

CITY OF HENDERSON

QUESTION NUM. 1

Shall the City of Henderson be authorized to levy an additional property tax of \$.06 per \$100 of assessed valuation for a period of 30 years, commencing July 1, 2025, for the purpose of improving public safety by reducing the response times, including for emergency medical services, of the Henderson Fire Department? A YES vote authorizes up to \$27,500,000 of general obligation bonds to be issued for the purpose of construction of new facilities and modernizing existing facilities and will generate additional revenue to be used to support the operations, maintenance, personnel and equipment needs of the Henderson Fire Department.

The total levy is estimated to result in an increase in property taxes of an average of \$21 per year for the owner of a new \$100,000 home. If approved, any property tax levied as authorized by this question would be exempted from the tax cap provisions established by the legislature in the 2005 session.

Yes

No

EXPLANATION & DIGEST

EXPLANATION – If approved the ballot measure would result in an increase to the property tax levy to property owners in the City of Henderson of six cents (\$.06) per \$100 of assessed valuation, which would result in an estimated increase of \$21.00 per year in property tax for an owner of a new home valued at \$100,000. Of the total property tax levy proposed, one cent (\$.01) per \$100 of assessed valuation will be used to repay \$27,500,000 of general obligation bonds that will be used for the construction of new facilities and modernizing existing facilities for the Henderson Fire Department. The remaining five cents (\$.05) per \$100 of assessed valuation will generate additional revenue to be used to support the ongoing operations, including emergency medical services, maintenance, personnel, and equipment needs of the Henderson Fire Department for the purpose of reducing response times. This term of the bond and property tax levy will be in place for a period of 30 years.

A “Yes” vote would allow the City of Henderson City Council to authorize up to \$27,500,000 of general obligation bonds to be issued for the purpose of construction and modernization of several fire stations over the next few years and to generate additional revenue to support the operations, maintenance, personnel and equipment needs for the Henderson Fire Department for the purpose of improving public safety and emergency medical services.

A “No” vote would result in no new revenue source from which the City of Henderson could finance the Henderson Fire Department construction and modernization projects. A “No” vote would also mean no additional revenue for the operations, maintenance, personnel, equipment and projects planned to ensure effective response times in the City of Henderson, including for emergency medical services.

DIGEST – If approved, this ballot measure will generate new public revenue in the form of property taxes. It would increase the property tax levied by the Clark County Assessor on property located within the City of Henderson. The proposed question does not add to, change, or repeal any existing law.

ARGUMENTS FOR PASSAGE

Vote *YES*. Henderson is a premier community, with a premier fire department, evidenced by five consecutive accreditations with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Only 23 fire departments in the U.S. have received 5 accreditations.¹

Because of the City's premier status, Henderson's population has grown dramatically from 284,968 in 2014 to 343,791 in 2024.^{2,3} Henderson's population is estimated to rise to 374,700 by 2029.³ This does not account for the nearly 900,000 annual visitors our City receives.⁴

This population increase impacts the fire department's number of calls for service and medical transports. In the last 5 years, calls have increased from 34,263 to 42,184, or 23.1%,⁵ and medical transports have increased from 19,146 to 23,818, or 24.4%.⁶ These statistics will only continue to increase as the City's population continues to grow. In order to maintain a premier fire department, providing exceptional and timely services to our community, the fire department will need to hire additional firefighters and paramedics as the population increases. They will also need additional equipment and fire stations to cover the growing areas of Henderson.

Currently, the fire department does not have a dedicated revenue stream.⁷ Each year, it must compete for budget money alongside the 16 other City departments. A Yes vote will authorize a minimal tax increase of \$0.06 per \$100. This minimal increase will create a dedicated source of revenue, which would be strictly allocated to support the necessary increases in staffing and equipment for essential Fire Department services. This will prevent the Fire Department from having to request diversion of funds from other City Departments that also benefit Henderson residents. At the same time, because Henderson property taxes are already low, this increase will still maintain Henderson's property taxes as one of the lowest for major cities in Nevada, at \$0.83,⁸ and far below the national average of \$0.99.⁹

The Fire department has a history of being a good steward of public funds, as evidenced by the recent recognition by the Nevada Taxpayer Association (NTA) with the 2023 Cashman Good Government Award, which recognizes superior stewardship of taxpayer dollars.¹⁰ With this new dedicated revenue stream, we can trust the fire department to continue to use our money wisely.

Vote *YES*. With this tax, we can ensure that all Henderson residents will continue to receive emergency services that are prompt, professional and premier.

The above argument was submitted by the Ballot Question Committee composed of citizens in favor of this questions as provided for in NRS 293.217. Committee members: Jason Andoscia—Chairperson, Douglas Hedger, and Heather Stamer.

1. Henderson Fire Department Annual Response Report 2023, page 16.
2. Clark County Department of Comprehensive Planning Report 8/2023.
3. www.WorldPopulationReview.com.
4. City Department of Economic Development estimate.
5. Henderson Fire Department Annual Response Report 2023, page 7.
6. Henderson Fire Department Annual Response Report 2023, page 14.
7. Information provided by Asst. City Manager's office/CFO.
8. NV Dept. of Taxation/Local Government Finance/Property Tax Rates for NV Local Governments FY 2023-2024.
9. Yahoo.com/news (KLAS articles 4/16/2024).
10. City of Henderson Finance Department Recognitions, page 2.

