

## MEASURE MM WILDFIRE PREVENTION FINANCING ACT

### THE QUESTION

Shall Measure MM, which would levy a special parcel tax for 20 years on owners of properties in the Wildfire Protection Zone to pay for wildfire prevention work and strategies, be adopted?



### THE SITUATION

Voters in the hills have twice voted to fund fire prevention efforts by creating two assessment districts, which were in effect from 1992-1997 and 2004-2014, respectively. Since 2003 Oakland has actively managed vegetation on city-owned property in the Oakland hills and inspected homes for fire dangers.

In 2024, the CA Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention's map showed much of the Oakland hills to be within a zone requiring active management of high wildfire risks. Also, in 2024, Oakland passed a 10-year "Vegetation Management Plan" to guide its efforts to manage risks in the hills.

#### Zone Map

### THE PROPOSAL

Measure MM would impose a special tax for 20 years on owners of properties within the Wildfire Prevention Zone ("Zone" as defined in the Measure), which includes the high risk zone defined by the CA Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention and adjacent areas. Only voters residing within the Zone would vote on the tax.

Revenues from the tax would be used only to

- implement the City's Vegetation Management Plan
- manage dead and dying trees and invasive species
- maintain evacuation routes
- regularly inspect all parcels within the Zone (except the City will continue to pay for the initial inspections)
- support enhanced patrols on days when the risk of fire is high
- coordinate all City departments in their wildfire prevention efforts
- pay administrative expenses for collecting and distributing the tax or for financial audits and financial tracking
- sponsor public education regarding fire prevention in cooperation with community groups.

MEASURE MM requires oversight by a commission and annual independent financial audits, but leaves additional audits by the City Auditor discretionary.

### FISCAL EFFECT

Measure MM would impose an annual parcel tax on owners of property in the Wildfire Prevention Zone. In the first year, the tax would be \$99 for single family dwellings, \$65 for each unit in residential properties, and other rates for non-residential properties based on their size. Annual cost of living adjustments would raise tax rates, but adjustments would be limited to no more than 5% annually. Regular exemptions such as those for persons with very low incomes or for qualified seniors are authorized. The tax, which would continue for 20 years, would generate \$2.67 million in the first year beginning July 1, 2025.



### SUPPORTERS SAY

- The most effective way to prevent forest fires is to implement a comprehensive plan like Oakland's.
- Measure MM is needed to fund implementation of Oakland's comprehensive "Vegetation Management Plan."



### OPPONENTS SAY

- Wildfire prevention is an essential service that should be funded by the City's general fund, not by special taxes such as Measure MM would impose.
- Oversight is inadequate because an audit by the City Auditor is optional.

