

**MEASURE K
CITY OF WILLITS**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2020-_____
CITY OF WILLITS EMERGENCY FUNDING ORDINANCE
IMPOSING A THREE QUARTER CENT GENERAL
TRANSACTIONS AND USE TAX**

WHEREAS, City of Willits residents have indicated that the quality of life in Willits is highly valued; and

WHEREAS, the City of Willits has approximately \$15.3 million in necessary road improvements over the next ten years and the existing one-half cent sales tax, a special tax limited to the maintenance, repair and construction of the City's road system, will only provide \$5 million of funding toward that total, leaving \$10.3 million in unfunded road improvements; and

WHEREAS, the City of Willits also lacks adequate funds to pay for the estimated \$4 million in parks and building maintenance services and an additional \$4 million in infrastructure improvement projects in the City parks and buildings over the next ten years, which are important to maintaining local property values and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the City of Willits has a growing structural deficit in its budget due to increased costs for all types of insurance, particularly, fire insurance, workers compensation and liability insurance, as well as increased costs for outside services and pension liability and has reached its limit in being able to cut costs without serious reduction in services; and

WHEREAS, the City of Willits suffers from the effects of the COVID-19 virus and is vulnerable to disruptions in utility service, wildfires and pandemics, and needs to have a source of revenue that cannot be seized by state or federal fiat so that it can continue to provide essential services in times of crisis; and

WHEREAS, the City of Willits, by taking ownership of Main Street from Caltrans, has increased its costs for road maintenance and traffic lights, as well as liability insurance; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to fairly compensate, recruit and retain employees such as police officers, parks employees, maintenance workers, building officials and others who work to keep our City safe, financially stable and livable, and current salaries are the lowest in the region; and

WHEREAS, there exists a significant need to replace old and obsolete police vehicles and police equipment, as well other City Departments' sub-standard and obsolete equipment, computers, computer systems and financial systems in order to keep up with current financial and communication standards; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to enhance recreational opportunities within the City and to enhance the beauty of Willits with tree plantings, public art and landscaping and by improving park maintenance and tree maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the City also seeks funding to enhance and maintain all of Main Street, the north portion of which will convert to City control and responsibility as of late 2020; and

WHEREAS, locally-enacted funding sources such as a voter-approved sales tax are not subject to seizure by the State, and must be spent in Willits to maintain its local services; and

WHEREAS, the proposed measure imposes an unrestricted general sales tax that can be used for any legitimate governmental purpose and it is not a commitment to any particular action; and

MEASURE K – continued

WHEREAS, the proposed measure requires Independent Citizens Oversight and mandatory financial audits to ensure funds are spent in furtherance of City objectives to enhance local services and the quality of life in the City and yearly reports to the community to ensure funds are spent as promised and would continue automatically without further action by the City Council until discontinued by a majority vote of Willits voters; and

WHEREAS, under the provisions of the laws relating to general law cities in the State of California, an election shall be held on November 3, 2020, for the submission to the voters of a question relating to a local three-quarters (¾) cent sales tax; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable that the election be consolidated with the statewide election to be held on the same date, and that within the City, the precincts, polling places, and election officers of the two elections be the same.

**NOW THEREFORE, THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF WILLITS
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

SECTION 1. INCORPORATION OF RECITALS. The People of the City of Willits, subject to voter approval, find that all Recitals are true and correct and incorporate them herein by this reference.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT OF MUNICIPAL CODE. Chapter 3.32, The City of Willits Emergency Funding Transactions and Use Tax Ordinance, is hereby added to the Willits Municipal Code to read as follows:

Sec. 3.32.010. Title.

This ordinance shall be known as the City of Willits Emergency Funding Transactions and Use Tax Ordinance. The City of Willits hereinafter shall be called "City." This ordinance shall be applicable in the incorporated territory of the City.

Sec. 3.32.020. Operative Date.

"Operative Date" means the first day of the first calendar quarter commencing more than 110 days after the adoption of this ordinance, the date of such adoption being as set forth below.