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENTS FOR PASSAGE

Those opposed to an increase in property taxes are not convinced by the Arguments For Passage statement above. The YES advocates accurately reference honors that our Henderson Fire Department has been awarded during the past five consecutive years. We, too, applaud our Fire Department not only on its achievements, but especially for its ability to maintain its effectiveness while nonetheless operating within a well-established budget. The opposition to the new tax regards this as clear evidence of a department's stellar performance operating within its pre-subscribed, approved and accepted budget. After all, this is much of the same challenge we all face – how to operate effectively within our budget constraints. To be clear, the seemingly small increase of \$.06 would be in addition to the current rate of \$.7708, meaning that the new rate of property taxation would be \$.8308 PER \$100 of Assessed value, as determined by the County Tax Assessor. Simply stated, a home with a Value of \$100,000 would pay an additional \$21 per year in property tax; a Value of \$300,000 would pay an additional \$63 per year; a Value of \$500,000 would pay an additional \$105 per year.

We say: NO TAX INCREASE.

The above rebuttal was submitted by the Ballot Question Committee composed of citizens in opposition to this question as provided for in NRS 293.217. Committee members: Richard Smith—Chairperson, Marilyn Ann Armanino, Timothy Brooks.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST PASSAGE

The City of Henderson now seeks to increase our taxes for the *purpose of improving public safety by reducing the response times, including for emergency medical services, of the Henderson Fire Department.*

Those standing in opposition to Ballot Question Number 1 do not purport to be the authority on how best to improve public safety through reducing response times for emergency medical and fire response. No doubt the rapid growth in our City has generated numerous requirements for additional and improved services; however, the prospect of raising property taxes now represents an increased tax burden at a time when inflation and increasing prices continue to erode our purchasing power.

Property taxes are paid by all property owners. Residential/home owners generally pay annually, upon receiving a statement of taxes due from the County Assessor's office. The amount of the homeowner's payment is based on the *assessed value of the home*. The assessed value is 35% of a home's market value, as established by the County Assessor. The homeowner is billed at the rate of .7708 for every \$100 of *assessed value*. The City now wants to increase that rate from .7708 to .8308, which will increase the tax burden by about \$21 per year for every \$100,000 of the home's value. For a home with a value of \$300,000, the increase would amount to approximately \$63 per year.

Obviously, the financial impact of this increase falls directly on property owners. Moreover, this increase will be in effect for the next 30 years, with no guarantee against requests for additional property tax increases during the coming years.

Prominent among the many favorable aspects of living in Henderson is the lower property tax factor of .7708, when compared to other municipalities. Eroding this tax advantage undermines this benefit which, in turn, could impact both home affordability, and our City's continued economic growth.

Clearly, and despite the rationale behind the request for the tax increase, no property owner wants to pay more in the form of property tax. Those who oppose this property tax increase respectfully suggest that the City might find additional funds for improved response times for emergency services through a reallocation and re-prioritization of its existing budget.

The above argument was submitted by the Ballot Question Committee composed of citizens in opposition to this question as provided for in NRS 293.217. Committee members: Richard Smith-Chairperson, Marilyn Ann Armanino, Timothy Brooks.

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENTS AGAINST PASSAGE

Inflation has impacted us all, including our Fire Department, resulting in rising costs for staff salaries, fire trucks, equipment and new fire stations, including additions and remodels.¹ Beyond the importance of sufficient response times protecting the health, lives and safety of our community, they also help property owners, by reducing property damage that would result from longer response times, and prevent the spread of fire to neighboring buildings.² For those with property insurance, quicker response times often result in reduced insurance premiums, helping to reduce home ownership costs.³

Currently, the Fire Department, in contrast to the Police Department, is forced to compete with other City Departments for appropriate funding. This increases the likelihood of underfunding a department which directly impacts our safety and well-being. With the dedicated revenue, our community will attain a level of safety we expect from our premier community for less than \$3.00 per month for a homeowner with a median market valued home of \$482,000.⁴

A vote of YES on this ballot question will have a significant impact towards having a responsive Fire Department that benefits our entire community, including real estate property owners.

The above rebuttal was submitted by the Ballot Question Committee composed of citizens in favor of this questions as provided for in NRS 293.217. Committee members: Jason Andoscia—Chairperson, Douglas Hedger, and Heather Stamer.

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1. <https://www.nvfc.org/new-survey-finds-volunteer-fire-departments-have-been-adversely-impacted-by-inflation/>
 2. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10694-019-00870-4?fromPaywallRec=true>
 3. <https://lyt.ai/blog/on-the-road/emergency-response-times-your-homeowners-insurance/>
 4. <https://www.zillow.com/home-values/11867/henderson-nv/>

ANTICIPATED FINANCIAL EFFECT

The total property tax levy of six cents (\$0.06) per \$100 of assessed valuation is estimated to result in an increase in property taxes of an average of \$21 per year for the owner of a new \$100,000 home. Of the total property tax levy, the property tax rate to be levied to repay the \$27,500,000 of general obligation bonds is expected to be one cent (\$0.01) per \$100 of assessed valuation during the 30-year term. The interest rate is anticipated to be 6.0% and the total bond repayment is anticipated to be \$59,575,700 which consists of \$32,075,700 in interest and \$27,500,000 in bond principal. The actual interest rate and bond repayment may be higher or lower than the above estimate, depending on interest rates and other bond terms at the time the bonds are sold. The remaining five cents (\$0.05) per \$100 of assessed valuation will generate additional revenue to be used to support the operations including emergency medical services, maintenance, personnel, and equipment needs of the Henderson Fire Department for the purpose of reducing response times. This total property tax levy will be for a period of 30 years. If this question is approved by the voters, any property tax levied as authorized by this question will be outside of the caps on a taxpayer's liability for property (ad valorem) taxes established by the 2005 Nevada Legislature.