

**TOWN OF CORTE MADERA MEASURE C**

**FULL TEXT OF MEASURE C  
EXHIBIT A**

ORDINANCE NO. 927

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF  
CORTE MADERA IMPOSING A SPECIAL TAX  
FOR PARAMEDIC AND/OR EMERGENCY  
MEDICAL SERVICES**

The people of the Town of Corte Madera do ordain as follows:

Section 1: A new chapter 3.50 is hereby added to the Town of Corte Madera Municipal Code to read as follows:

Chapter 3.50

CORTE MADERA PARAMEDIC AND/OR  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES TAX

- 3.50.010 Authority, purpose and intent.
- 3.50.020 Definitions.
- 3.50.030 Tax imposed.
- 3.50.040 Use of tax proceeds, appropriations limit.
- 3.50.050 Method of collection.
- 3.50.060 Delinquency.
- 3.50.070 Amendment of chapter.
- 3.50.080 Severability.
- 3.50.090 Two-thirds voter approval, effective date.
- 3.50.100 Sunset provision.
- 3.50.110 Execution.

3.50.010 Authority, purpose and intent. It is the sole purpose and intent of this chapter to impose a special tax on residential and nonresidential property within the Town of Corte Madera (Town) for paramedic and/or emergency medical services.

3.50.020 Definitions. The definitions given in this section shall govern the construction of this chapter.

(1) Floor area. "Floor area" shall be defined as the total enclosed area of all floors of a building measured to the outside face of the walls.

(2) Nonresidential Use. "Nonresidential use" shall be defined as any building which is designed, intended, or used for any purpose other than a residential use, including, but not limited to, commercial, industrial and office uses. A hotel, motel and all residential units contained therein, as defined below, shall be treated as a nonresidential use.

(3) Residential Unit. "Residential unit" shall be defined as each building or portion thereof, containing one or more rooms, a separate bathroom, and a single kitchen, as defined in Section 18.04.400 of the Corte Madera Municipal Code, designed for or occupied by one family or by one or more individuals.

3.50.030 Tax imposed. A special tax for the purpose outlined in Section 3.50.010 shall be imposed on nonresidential uses and on residential units in the amount specified below for each of the fiscal years 2011-2012 to 2014-2015.

(1) Nonresidential uses:

A. Sixty dollars (\$60.00) per year for each 1,000 square feet of floor area for fiscal year 2011-2012.

<p><b>C</b> <b>MEASURE C:</b> In order to continue existing emergency services in the Town of Corte Madera, shall there be a continuation of the special tax for paramedic and/or emergency medical services for four more years at the annual amount of \$60.00 per residence and per 1,000 square feet of floor area for non-residential uses for fiscal year 2011-2012, increasing a maximum of \$5.00 yearly, if needed, with the appropriations limit increasing by the amount of said tax?</p>	<b>YES</b>
	<b>NO</b>

**TOWN ATTORNEY'S IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS  
OF MEASURE C**

If this measure is approved by the requisite two-thirds vote, an ordinance shall be adopted in the Town of Corte Madera imposing a special tax to pay for paramedic and/or emergency medical services (EMS). This is not the first time an EMS tax has been submitted to and approved by the Town's voters. A special EMS tax was first approved by the Town's voters on June 7, 1983, and was last approved by the Town's voters in November 2006. The tax expired on June 30, 2011. Voter approval of this measure is required in order to continue the provision of EMS services at existing levels.

If approved, this measure will impose a yearly tax for EMS services for the current and the next three fiscal years. A "fiscal year" runs from July 1 of one year through June 30 of the next year. For fiscal year 2011-2012, the tax amount will be \$60,000 for each residential unit. For non-residential uses, the tax rate for fiscal year 2011-2012 will be \$60.00 per 1,000 square feet of enclosed floor area. This is the same EMS tax rate that was in effect in fiscal year ending June 30, 2011. The tax rate on residential and nonresidential uses may increase \$5.00 per year for each of the remaining three years the tax is in effect as necessary to meet annual expenditures of providing EMS services. These annual increases are not automatic. They must be approved by the City Council at a public meeting on an annual basis.

The measure provides that the tax proceeds must be separately accounted for and may only be used for the provision of EMS services. The measure also provides that the EMS tax will be collected by the Marin County Tax Collector along with and subject to the same rules applicable to the ad valorem property tax. The tax will automatically terminate on June 30, 2015.

s/JEFFREY A. WALTER  
Town Attorney

B. Beginning with fiscal year 2012-2013, the Town Council may, based upon a budget recommended to it, approve an annual increase to said amount not to exceed Five dollars (\$5.00) annually to a maximum of Seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per year for each 1,000 square feet of floor area for fiscal year 2014-2015.