Sec. 3.32.030. Purpose.

This ordinance is adopted to achieve the following, among other purposes, and directs that the provisions hereof be interpreted in order to accomplish those purposes:

A. To impose a retail transactions and use tax in accordance with the provisions of Part 1.6 (commencing with Section 7251) of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code and Section 7285.9 of Part 1.7 of Division 2 which authorizes the City to adopt this tax ordinance which shall be operative if a majority of the electors voting on the measure vote to approve the imposition of the tax at an election called for that purpose.

B. To adopt a retail transactions and use tax ordinance that incorporates provisions identical to those of the Sales and Use Tax Law of the State of California insofar as those provisions are not inconsistent with the requirements and limitations contained in Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code.

C. To adopt a retail transactions and use tax ordinance that imposes a tax and provides a measure therefore that can be administered and collected by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration in a manner that adapts itself as fully as practicable to, and requires the least possible deviation from, the existing statutory and administrative procedures followed by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration in administering and collecting the California State Sales and Use Taxes.

MEASURE K – continued

D. To adopt a retail transactions and use tax ordinance that can be administered in a manner that will be, to the greatest degree possible, consistent with the provisions of Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, minimize the cost of collecting the transactions and use taxes, and at the same time, minimize the burden of record keeping upon persons subject to taxation under the provisions of this ordinance.

E. To provide transactions and use tax revenue to the City to be used to fund general revenue purposes.

Sec. 3.32.040. Contract with State.

Prior to the operative date, the City shall contract with the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration to perform all functions incident to the administration and operation of this transactions and use tax ordinance; provided, that if the City shall not have contracted with the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration prior to the operative date, it shall nevertheless so contract and in such a case the operative date shall be the first day of the first calendar quarter following the execution of such a contract.

Sec. 3.32.050. Transactions Tax Rate.

For the privilege of selling tangible personal property at retail, a tax is hereby imposed upon all retailers in the incorporated territory of the City at the rate of three-quarters of one percent (0.75%) of the gross receipts of any retailer from the sale of all tangible personal property sold at retail in said territory on and after the operative date of this ordinance.

Sec. 3.32.060. Place of Sale.

For the purposes of this ordinance, all retail sales are consummated at the place of business of the retailer unless the tangible personal property sold is delivered by the retailer or his/her agent to an out-of-state destination or to a common carrier for delivery to an out-of-state destination. The gross receipts from such sales shall include delivery charges, when such charges are subject to the state sales and use tax, regardless of the place to which delivery is made. In the event a retailer has no permanent place of business in the State or has more than one place of business, the place or places at which the retail sales are consummated shall be determined under rules and regulations to be prescribed and adopted by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration.

Sec. 3.32.070. Use of Tax Rate.

An excise tax is hereby imposed on the storage, use or other consumption in the City of tangible personal property purchased from any retailer on and after the operative date of this ordinance for storage, use or other consumption in said territory at the rate of three-quarters of one percent (0.75%) of the sales price of the property. The sales price shall include delivery charges when such charges are subject to state sales or use tax regardless of the place to which delivery is made.

Sec. 3.32.080. Adoption of Provisions of State Law.

Except as otherwise provided in this ordinance and except insofar as they are inconsistent with the provisions of Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, all of the provisions of Part 1 (commencing with Section 6001) of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code are hereby adopted and made a part of this ordinance as though fully set forth herein.

Sec. 3.32.090. Limitations of Adoption of State Law and Collection of Use Tax.

In adopting the provisions of Part 1 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code:

MEASURE K – continued

A. Wherever the State of California is named or referred to as the taxing agency, the name of this City shall be substituted therefor. However, the substitution shall not be made when:

1. The word "State" is used as a part of the title of the State Controller, State Treasurer, State Treasury, the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration or the Constitution of the State of California;

2. The result of that substitution would require action to be taken by or against this City or any agency, officer, or employee thereof rather than by or against the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration or the State Board of Equalization, in performing the functions incident to the administration or operation of this Ordinance.

