY:** Isaac Whippy, City Manager

**PRESENTER:** Isaac Whippy, City Manager & Steve Orsi Fire Chief

**AGENDA TITLE:** Receive Report and Consider Adoption of City Council Resolution Submitting a Fort Bragg Fire Protection Measure to the Voters at the November 3, 2026 General Municipal Election, Reiterating the City's Request that the Election be Consolidated with Other Elections Held on that Date and Taking Certain Related Actions

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### RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council:

1. Receive a report regarding the City's fire apparatus and equipment replacement needs;
  2. Adopt a Resolution of the Fort Bragg City Council Submitting a Measure to the Voters at the November 3, 2026 General Municipal Election, Reiterating the City's Request That the Election Be Consolidated with Other Elections Held on That Date and Taking Certain Related Actions
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### BACKGROUND

Providing reliable fire protection services requires ongoing investment in fire engines, rescue equipment, communications systems, firefighter safety equipment, and other critical public safety infrastructure.

For many years, fire protection services within the greater Fort Bragg area were provided through the Fort Bragg Fire Protection Authority (FBFPA), a Joint Powers Authority established in Fiscal Year 1989/90 between the City of Fort Bragg and the Fort Bragg Rural Fire Protection District. The Authority was responsible for providing coordinated fire suppression, rescue, and emergency response services throughout the community. Funding responsibilities were shared between the City and the Rural Fire District based upon service demand.

To help maintain reliable fire apparatus and emergency response equipment, Fort Bragg voters have repeatedly approved a Fire Equipment Acquisition Tax. The tax was approved

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 8A**

by voters in 1983, 1994, 2004, and most recently in 2014. At each election, the measure received more than two-thirds voter approval. The most recent measure, Measure O, was approved by approximately 78 percent of voters and authorized a Fire Equipment Acquisition Tax of \$22 per parcel annually for a period of ten years. The measure generated approximately \$53,274 annually and expired in December 2024.

The purpose of the tax has remained consistent throughout its history: providing a dedicated local funding source for the acquisition and replacement of fire apparatus and emergency response equipment used to protect the community.

## **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

The City's fire apparatus fleet represents one of its most important public safety investments. Fire engines, water tenders, command vehicles, rescue equipment, communications systems, and firefighter safety equipment are essential tools used every day to protect lives and property.

Since the approval of Measure O in 2014, the cost of fire apparatus and equipment has increased significantly. A replacement fire engine can now exceed \$1 million, while lead times for new apparatus often extend several years.

The Fire Department's current replacement schedule identifies approximately \$5.5 million in apparatus and equipment replacement needs over the next ten years. These needs include fire engines, water tenders, command vehicles, rescue equipment, marine rescue equipment, communications equipment, and firefighter safety equipment.

The proposed measure would reauthorize the Fire Equipment Acquisition Tax for an additional ten-year period at a rate of \$50 per parcel annually beginning in Fiscal Year 2027-28 and ending in Fiscal Year 2036-37. Revenue generated by the measure would be restricted exclusively to the acquisition of fire equipment for use by the Fort Bragg Fire Department and would be deposited into a separate account. Annual reporting requirements are included to ensure transparency and accountability.

Based upon current parcel counts, the proposed measure is expected to generate approximately \$123,900 annually, or approximately \$1.24 million over the ten-year life of the measure.

Approval of the resolution does not impose the tax. Rather, it places the question before Fort Bragg voters at the November 3, 2026 General Municipal Election.

Fort Bragg voters have a long history of supporting dedicated funding for fire apparatus and emergency response equipment. The Fire Equipment Acquisition Tax has provided a reliable local funding source for more than four decades and has helped ensure the Fire Department maintains the equipment necessary to protect the community.

The proposed measure would allow voters to determine whether to continue that investment for an additional ten years and help address the Fire Department's future apparatus and equipment replacement needs.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The proposed Fire Equipment Acquisition Tax would be levied at \$50 per parcel annually on approximately 2,478 taxable parcels within the City of Fort Bragg.

If approved by the voters, the measure is expected to generate approximately \$123,900 annually, or approximately \$1.24 million over the ten-year life of the measure. Revenue would be restricted solely to the acquisition and replacement of fire apparatus and equipment for use by the Fort Bragg Fire Department.

The Fire Department's current replacement schedule identifies approximately \$5.5 million in apparatus and equipment replacement needs over the next ten years, including fire engines, water tenders, command vehicles, rescue equipment, marine rescue equipment, communications equipment, and firefighter safety equipment.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Taxable Parcels in Fort Bragg	2,478
Proposed Annual Tax	\$50
<b>Annual Revenue</b>	<b>\$123,900</b>
10-Year Revenue	\$1,239,000
10-Year Replacement Need	\$2,750,000
Funding Gap	\$1,511,000

The City will incur election-related costs associated with placing the measure on the November 3, 2026 ballot. Staff anticipates these costs can be accommodated within the Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget.

**CONSISTENCY/STRATEGIC PLANNING**

This item is consistent with the City Council Strategic Plan goal of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Reliable fire apparatus and emergency response equipment are essential components of the City's emergency response system and help ensure the City can continue providing effective fire protection services to residents, businesses, and visitors.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4), the creation of government funding mechanisms and fiscal activities that do not involve commitment to a specific project are not projects subject to CEQA.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Resolution Submitting a Fire Equipment Acquisition Tax Measure to the Voters
2. Proposed Ordinance Amending Chapter 3.30 of the Fort Bragg Municipal Code Regarding the Fire Equipment Acquisition Tax
3. Fire Apparatus and Equipment Replacement Schedule
4. Historical Summary of Fire Equipment Acquisition Tax Measures
5. Notice of Last Day to Submit Arguments
6. Notice of Election