City of Culver City

Staff Report

File #: 27-126, **Version:** 1 **Item #:** A-1.

CC - ACTION ITEM: (1) Adoption of a Resolution to Place a Measure on the Ballot for the General Municipal Election to be Held in the City of Culver City on Tuesday, November 3, 2026 to Increase the Rate of the Transient Occupancy Tax (Hotel Tax) to the Rate of 16%; (2) (If Desired) Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing the City Council and/or Certain Council Members to Submit Primary Ballot Arguments Regarding the Ballot Measure; (3) (If Desired) Creation and Appointment of Members to Ad-Hoc Subcommittee(s) to Draft and/or Submit Primary and Rebuttal Ballot Arguments; and (4) Instruction to the City Attorney to Prepare the Impartial Analysis for the Ballot Measure.

Meeting Date: July 27, 2026

Contact Person/Dept: Stephen Agostini/City Manager's Office
Jeremy Bocchino/City Clerk's Office
Michael Cobden/City Attorney's Office
Michael Towler/Finance Department

Phone Number: (310) 253-5851

Fiscal Impact: Yes [X] No [] **General Fund:** Yes [X] No []

Attachments: Yes [X] No []

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (07/22/2026)

Department Approval: Lea Eriksen, Senior Assistant City Manager (07/21/2026)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council (1) adopt a resolution to place a measure on the ballot for the General Municipal Election to be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2026 to increase the rate of the Transient Occupancy Tax (Hotel Tax) to the rate of 16% (Attachment 1); (2) (if desired) adopt a resolution authorizing the City Council and/or certain Council Members to submit primary ballot arguments regarding the ballot measure (Attachment 2); (3) (if desired) creation and appointment of Council Members to an ad-hoc subcommittee to draft and/or submit primary and rebuttal ballot arguments; and (4) instruction to the City Attorney to prepare the impartial analysis for the ballot measure.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

On June 22, 2026, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2026-R076 calling the General Municipal on Tuesday, November 3, 2026 to elect Two Council Members and to place on the ballot one proposed Charter amendment regarding lowering the voting age to 16 for City and School District elections, requested that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles consolidate the Election and render full services to the City of Culver City, and adopted a resolution approving rebuttal arguments.

On July 13, 2026, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2026-R083 certifying a citizen's initiative petition and placing a second measure for a Parcel Tax on the ballot entitled "Culver City Public Schools Excellence In Education Act Of 2026."

Also on July 13, 2026, the City Council discussed and approved the placement of a ballot measure to increase the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) to the rate of 16%, tentatively called the "Culver City Community Safety And Public Services Measure."

The TOT Ballot Measure

The proposed ballot measure question follows:

Measure _____ Shall an ordinance to maintain Culver City 911 emergency response/ firefighter/ paramedic/ police staffing; affordable housing/ mental health/ homeless reduction programs; improve streets, roads, sidewalks, public transportation, storm drains, infrastructure, parks and provide other general fund services by raising Culver City's transient occupancy tax paid by hotel/ motel guests from 14% to 16%, generating approximately $2,000,000 annually until ended by voters, requiring annual audits, public spending disclosures, with all funds used locally, be adopted?"	YES____
	NO ____

DISCUSSION

The Culver City Municipal Code ("CCMC") currently imposes a Transient Occupancy Tax ("TOT") at the rate of fourteen percent (14%) of the rent charged by hotel and short term rental ("STR") operators. (CCMC § 11.02.105.) This tax is paid by the person renting the room and is intended to help defray the costs of temporary stays in the City by visitors, including use of streets, parks, and

public safety infrastructure. Visitors enjoy the same benefits provided by the City to its residents, but for only limited periods of time. Therefore, it is logical and reasonable that they pay a small portion of general tax dollars to pay for such services.

The Los Angeles region, including Culver City, is planning to host the world for the 2028 Olympic Games, which will result in an unprecedented increase in visitors to Culver City and our Hotels and STRs. The City has already begun to expend additional general fund dollars in preparation for this event and anticipates that the impacts on the City and governmental services will be significant. Local businesses, especially hotels and STR operators, will benefit significantly from this influx of visitors. The City would like to be able to capture some of this additional revenue to assist in paying for the burdens on the General Fund that this hosting will entail.

The proposed resolution will place an ordinance on the ballot for the voters of the City to approve. This ordinance will amend the Municipal Code to increase a general tax, which requires approval by a majority of the voters of the City under Article XIIIC, section 2 of the California Constitution. If approved, the tax increase will take effect on March 1, 2027.