3. In those sections, including, but not necessarily limited to sections referring to the exterior boundaries of the State of California, where the result of the substitution would be to:

a. Provide an exemption from this tax with respect to certain sales, storage, use or other consumption of tangible personal property which would not otherwise be exempt from this tax while such sales, storage, use or other consumption remain subject to tax by the State under the provisions of Part 1 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, or;

b. Impose this tax with respect to certain sales, storage, use or other consumption of tangible personal property which would not be subject to tax by the state under the said provision of that code.

4. In Sections 6701, 6702 (except in the last sentence thereof), 6711, 6715, 6737, 6797 or 6828 of the Revenue and Taxation Code.

B. The word "City" shall be substituted for the word "State" in the phrase "retailer engaged in business in this State" in Section 6203 and in the definition of that phrase in Section 6203.

Sec. 3.32.100. Permit Not Required.

If a seller's permit has been issued to a retailer under Section 6067 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, an additional transactor's permit shall not be required by this ordinance.

Sec. 3.32.110. Exemptions and Exclusions.

A. There shall be excluded from the measure of the transactions tax and the use tax the amount of any sales tax or use tax imposed by the State of California or by any town, city and county, or county pursuant to the Bradley-Burns Uniform Local Sales and Use Tax Law or the amount of any state-administered transactions or use tax.

B. There are exempted from the computation of the amount of transactions tax the gross receipts from:

1. Sales of tangible personal property, other than fuel or petroleum products, to operators of aircraft to be used or consumed principally outside the county in which the sale is made and directly and exclusively in the use of such aircraft as common carriers of persons or property under the authority of the laws of this State, the United States, or any foreign government.

2. Sales of property to be used outside the City which is shipped to a point outside the City, pursuant to the contract of sale, by delivery to such point by the retailer or his agent, or by delivery by the retailer to a carrier for shipment to a consignee at such point. For the purposes of this paragraph, delivery to a point outside the City shall be satisfied:

MEASURE K – continued

a. With respect to vehicles (other than commercial vehicles) subject to registration pursuant to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 4000) of Division 3 of the Vehicle Code, aircraft licensed in compliance with Section 21411 of the Public Utilities Code, and undocumented vessels registered under Division 3.5 (commencing with Section 9840) of the Vehicle Code by registration to an out-of-City address and by a declaration under penalty of perjury, signed by the buyer, stating that such address is, in fact, his or her principal place of residence; and

b. With respect to commercial vehicles, by registration to a place of business out-of-City and declaration under penalty of perjury, signed by the buyer, that the vehicle will be operated from that address.

3. The sale of tangible personal property if the seller is obligated to furnish the property for a fixed price pursuant to a contract entered into prior to the operative date of this ordinance.

4. A lease of tangible personal property which is a continuing sale of such property, for any period of time for which the lessor is obligated to lease the property for an amount fixed by the lease prior to the operative date of this ordinance.

5. For the purposes of subparagraphs (3) and (4) of this section, the sale or lease of tangible personal property shall be deemed not to be obligated pursuant to a contract or lease for any period of time for which any party to the contract or lease has the unconditional right to terminate the contract or lease upon notice, whether or not such right is exercised

C. There are exempted from the use tax imposed by this ordinance, the storage, use or other consumption in this City of tangible personal property:

1. The gross receipts from the sale of which have been subject to a transactions tax under any state-administered transactions and use tax ordinance.

2. Other than fuel or petroleum products purchased by operators of aircraft and used or consumed by such operators directly and exclusively in the use of such aircraft as common carriers of persons or property for hire or compensation under a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued pursuant to the laws of this State, the United States, or any foreign government. This exemption is in addition to the exemptions provided in Sections 6366 and 6366.1 of the Revenue and Taxation Code of the State of California.

3. If the purchaser is obligated to purchase the property for a fixed price pursuant to a contract entered into prior to the operative date of this ordinance.

4. If the possession of, or the exercise of any right or power over, the tangible personal property arises under a lease which is a continuing purchase of such property for any period of time for which the lessee is obligated to lease the property for an amount fixed by a lease prior to the operative date of this ordinance.