(2) Residential Units:

A. Sixty dollars (\$60.00) per year for each residential unit for fiscal year 2011-2012.

B. Beginning with fiscal year 2012-2013, the Town Council may, based upon a budget recommended to it, approve an annual increase to said amount not to exceed Five dollars (\$5.00) annually to a maximum of Seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per year for each residential unit for fiscal year 2014-2015.

3.50.040 Use of tax proceeds, appropriations limit. The proceeds of the special tax imposed by this chapter shall be used solely for the purpose of providing paramedic and/or emergency medical services. The appropriations limit of the Town shall be increased by the proceeds received from this special tax for each of the four years of this special tax.

3.50.050 Method of collection. The special tax imposed by this chapter shall be due from every person who owns real property within the Town on which is located a residential unit(s) and/or a nonresidential use(s) and as reflected upon the rolls of the Marin County Assessor at the same time ad valorem tax is due. This special tax shall be collected by the Marin County Tax Collector at the same time, in the same manner, and subject to the same terms and conditions, including penalties and interest, as the ad valorem tax. The full amount due under this chapter shall constitute a debt to the Town. An action for the collection of any tax due hereunder may be commenced in the name of the Town, or its assignee, in any court having jurisdiction of the cause.

3.50.060 Delinquency. To any amount of the tax created by this chapter which becomes delinquent, the Marin County Tax Collector shall add a penalty in an amount equal to any penalty owing for delinquencies in the ad valorem property tax. The tax and penalty shall bear interest at the same rate as the rate for unpaid ad valorem tax until paid.

3.50.070 Amendment of chapter. The Town Council is hereby authorized to amend this chapter by three (3) affirmative votes of its members for the limited purposes of carrying out the general purposes of this chapter, to conform the provisions of this chapter to applicable state law, to permit the County Tax Collector to collect the special tax levied by this chapter, or to reassign the duties of public officials under this chapter. In no event, however, may the Town Council increase the tax amount specified in Section 3.50.30 or modify the purposes for which the tax may be utilized as provided for in Section 3.50.040 without the approval of two-thirds of the voters of the Town voting on the question.

3.50.080 Severability. If any section, or part thereof, of this chapter is held invalid or unenforceable by any court and such judgment becomes final, then that section,

or part thereof, may be amended by this Council, by a majority vote, to conform with the judgment of such court, provided such amendment is consistent with the purpose and intent of this chapter. If any section, subsection, sentence, phrase or clause of this chapter is for any reason held to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this chapter. The People of the Town of Corte Madera hereby declare that they would have adopted this chapter and each section, subsection, sentence, phrase or clause thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, phrases, or clauses may be declared invalid.

3.50.090 Two-thirds approval, effective date. An election to confirm and approve this Ordinance has been set for November 8, 2011. This ordinance shall be effective only if approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the voters voting upon this Ordinance and shall go into effect ten (10) days after the vote is declared by the County Election Department.

3.50.100 Sunset provision. This Ordinance shall expire and be of no further force or effect after midnight, June 30, 2015.

3.50.110 Execution. The Town Mayor is hereby authorized to attest to the adoption of this Ordinance by signing where indicated below.

I certify that the foregoing Ordinance was PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED by the people of the Town of Corte Madera voting on the 8th day of November 2011.

s/ALEXANDRA COCK  
Mayor

ATTEST:

s/CHRISTINE GREEN  
Town Clerk

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE C

This is not a new tax. It is a continuation of a special tax approved by an overwhelming majority of Corte Madera voters starting in 1983. Subsequently, with these tax revenues and based on the need for a closer ambulance, the Corte Madera Fire Department began providing paramedic services by hiring paramedic/firefighters and responding with an ambulance based at Station 13 on Paradise Drive. There is also a first responder paramedic/firefighter located at Station 14 on Tamalpais Drive. This arrangement gives us one of the best paramedic services and shortest response times in Marin.

The tax provides a significant portion of the revenue needed to fund the existing paramedic ambulance services in Town. Without the tax, the Advanced Life Support services provided by the Corte Madera Fire Department paramedics primarily for Corte Madera residents will be in jeopardy.

Failure to pass this tax will result in loss of paramedic/firefighters in our Corte Madera Fire Department. Emergency paramedic ambulance service would need to be provided by an ambulance miles away, with the strong possibility of longer response times. Response time and rapid intervention are critical to saving lives in cardiac events, traumatic injuries, and other medical emergencies. A delay of even seconds in care and/or transport can literally mean the difference between life and death.

This tax would be at the same rate as the prior Paramedic Tax of \$60.00 per household. Any increases must be approved by the Corte Madera Town Council during a public hearing. The maximum tax increase over the next 4 years is \$15.00, for a total of \$75.00. This compares favorably to paramedic taxes in Novato and San Rafael and will ensure the continuation of our excellent paramedic services.

