

From: [isaac](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Agenda Item 3.1
Date: Monday, September 11, 2023 5:03:31 PM

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Thanks to staff for there excellent report. I am convinced the city does need some additional revenue.

I am generally against raising sales and UUT, as those can hit hard residents already struggling to pay bills.
The other suggestions of TOT and a Transfer Tax; I would support both of these.

A transfer tax in particular has potential to discourage speculation, especially short-term "flippers". Speculators inflate property prices and make it harder for regular folks to buy homes here.

I wonder if the tired system could be tied to the difference in assessed value? We could potentially have a more aggressive tiered system without harming people who just need to move for work or family or other reasons. And if it were tied to the difference in assessed value there would not be additional hardship in the case of 2008 happening again and people getting trapped in upside down mortgages.

Finally, I would like to bring the council's attention to the staff report from October 23, 2018. Staff predicted \$1million a year in additional revenue from Cannabis sales. But the regulations were revised. We have only one location and it is delivery only. We are not making the revenue we hoped, and I blame the revisions. I suggest at some future date revisiting these changes.

Thanks,
Isaac Stone

PS I might be willing to make an exception for a sales tax specifically for gasoline.
Yes I know the same hardship arguments apply, but the climate crisis is no joke; disincentivizing driving is more important.

From: [Serge Bonte](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: re: 9/12/23 Meeting - Agenda Item 3.1 Potential Revenue Ballot Measure for 2024
Date: Monday, September 11, 2023 11:14:12 PM

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Honorable Mayor and City Council Members:

I wanted to share a few thoughts about the 4 options you will be considering.

Sales Tax or Utility Tax increases should be non starters; both of these taxes are regressive and inflationary.

Between the remaining two , I would favor the Property Transfer Tax mainly because it hasn't changed for 50 years. That said, the property transfer tax is more volatile and possibly less popular at the ballot box than a TOT.

If going with a TOT increase, I would like to urge you to also add policies/language to maximize TOT collection. The City started to collect TOT on Airbnb; you should make sure that TOT is also collected on other platforms and that there is better compliance with the City host registration requirements. The City should also look into collecting TOT on the new "Google Hotel"

<https://www.sfgate.com/tech/article/google-hotel-workers-return-office-18279747.php>

While not located in Mountain View, it is within Mountain View's sphere of influence and is clearly describing itself as a hotel. It would only be fair that their guests would be charged the same TOT as the guests of the nearby Shashi Hotel.

Finally, I was disappointed not to see any mention of a vacancy tax. I believe it could be an effective tool to bring more economic vitality to Mountain View and avoid the many blighted areas in Mountain View (just go up and down El Camino to see deteriorating abandoned buildings , fenced lots, sometimes due to land banking, sometimes due to entitled but dormant projects.

Sincerely,

Serge Bonte

PS: I also wanted to comment on this footnote: " A Cannabis Business Tax, Measure Q, was passed by the voters in 2018 which imposes a gross receipts tax on cannabis businesses that operate or provide specified services within the City. This tax has not generated any revenue to the City and will not be discussed in this Study Session memo ", let it be very clear that the reason that voter approved tax didn't generate revenue was because Council subsequently materially banned any Cannabis Business in Mountain View.