5. For the purposes of subparagraphs (3) and (4) of this section, storage, use, or other consumption, or possession of, or exercise of any right or power over, tangible personal property shall be deemed not to be obligated pursuant to a contract or lease for any period of time for which any party to the contract or lease has the unconditional right to terminate the contract or lease upon notice, whether or not such right is exercised.

MEASURE K – continued

6. Except as provided in subparagraph (7), a retailer engaged in business in the City shall not be required to collect use tax from the purchaser of tangible personal property, unless the retailer ships or delivers the property into the City or participates within the City in making the sale of the property, including but not limited to, soliciting or receiving the order, either directly or indirectly, at a place of business of the retailer in the City or through any representative, agent, canvasser, solicitor, subsidiary, or person in the City under the authority of the retailer.

7. "A retailer engaged in business in the City" shall also include any retailer of any of the following: vehicles subject to registration pursuant to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 4000) of Division 3 of the Vehicle Code, aircraft licensed in compliance with Section 21411 of the Public Utilities Code, or undocumented vessels registered under Division 3.5 (commencing with Section 9840) of the Vehicle Code. That retailer shall be required to collect use tax from any purchaser who registers or licenses the vehicle, vessel, or aircraft at an address in the City.

D. Any person subject to use tax under this ordinance may credit against that tax any transactions tax or reimbursement for transactions tax paid to a district imposing, or retailer liable for a transactions tax pursuant to Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code with respect to the sale to the person of the property the storage, use or other consumption of which is subject to the use tax.

Sec. 3.32.120. Amendments.

All amendments subsequent to the effective date of this ordinance to Part 1 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code relating to sales and use taxes and which are not inconsistent with Part 1.6 and Part 1.7 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, and all amendments to Part 1.6 and Part 1.7 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, shall automatically become a part of this ordinance, provided however, that no such amendment shall operate so as to affect the rate of tax imposed by this ordinance.

Sec. 3.32.130. Enjoining Collection Forbidden.

No injunction or writ of mandate or other legal or equitable process shall issue in any suit, action or proceeding in any court against the State or the City, or against any officer of the State or the City, to prevent or enjoin the collection under this ordinance, or Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, of any tax or any amount of tax required to be collected.

Sec. 3.32.140. Citizens' oversight and annual audit.

A. There shall be a committee appointed by the City Council to review and report on the receipt of revenue and expenditure of funds from the tax authorized by this chapter ("revenues and expenditures"). The number, qualifications and duties of Committee members shall be established by ordinance or resolution of the City Council.

B. Beginning with the fiscal year that ends June 30, 2021, the City's independent auditors shall, as part of their annual audit of the City's financial statements, review the collection and expenditure of revenue from the tax authorized by this chapter. The auditors' review shall be a public document. The committee shall annually review the auditors' findings and report in writing to the City Council regarding the auditors' findings regarding the revenues and expenditures. The committee's statement shall be transmitted to the City Council for consideration at a public meeting.

MEASURE K – continued

C. By January 31, 2021, the City Council shall adopt a resolution establishing the composition of the committee and further defining its responsibilities consistently with this section. Provisions defining the scope of committee responsibilities and reporting requirements shall address bond oversight, in the event that a decision is made at a later time to sell bonds that are in part backed by the revenues referenced in this section. The City Council shall appoint the initial members of the committee no later than March 1, 2021.

Sec. 3.32.150. Termination Date.

The authority to levy the tax imposed by this chapter shall expire ten (10) years following its Operative Date.

SECTION 3. ADJUSTMENT OF APPROPRIATIONS LIMIT.

Pursuant to Article XIII B of the Constitution of the State of California and applicable laws, the appropriations limit for the City is hereby increased by the aggregate sum authorized to be levied by this tax for fiscal year 2020-2021 and each year thereafter.

SECTION 4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT.