Please vote "YES" on this measure. The life you save may be your own!

s/ALEXANDRA COCK

Mayor, Town of Corte Madera

s/BOB RAVASIO

Vice-Mayor, Town of Corte Madera

s/CARLA CONDON

Councilmember, Town of Corte Madera

s/DIANE FURST

Councilmember, Town of Corte Madera

s/ROBERT BUNDY, MD

Retired Emergency Physician

## REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE C

"The life you save may be your own"

One of the primary responsibilities of Corte Madera is to provide for the **public safety** of its residents. This tax measure is another example of the Town Council's **misplaced priorities**. It should revise its budget and first pay for paramedic services to save our lives before funding non-essentials. Ask the residents to support a parcel tax to pay for beautification projects as San Rafael voters agreed to do. **What's more important for Corte Madera - people or plants?**

Corte Madera has consolidated its police department with Larkspur, is combining some police services with San Anselmo, and contracts for some of its landscaping needs, including beautification. Two things have happened in each case. Significant sums of money have been saved and the service is equal to or better than before.

The Town Council should do more to **save our money** while providing basic services rather than ask us for more money, threatening to close the Paradise Drive Fire station, lay off firefighters/paramedics and put lives at risk if the Paramedic Parcel Tax, **which was defeated last year**, is not reinstated.

**Let's defeat this measure again. Basic services shouldn't require parcel taxes. Corte Madera should find the necessary \$397,000, which is less than 2% of its 20+ million dollar budget.**

**Don't be scared. Vote against Measure C.**

s/CHARLES H. CONRAD

s/GEORGE R. TOPOR

s/STUART JACOBSON

s/SUSAN TOPOR

## ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE C

**Corte Madera's current \$20+ million budget is intended to pay for basic services – Police, Fire, Paramedics and Public Works, including beautification. We are now asked to supplement that by reinstating a \$60.00 per year Parcel Tax for Paramedic services (with annual increases.) Corte Madera should look at its priorities and get its house in financial order before asking us for more money to pay for previous financial mistakes? (Please see June 2011 Grand Jury report on Corte Madera's finances.)**

Is a Parcel Tax for Police, Fire, and Public Works next?

The proposed Parcel Tax would generate approximately \$400,000.00 annually. The Town presently provides the same dollar amount (less than 2% of the annual budget). Another \$700,000.00 comes from insurance reimbursements. **Why won't Corte Madera fund our basic emergency services?**

It has been stated that failure to pass the measure would result in closing the Paradise Drive Fire Station, **which isn't always staffed 24 hours a day**, personnel layoffs and a potential lower level of service. We are confident that the other communities and private services would **continue to provide comparable service and mutual assistance.**

Yes, budget cuts have occurred (though furlough days have ended), but why not consider increased consolidation or looking at contracting as a way to save money? Our combined Police Department (with Larkspur) saves us **\$500K+** per year. **Consolidation Candidates: The Fire Department** which includes paramedics (one of the more expensive units in the County). According to the current Town budget, **the average fire department employee including paramedics costs \$195,000 per year. Public Works and Park and Rec.** Combining those functions **could generate \$800,000+ per year in savings.**

Please vote **against the measure.** Perhaps this will let the town know, with its \$20+ million budget, to fund our basic services first.

s/CHARLES H. CONRAD

s/GEORGE R. TOPOR

s/STUART JACOBSON

s/SUSAN TOPOR

## REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE C

Opponents of Measure C agree that paramedic services are needed. They think that if we vote this tax down, our Town will somehow find the money, or other communities and private services would deliver comparable paramedic services without the tax. That's simply not true.

If Measure C fails, six of our paramedic/firefighters will be terminated, the fire station on Paradise Drive will have to close, and we will be forced to negotiate with Ross Valley Paramedic Authority (RVPA) for paramedic services, without the funds needed to pay for them.

Before we had our own Corte Madera Paramedic Unit based at Station 13 on Paradise Drive, our paramedic tax dollars paid the RVPA to respond to Corte Madera's emergency medical calls with their one ambulance. Because their ambulance is stationed miles away in Ross and slowed by cross-county traffic, we experienced unacceptably long response times. Seconds can mean the difference between life and death.

For that reason, a citizens' committee in the 1990s recommended using the paramedic tax approved in 1983 to fund our own paramedics and ambulance. We now have paramedic services in Corte Madera among the best in Marin, with average response times twice as fast as those provided by RVPA.

Continuation of the \$60 per year paramedic tax (just \$5 per month) is an investment in survival. It could save your life – or the life of someone you love.

For facts about Measure C and grassroots efforts to save our paramedic services, visit [www.CMParamedics.org](http://www.CMParamedics.org) and join us - Vote Yes on Measure C.

Signed,

s/HARRY SCHRIEBMAN

Corte Madera Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

s/BECKY REED

Co-chair, Citizens for Saving Paramedic Services

s/KITTY PROSSER

Corte Madera Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

s/MONICA BONNY

Trustee, Tamalpais Union High School District Board

s/BRANDON HEMLEY

President, Christmas Tree Hilldwellers Association