



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Mayor Victoria Woodards and Chief Policy Analyst Bucoda Warren  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** relating to property taxes; directing the City Manager to work with the Tacoma Fire Chief to develop a spending plan for the additional funds should the levy lid lift for fire services pass during the General Election on November 5, 2024 – Requested for October 22, 2024  
**DATE:** October 22, 2024

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**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

relating to property taxes; directing the City Manager to work with the Tacoma Fire Chief to develop a spending plan for the additional funds should the levy lid lift for fire services pass during the General Election on November 5, 2024.

**COUNCIL SPONSORS:**

Mayor Victoria Woodards

**BACKGROUND:**

On November 5, 2024, Proposition 1 will be considered by Tacoma voters for a new levy lid lift that would raise about \$30 million a year to support fire services. If approved, this funding would support existing fire services and needed enhancements, however how that money would be spent may not be clear.

This resolution would direct the City Manager to develop a spending plan with the Fire Chief for how potential new levy funding would help support investments such as but not limited to: fire station upgrades, engine and ladder purchases and other fleet replacement, and equipment replacement. By outlining a transparent spending plan, the City Council is demonstrating accountability and a commitment to effective resource management.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

Residents across the City of Tacoma will be impacted by the outcome of Proposition 1. By openly communicating how the funds will enhance fire services, we build trust and demonstrate our commitment to improving safety and equity for all Tacoma residents.

**2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

**Equity and Accessibility:**

Improved fire funding enhances equity in service by ensuring all communities receive timely and effective emergency response, regardless of their socioeconomic status or geographic location. Increased funding allows for better distribution of resources, such as modern equipment, comprehensive training, and sufficient staffing, particularly in underserved and high-risk areas. This can reduce disparities in fire safety and emergency medical services, ensuring every resident has access to critical support in emergencies. Ultimately, equitable fire funding fosters safer, more resilient communities where all individuals can thrive.

**Livability: Equity Index Score:** Moderate Opportunity

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.



**Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).**

Committing to increased transparency in the spending of new funding would help foster community confidence and trust in City operations.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Do not pass resolution		Understanding specifics of where levy funding if approved by voters would be spent would be unclear, creating uncertainty for City staff.

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

Following certification of the General Election if Proposition 1 passes, the City Manager and the Fire Chief will share a spending plan for levy funds to the City Council by January 31, 2025.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

We recommend passage of this resolution to direct the City Manager to develop a spending plan in partnership with the Fire Chief to increase transparency in the use of new funds.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no direct financial impact to passing this resolution for the existing budget, however this resolution would direct the City Manager to create a spending plan for new funds from the potentially voter approved fire levy and potentially allocate them for those uses as allowed by state law.

**What Funding is being used to support the expense?**

2024 voter approved fire levy funding.

**Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?**

N/A

**Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?**

No

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**

No

**Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?**

No