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HANFORD, CA PROPOSES 4% HOTEL TAX HIKE FOR NOVEMBER BALLOT



By Francisco Ramirez Jr.

HANFORD, CA - The Hanford City Council voted unanimously on July 1, 2025, to place a measure on the November 4, 2025, special election ballot to increase the transient occupancy tax (TOT) from 8% to 12%, aiming to generate approximately \$375,000 annually for general city services in Hanford, CA, a key Central Valley community. The proposal, presented by Senior Administrative Analyst Sarah Wilborn, targets hotel and short-term rental guests, sparing local residents direct costs while bolstering funding for police, fire, parks, recreation, and infrastructure maintenance.

What Is the Transient Occupancy Tax?

The TOT, also known as the hotel tax, applies to guests staying in hotels or short-term rentals, such as Airbnbs, for 30 days or less in Hanford, CA. In place since 1985 at 8%, the tax has not been adjusted in four decades. According to Wilborn, the proposed increase to 12% will provide "a stable funding source for the general fund [moving forward.](#)" The additional revenue is intended for critical services, including police and fire protection, park maintenance, and infrastructure like streets and sidewalks, which are vital to the quality of life in the Central Valley.

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Details of the Proposal

The resolution, numbered 25-37-R, was adopted during the July 1, 2025, council meeting, with all [council members - Mayor Travis Paden](#), Vice Mayor Nancy Howze, Council Member Kimber Regan, Council Member Lou Martinez, and Council Member Mark Kairis - voting in favor. The ballot measure, titled "City of Hanford Transient Occupancy Tax Measure," reads: "Shall a measure be adopted amending the Hanford Municipal Code to increase the maximum rate of the city's transient occupancy hotel tax paid by hotel and vacation rental guests from 8 to 12% providing approximately \$375,000 annually for city general services, including without limitation, police, fire, parks, and recreation, maintaining public infrastructure such as streets, sidewalks, parks, and facilities, and general government use until ended by voters."

If [approved by a majority](#) of voters in the November 4, 2025, special election, the new rate will take effect on January 1, 2026. The Community Relations Manager will launch an information campaign to educate Central Valley voters about the measure, ensuring transparency in Hanford, CA's fiscal planning.

Community Impact and Next Steps

The TOT increase is designed to minimize the financial burden on Hanford residents, as it targets visitors rather than locals. Council Member Kimber Regan sought clarification during the meeting, asking, "Is this something that could also be applied if people are staying at Airbnbs for up to 30 days?" Wilborn [confirmed](#) that short-term rentals under 30 days are included, addressing a growing trend in the Central Valley's tourism sector.

The council's decision aligns with Hanford, CA's strategic goal of fiscal sustainability, especially as the city addresses rising costs for public services. With the Kings County Election Office deadline in August, city staff will submit all required documents to ensure the measure appears on the ballot. If approved, mid-year budget appropriations may cover



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campaign-related expenses.

Why It Matters for Hanford

For residents of Hanford, CA, and nearby Central Valley cities like Fresno, Visalia, and [Tulare](#), the proposed TOT increase could enhance public services without raising local taxes. The additional \$375,000 annually could improve safety, maintain parks, and upgrade infrastructure, addressing concerns raised by residents during the same meeting about park maintenance and [public safety](#). However, the measure's success depends on voter approval, making [community](#) engagement critical.