Authorize the City Council and/or Certain Council Members to Submit Primary and Rebuttal Arguments Regarding the Ballot Measure

If the City Council would like to submit an argument in favor of the ballot measure, then it is recommended that an Ad Hoc Subcommittee be created and members appointed thereto to draft the argument in favor of the measure by resolution (see Attachment 2). The Subcommittee may either submit the argument directly or bring back at a future meeting for approval and submittal by the full Council. A third option is to authorize that the argument drafted by the subcommittee may be submitted by the full Council without review and approval at a City Council meeting. The guidelines below must be followed:

Only one ballot argument for, and one ballot argument against, each measure and rebuttals to each may be printed in the Voter Information Guide (formerly known as the Sample Ballot.). Under Elections Code section 9282(a), “[[f]or measures placed on the ballot by petition, the persons filing an initiative petition pursuant to this article may file a written argument in favor of the ordinance, and the legislative body may submit an argument against the ordinance."

In the event more than one argument for or against the measure is submitted to the City Clerk within the time prescribed, Elections Code Section 9287 states that the Elections Official must give preference and priority, in the order named, to the arguments as follows:

- The legislative body, or member(s) of the legislative body authorized by that body;
- The individual voter, or bona fide association of citizens, or combination of voters and associations, who are the bona fide sponsors or proponents of the measures;
- Bona fide associations of citizens; and
- Individual voters who are eligible to vote on the measures.

Should the City Council decide to submit an argument as a body, it is automatically placed in the Voter Information Guide. If the City Council decides to have some of its members submit an argument, those members need to be designated by the City Council for their argument(s) to receive

priority. The City Council should decide whether it will submit initial and rebuttal arguments for or against the measures as a body or designate individual Council Members to submit those arguments. If individual members are to be designated, then the City Council should make those designations at this meeting. Any rebuttal arguments submitted shall comply with the requirements set forth in Resolution No. 2026-R080 adopted by the City Council on June 22, 2026.

Please note, that if more than two City Council Members will be working together to write, or intend to give comments on the same argument, then, pursuant to the Brown Act, the discussions and comments among those Council Members may only occur during a duly noticed public meeting of the City Council. Based on the calendar for the November 3, 2026 election, primary arguments are due to the City Clerk's Office no later than the close of business (5:30 PM) on (E-81) Friday, August 14, 2026 and shall not exceed 300 words in length. Should the City Council determine it would like to review and approve the primary arguments written by the subcommittee, staff recommends such review and approval be agendized for the August 10, 2026 City Council Meeting to submit the official City Council argument prior to the August 14, 2026 deadline.

The deadline for submission of rebuttal arguments to the City Clerk's Office is no later than close of business (5:30 PM) on (E-71) Monday, August 24, 2026 and shall not exceed 250 words. If a rebuttal argument is necessary, and the City Council wishes to review and approve a rebuttal argument written by the subcommittee(s), then such review and approval would need to be conducted by the City Council prior to the deadline for rebuttals, which would require a special City Council Meeting.

Naming of Measure

Cities are requested to provide three choices; in case a designation is unavailable.

Unless otherwise directed by the City Council, the City Clerk intends to submit to the County three choices of "T", H", or "R" for the TOT ballot measure.

City Attorney Impartial Analysis

Section 9280 of the Elections Code requires the City Attorney to prepare an impartial analysis of each of the measures, showing the effect of each measure on the existing law and the operation of each measure. The impartial analysis must be submitted to the City Clerk no later than the close of business (5:30 PM) on Friday, August 14, 2026.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

The estimated total costs for the election ranges depending on the number of pages required in the ballot booklets, the number of candidates, as well as the number of ballot measures for the election. A range of $200,000 to $250,000 will allow for up to 4 ballot measures and 8 candidates total for the two positions. The Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 includes sufficient funding for these costs in Account No. 10111100.610600 (City Clerk - Election Services).

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2026-07-27 - ATT 1_Proposed Resolution Calling for the Placement of a Measure on the Ballot for the November 3, 2026 General Municipal Election for the Submission to the Qualified Voters of an Ordinance to Increase the Rate of the Transient Occupancy Tax (Hotel Tax) to the Rate of 16%.

2. 2026-07-27 - ATT 2_ Proposed Resolution authorizing the City Council and/or certain Council Members to submit primary ballot arguments regarding the ballot measure.

MOTIONS

That the City Council:

1. Adopt the proposed resolution Calling for the Placement of a Measure on the Ballot for the November 3, 2026 General Municipal Election for the Submission to the Qualified Voters of an Ordinance to Increase the Rate of the Transient Occupancy Tax (Hotel Tax) to the Rate of 16%; and,

2. (If desired) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Council and/or certain Council Members to submit a primary argument regarding the ballot measure; and,

3. (If desired) Create an ad-hoc subcommittee to draft and/or submit primary and rebuttal ballot arguments and appoint two Council Members thereto; and,

4. Instruct the City Clerk to post a Notice Setting the Date after which no arguments may be submitted; and,

5. Instruct the City Attorney to prepare the impartial analysis for the ballot measure.