



Oakley City Council Has Not voted to support a Reallocation of Property Taxes

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Contrary to misleading headlines by a publication whose staff was not present during the City Council Meeting work session on this topic might have you believe, Oakley's City Council **DID NOT** agree or support any property tax reallocation proposals.

The City recognizes its role in staying engaged in conversations and evaluating proposals that could help improve the structural deficit of the ECCFPD. However, the City receives an average of 6.9% of the 1% property tax, (compared to Brentwood's 12%). Similarly, ECCFPD's receives an average of over 7% of the 1% (compared to ConFire's 14%, San Ramon Valley Fire's 15%, & Orinda-Moraga Fire's 21%). In Oakley specifically, our residents 1% breaks down to 6.9% returning to the City and 6.6% going towards the ECCFPD. The difference is minimal between the two, however, the City is charged with delivering a broader scope of services which include recreational programming, building, public works, parks and police protection among others.

Here are the facts with regard to the City of Oakley's role and response:

Oakley's Mayor Higgins, Councilmember Hardcastle and City Manager attended a community meeting sponsored by the East County Voters (ECV) to hear their proposal. Their proposal urges the agencies that receive the 1% of property tax to voluntarily reallocate the funding received and decrease their own shares and contribute that amount to the Fire District. The Superintendents of the School Districts and the General Managers of the affected special districts all voiced their opposition to the proposal.

Oakley's City Council held a work session during the Tuesday, February 28th City Council Meeting to discuss the City's role or response to possible proposals that are being considered by residents to help fund the East Contra Fire Protection District (ECCFPD). During this work session:

- One Councilmember suggested taking 1% each year (approximately \$45,000) in years that the assessed property valuations exceed what is budgeted and set it aside. This would not address the structural deficit of Fire Services and would take 66 years before we'd have enough to be able to fund the operational cost of a fire station, which now is estimated to cost over \$3 million.
- Councilmembers discussed whether we had the financial ability to contribute our share required to keep the fourth fire station open. This station was reopened on a

temporary basis last year by one-time funding provided by the cities of Oakley, Brentwood, and the County. However, Oakley's "share" could exceed \$600,000 which is beyond our means.

- Staff mentioned that there is placeholder legislation introduced by Assembly member Frazier that is anticipated to recommend some sort of reallocation of the 1% in Contra Costa County. Since the language of this bill is yet to be determined, the City Council expressed a desire to learn more about this bill before opining and asked City Staff to invite the Assembly member or his Staff to present further details at a future City Council meeting. It isn't until after hearing more about the specifics that the Council would decide if it's something they could support.
- The Council **DID DECIDE** to send a letter to our State legislators urging their assistance and leadership in helping to address the funding issues of the ECCFPD. Many fire districts throughout the state find themselves in similar situations, thus a State level policy seems appropriate.