

Novato Community Update

INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OF NOVATO



CITY OF NOVATO
CALIFORNIA



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Protecting **ESSENTIAL SERVICES**

Survey Says! Life is Good in Novato

In a recent survey, almost 80% of Novato residents rated the quality of life as excellent or good. Nearly two-thirds of residents indicated they are satisfied with the job the City is doing providing services. While these are strong marks, the City is proactively working to ensure that the City's ongoing budget deficit does not impact vital services, community safety and quality of life.

Ongoing Budget Challenges

For several years, the City has experienced a growing budget deficit. The ongoing projected budget deficit, exceeding \$2 million per year, will continue to grow without service reductions or enhanced revenue. While Novato has cut city staffing by over 30 positions to reduce operating costs, one-time COVID recovery and stimulus funding helped protect essential services like police patrols and 9-1-1 response, street repair, and park maintenance from cuts. With one-time funding now expended and depleted, Novato is evaluating sustainable budget solutions to protect these services going forward.



Limited Locally Controlled Funding

Several root causes of Novato's funding challenges exist. Nearly 40% of the City's funding comes from local property taxes and Novato receives the smallest share of local property tax revenue of all Marin County cities. While cities like Mill Valley, Larkspur, San Anselmo and Belvedere receive over 20% of the property tax revenue generated locally, out of every dollar Novato residents pay in property tax, only 7¢ returns to the City. Similarly, Novato's sales tax rate is the second lowest in Marin County, and of the 8.5% sales tax collected in Novato, only 1.25% comes back to the City.

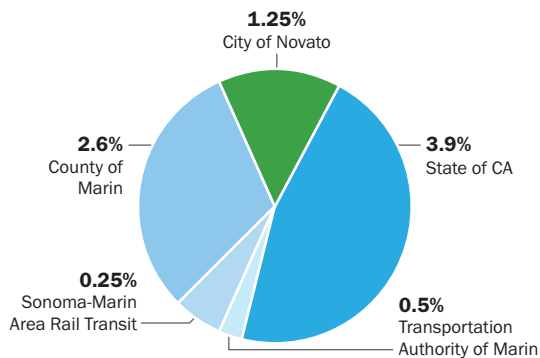


Protecting City Services with Enhanced Local Funding

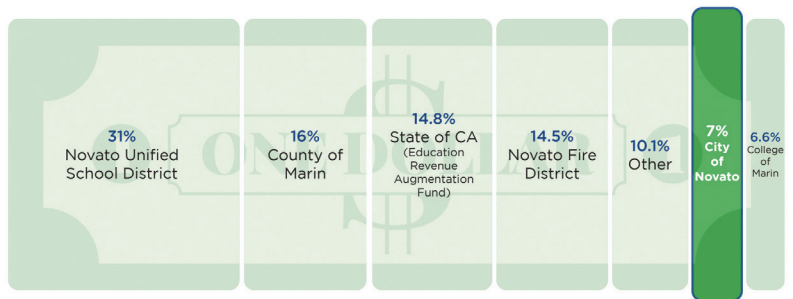
To protect city services that the community values, the City is evaluating options for ensuring that more of the funding generated in Novato, stays in Novato. In a recent independent study of Novato's budget, the Marin County Civil Grand Jury recommended that Novato increase the portion of the sales tax rate that is locally controlled, so that those funds stay in Novato and cannot be taken away by the County or regional agencies.

and QUALITY OF LIFE in Novato

Of the 8.5% sales tax collected in Novato, only 1.25% returns to the City of Novato.

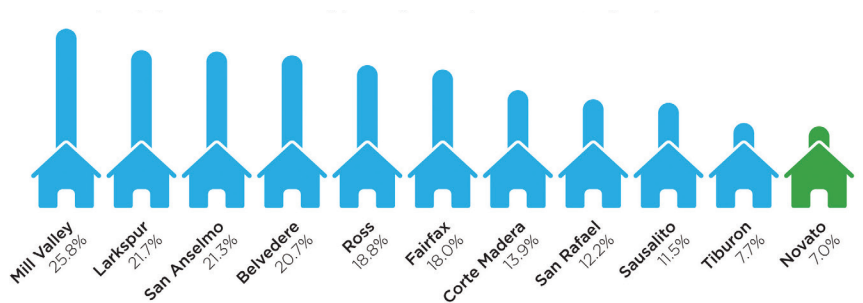


Only 7% of property taxes paid by Novatans returns to support the City of Novato.






Share of Property Taxes Paid

The City of Novato receives the smallest share of property tax paid out of all Marin County cities. Property tax helps pay for critical services such as 9-1-1 response, repair of streets and roadways, wildfire prevention, and maintenance of public parks and facilities.



PROTECTING ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Nearly 70% of the City Budget funds city workers who deliver vital services to local residents, with the largest portions being:

-  Police officers and emergency services personnel focused on maintaining public safety
-  Public works employees who fix potholes, repair streets and sidewalks, maintain parks and repair city facilities
-  Parks, recreation and community services workers who run programs for children, youth, families and seniors

Novato has already eliminated over 30 staff positions, with a focus on positions that do not directly impact high priority services for residents. With an ongoing projected budget deficit exceeding \$2 million per year, additional cuts will likely impact priority services unless new funding can be secured.

If you have questions about the Novato City Budget, local city services or want to share your thoughts, please email AssistantCityManager@novato.org or call 415.899.8903.



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In addition to providing services to residents, the City of Novato is also responsible for maintaining city infrastructure and facilities. The City Council adopts a five-year Capital Improvement Plan that allocates funding to high priority projects. The City also leverages federal, state and regional funding as well as grants to complete many capital projects.

Novato Boulevard Improvements

This project creates a new 3-lane layout for Novato Boulevard between Diablo and Grant Avenues. The improvements enable the roadway and intersections to operate more effectively and enhance safety and usability for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. This project includes approximately \$10 million in Transportation Authority of Marin Measure A Major Streets and Roads funding.



Grant Avenue Bridge Widening

This project widens and rehabilitates the existing bridge on Grant Avenue between 8th Street and Virginia Avenue to improve access and usability for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. This project received a \$3.5 million Federal Highway Bridge Program grant.



Pioneer Park Playground Improvements

Pioneer Park delivers Marin County's first inclusive playground serving children ages 2 to 12 years old. The equipment and amenities, suitable for children of all abilities, features new play and shade structures and provides a safe gathering space that encourages and promotes inclusive play. This project received a \$50,000 grant through the CA Parks and Recreation Society, PlayCore and GameTime.

GET INVOLVED – ATTEND A MEETING

The Novato City Council and the Finance Advisory Commission hold meetings regularly to discuss City business. Learn more about how to participate at an upcoming meeting at novato.org/agendas.

2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

Novato City Council Meetings

2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm

Finance Advisory Commission

3rd Thursday of the month at 7:30am

More information, including financial documents, available at: novato.org/localfunding

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