

Regular Council Meeting

July 30, 2026

FRESNO CITY COUNCIL



Public Comment Packet

ITEM(S)

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2-II (ID 26-1028)

***RESOLUTION - Approving the Fresno Public Safety, Infrastructure Restoration, and City General Services Tax Ordinance, with the use of Tax Revenue to be Reviewed and Reported on by a Citizens Oversight Committee; Ordering the Submission of the Measure to City Voters at a Special Municipal Election to be Held on November 3, 2026; Requesting the County Conduct the Special Municipal Election; and Requesting Consolidation with the Statewide Election to be held on that Date (Subject to Mayor's Veto)

Contents of Supplement: Public Comment Received

Supplemental Information:

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From:

Subject:

Date:

[REDACTED]
[BULK] New eComment for City Council on 2026-07-30 9:00 AM - Regular Meeting
Tuesday, July 28, 2026 5:38:41 PM

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

[City of Fresno](#)

New eComment for City Council on 2026-07-30 9:00 AM - Regular Meeting

Dan Waterhouse submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: City Council on 2026-07-30 9:00 AM - Regular Meeting

Item: 2.-II. ID 26-1028 ***RESOLUTION - Approving the Fresno Public Safety, Infrastructure Restoration, and City General Services Tax Ordinance, with the use of Tax Revenue to be Reviewed and Reported on by a Citizens Oversight Committee; Ordering the Submission of the Measure to City Voters at a Special Municipal Election to be Held on November 3, 2026; Requesting the County Conduct the Special Municipal Election; and Requesting Consolidation with the Statewide Election to be held on that Date (Subject to Mayor's Veto)

eComment: I urge approval of this item. The voters should decide.

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: July 30 City Council Meeting -- Agenda Item 2-II,
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 5:01:43 PM
Attachments: [2026.07.28 Council Pres Esparza.pdf](#)
[Untitled attachment 00023.htm](#)
[Screen Shot 2022-06-23 at 11.05.25 AM.png](#)
[Untitled attachment 00026.htm](#)

For your consideration re: No Debt for Development proposal on Thursday's agenda.

PATIENCE MILROD
LAWYER/LICENCIADA EN LEYES

July 28, 2026

Hon. Nelson Esparza, Council President
Members of the Fresno City Council
2600 Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93721

by email

RE: City Council July 30, 2026 Agenda Item 2-II, Resolution 26-1027
("No Debt on Development" measure)

Dear Council President Esparza and Members of the City Council:

I write on behalf of CLC and RCI to request that your Council redraft, or reject, this proposed charter amendment.

Item 2-II dropped onto your July 30 agenda yesterday morning, 9 minutes before the deadline for noticing City Council agenda items; the measure is clearly the product of last-minute drafting; there is no accompanying staff report. Certainly the public, and you the policymakers, need more time to fully assess this proposal.

That said, it appears the measure does not live up to its hype: in particular, it allows Fresno's taxes and fees to flow into SEDA rather than funding only Fresno infrastructure and services. Please fix it, so it really does what its proponents claim it does, before you pass it.

The proposed Charter amendment explicitly guarantees Fresno taxpayers and ratepayers will subsidize SEDA development.

Fresnans will pay, one way or another, for City services in the SEDA area: even if the measure won't allow the City to pay for the buildings in which they work, there's no bar on using City funding, for example, to pay police officers and fire fighters, code enforcement personnel, and bus drivers, and to purchase, maintain, and replace all the equipment they use. So, while the City could not build or maintain a SEDA fire station with General Fund money, it could staff and run one indefinitely. Ongoing public safety costs are the most resource-sucking feature of growth on a city's fringes. **The public framing here (that CFDs will cover police and fire) is not something the Charter amendment actually requires in any way.**

Fresnans will pay for major infrastructure to benefit SEDA. The measure (§§ (b)(1) and (2)) only restricts City funding for facilities "located within or constructed exclusively to serve" SEDA. Fresnoans will still be stuck with paying for major sewer and

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93728

water trunk lines, and any other of the huge-ticket items running hundreds of millions potentially into billions of dollars, which originate or are located outside the SEDA boundaries but only require expansion due to the anticipated growth SEDA is supposed to bring.

Fresnans' water and sewer funds are fair game for SEDA financing. Fresno's water and sewer systems are enterprise funds. The measure's ¶¶ (a)(1) and (b)(4) allow use of enterprise funds to pay for SEDA infrastructure and explicitly permit water and sewer revenue bonds for SEDA facilities – which will be repaid by ratepayers across the entire City.

Fresnans will pay to set up SEDA's special financing districts. The measure (¶ (b)(5)) puts no limits on the costs taxpayers will incur for special district *formation*, including for example, consultants, bond counsel, engineering, special tax formula work, and ongoing district administration. While ¶ (b)(1)(i) bars General Fund transfers *to* such districts, ¶ (b)(5) permits spending to *form* them – effectively a blank check.

Fresnans will continue to subsidize SEDA developers. The measure only prohibits outright waivers of development and impact fees, and only those financed by General Fund dollars. There is no bar on fee deferrals, fee credits, reimbursement agreements with developers, or simply setting impact fees below cost recovery. All these means – financially identical to outright waivers – are perfectly allowable under this proposal, and amount to Fresno taxpayers further lining SEDA developers' pockets.

Fresnans cannot predict what unnamed evasions this measure allows. Seeing in this proposal so many loopholes through which ratepayers' and taxpayers' dollars will flood into SEDA, Fresnans cannot be confident that there are not still other mechanisms not identified here that similarly evade the claimed purpose of the measure – including but not limited to Certificates of Participation and other esoteric municipal financing mechanisms of which mere mortals are predictably ignorant.

The proposed Charter amendment is pretty much a contradictory and confusing mess.

One of the problems with this proposal is that no one has time to identify and consider its flaws before you vote on it – a VERY good reason for not voting on it yet.

But here is an incomplete list: internally inconsistent provisions, including contradictory definitions; a total lack of enforcement structure/process; no emergency or state-mandate exception; the ballot question and synopsis run afoul of state election law.

SOME RECOMMENDED CHANGES:

- replace “exclusively to serve” with a proportionate-share or “principally serves” test (¶¶ (b)(1) and (2));
- add municipal *services* to the definitions or to ¶ (b)(1);
- add an anti-evasion clause reaching City-affiliated entities and enterprise-fund debt issued for SEDA backbone capacity;
- define the scope of expenses allowed under ¶ (b)(5) for forming SEDA special districts;
- add a full-cost-recovery requirement for SEDA impact fees;
- add an enforcement/standing and annual public reporting section;

- add a narrow emergency and state-mandate exception; and
- conform the ballot question, synopsis, and operative text to ensure compliance with pertinent California Elections Code provisions.

Thank you in advance for your attention to these matters. Of course we are happy to answer any questions or provide more information if needed.

Very truly yours,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Patience Milrod.

PATIENCE MILROD
Attorney for Fresno Madera Tulare and Kings
Counties Central Labor Council, and Regenerate
California Innovation

cc: Mayor Jerry Dyer
City Attorney
City Clerk, for inclusion in the SEDA record of proceedings