The approval of this ordinance is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §§ 21000 et seq., "CEQA," and 14 Cal. Code Reg. §§ 15000 et seq., "CEQA Guidelines"). This ordinance imposes a general tax that can be used for any legitimate governmental purpose; it is not a commitment to any particular action. As such, under CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4), the ordinance is not a "project" within the meaning of CEQA because it creates a government funding mechanism that does not involve any commitment to any specific project that may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. If revenue from the tax were used for a purpose that would have either such effect, the City would undertake the required CEQA review for that project. Therefore, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15060, CEQA analysis is not required.

SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY. If any provision of this ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance relates to the levying and collecting of the City transactions and use taxes and shall take effect immediately.

SECTION 7. NOTICE. Upon approval by the voters, the City Clerk Administrator shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Ordinance and shall cause it to be published according to law.

Measure K

City of Willits Emergency Funding Transactions and Use Tax Ballot Measure

Impartial Analysis by City Attorney, City of Willits

The City Council of the City of Willits has placed Measure K on the November 3, 2020 ballot. California Revenue and Taxation Code section 7285.9 authorizes the City Council to levy a transactions and use tax by ordinance, provided the ordinance is approved by the voters.

If approved by Willits voters, Measure K will create a new three-quarters (0.75%) of one cent transactions and use tax for every dollar of taxable sales of goods in the City, and on the taxable storage, use or consumption in the City of goods purchased.

A transactions and use tax is administered by the State Board of Equalization and is commonly referred to as a sales tax. Once established, this tax is allocated to the city where any goods are delivered or placed into use. The transactions and use tax that would be established by Measure K is also considered to be a "general tax."

As a "general tax," the revenue generated by Measure K will be deposited in the City's general fund. The ballot question for the Measure states that the new tax is to be used for funding essential City services including police, parks, street maintenance, sports field maintenance and for other city facilities. As a "general tax," the City of Willits would be able to use tax proceeds for any legal governmental purpose without restriction. The City Finance Director estimates that the tax will generate \$1 million annually to the general fund.

The tax derived from Measure K would be paid in addition to current sales taxes and would be collected at the same time and in the same manner as existing sales taxes. The revenues raised by the tax would not be shared with the State or any other agency.

The ordinance provides that a committee of community members, appointed by the City Council, will review and report on the receipt of revenue and expenditure of funds from the tax. The City's independent auditors shall, as part of their annual audit of the City's financial statements, will also review the collection and expenditure of revenue from the tax. The auditors' report will be a public document and reviewed in an open and public Willits City Council meeting.

Because Measure K is a "general tax," it will be approved if a simple majority (50% + 1) of voters vote in favor of it. If approved, Measure K would become effective in 2021 and remain in effect for ten (10) years. The tax would expire at the end of the ten-year period unless it is reauthorized by a majority of the voters at a future election that occurs prior to the expiration of the tax.

s/H. James Lance
Willits City Attorney

**ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF
MEASURE K**

Make no mistake, if Measure K, the City of Willits Emergency Funding Ordinance, does not pass, the City of Willits will be forced to close local government operations including eliminating local police services; road, street, park and sports field maintenance; Community Facilities and Fields, and other essential city services like code enforcement, planning and building.

This emergency ordinance is for ten years only. All money raised from Measure K will stay in Willits to benefit local residents. It cannot be taken away by the state.

If Measure K does not pass, what does this mean to the average Willits resident?

- 1) Our local Willits police department will be eliminated;
- 2) All neighborhood street repair including maintenance of Main Street will be the County's responsibility;
- 3) Residents will have to travel to Ukiah to obtain permits and other government services;
- 4) The Community Center, home too many public and private events, will close.
- 5) Parks, Pool, and our Sports Fields will cease to be maintained.

Measure K requires a clear system of accountability, including a Citizens Financial Oversight Committee and mandatory financial audits to ensure the money is spent properly.

Most importantly, Measure K will ensure that we preserve local control, and all essential services and programs in our community.

Please vote YES on Measure K.

s/Gerardo Gonzalez, Mayor
City Council of the City of Willits

Dated: 8-4-20

NO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE K
WAS SUBMITTED.