



GRASS VALLEY

City Council Regular Meeting, Capital Improvements Authority and Redevelopment "Successor Agency"

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Council Chambers, Grass Valley City Hall | 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, California

Telephone: (530) 274-4310 - Fax: (530) 274-4399

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Web Site: www.cityofgrassvalley.com

MINUTES

Mayor Jan Arbuckle, Vice Mayor Hilary Hodge, Councilmember Bob Branstrom,
Councilmember Haven Caravelli, Councilmember Tom Ivy

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:02PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of allegiance led by Mayor Arbuckle.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Councilmember Bob Branstrom

Councilmember Haven Caravelli

Councilmember Tom Ivy

Vice Mayor Hilary Hodge

Mayor Jan Arbuckle

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion made to approve the agenda as submitted by Councilmember Branstrom, Seconded by Vice Mayor Hodge.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Branstrom, Councilmember Caravelli, Councilmember Ivy, Vice Mayor Hodge, Mayor Arbuckle

REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

No reportable action.

PUBLIC COMMENT

In person: Dave Williams, Robin Galvin-Davies, Rachel Grivas, Judy Penrose, Brenda English, Aria Griffis, and Courtney Williams.

CONSENT ITEMS

Motion made to approve consent as submitted by Vice Mayor Hodge, Seconded by Councilmember Branstrom.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Branstrom, Councilmember Caravelli, Councilmember Ivy, Vice Mayor Hodge, Mayor Arbuckle

1. Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 10, 2023.

Recommendation: Council approve minutes as submitted.

2. Approval of the Town Hall Meeting Minutes of October 10, 2023.

Recommendation: Council approve minutes as submitted.

3. Local Emergency Proclamation (Winter Storm of February 2023)

CEQA: Not a project

- Recommendation:** To continue the Winter Storm February 24th, 2023 to March 1st, 2023 proclamation declaring a Local State of Emergency
4. Local Emergency Proclamation (Drought Conditions)
CEQA: Not a Project.
Recommendation: Drought Conditions proclamation declaring a Local State of Emergency
 5. Job Description for Pop-Ups Coordinator
CEQA: Not a Project.
Recommendation: That Council approve a job description for a Pop-Ups Coordinator.
 6. Downtown Streetscape Improvements Project - Budget Amendment
CEQA: Exempt - Not a Project
Recommendation: That Council authorize the Finance Director to execute a budget amendment to reallocate \$150,000 in funds to the Downtown Streetscape Improvements Project

ADMINISTRATIVE

7. Consider Resolution No. 2023-62 of the City Council of the City of Grass Valley calling an election on March 5, 2024, to consider a transactions and use tax for Fire Resiliency and Vegetation Management
CEQA: Not a Project.
Recommendation: That Council adopt Resolution No. 2023-62 of the City Council of the City of Grass Valley calling a special election on March 5, 2024, to consider a transactions and use tax, requesting to consolidate the elections with other elections the Registrar of Voters is to administer on March 5, 2024, and authorizing the City Clerk to perform all other acts necessary or required by law to implement this Resolution and related to the Special Election.
City Attorney, David Ruderman, announced a change to the Resolution number and changes to the Resolution. City Manager, Tim Kiser, gave brief presentation to Council.
Public Comment: Brenda English, Robin Galvin-Davies, Judy Penrose, Larry Hoffman.
Council asked for clarification on the use of the phrase "fiscal emergency", and asked for more collaboration with Nevada County and Nevada City. Council asked Staff to communicate with Nevada County and Nevada City to discuss property fire insurance and how, working together, rates may be better controlled.
Motion made to adopt Resolution No. 2023-62 of the City Council of the City of Grass Valley calling a special election on March 5, 2024, to consider a transactions and use tax, requesting to consolidate the elections with other elections the Registrar of Voters is to administer on March 5, 2024, and authorizing the City Clerk to perform all other acts necessary or required by law to implement this Resolution and related to the Special Election by Vice Mayor Hodge, Seconded by Councilmember Branstrom.
Voting Yea: Councilmember Branstrom, Councilmember Caravelli, Councilmember Ivy, Vice Mayor Hodge, Mayor Arbuckle
8. Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
CEQA: Not a Project
Recommendation: That Council 1) receive an update on the City's efforts to date on procuring electric vehicle (EV) charging stations; and 2) provide direction to staff on proceeding with a request for proposals.
City Manager, Tim Kiser, gave presentation to Council.


Council discussed the need to reasonably priced EV chargers, the importance of independent charging stations as opposed to Tesla charging stations, discussed e-bike charging and storage, asked for clarification on the difference between owning and leasing, asked if there are any local companies, asked if Truckee or Nevada City has installed EV chargers and how they have worked for them.

BRIEF REPORTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilmember Caravelli enjoyed the lights downtown and announced the upcoming ERC Summit on 10/26. Councilmember Ivy attended the Solid and Hazardous Waste event and the Pioneer board meeting. Councilmember Branstrom volunteered at the NCCA career technical education events, partook in the Open Studio event, attended a concert from In Concert Sierra, CalCities webinar, LAFCO conference, celebrated his mother 101 birthday, Ken Getz celebration of life, and attended the Jones Hospital plaque dedication. Vice Mayor Hodge participated in the Sac Cities League cornhole competition, attended the Mayors and Managers meeting and the Music in the Mountains fundraising Gala, and reminded the public about flu season. Mayor Arbuckle attended the GVDA mixer, a construction industry education meeting, the past chiefs dinner, the Jones Hospital plaque dedication, hosted Monday with the mayor, and reminded the public about the upcoming Memorial Park panels unveiling.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 8:48PM.

 for Jan Arbuckle

Jan Arbuckle, Mayor



Taylor Day, City Clerk

Adopted on: 11/14/2023

Miranda Bacon

From: Amy Young [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 7:24 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: I oppose a tax rate increase

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

City Council Members,

After doing our taxes and revising the family budget which is so tight it squeaks, I needed some groceries and the kids wanted to use their birthday money to buy a new video game.

We drove down to Wal-Mart to save every penny we could and fill up on gas down there while we were at it.

If you pass another sales tax hike, this kind of behavior will be even more common than it is now. I feel for the small businesses here, and try to buy a few things when the cost of making the trip down the hill is not outweighed by the savings, but as a family trying to make ends meet you can't expect us to *not* adjust to more taxes, especially when those taxes are going into a general fund with no guarantee that they will be spent on fire issues.

Amy Young

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Romans 11:36

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

Miranda Bacon

From: Kathy Tillett [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, October 23, 2023 12:22 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Tax Increase for Fire Protection

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

Just a quick note to let you know I am completely against any increase in taxes for fire protection if the monies are placed in the general fund vs a specific fund for fire mitigation only.

It is time for the city to focus on the needs of our current citizens and NOT tourism. Improvements to parks are great if for locals not for soccer tournaments to encourage tourism.

How is the funding for future low income housing coming along? We desperately need more income based and senior housing!

Kathy Tillett
304 Sutton Way #38
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Sent from Windows Mail

Miranda Bacon

From: Aria Griffis [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 8:05 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Parklet at 114 West Main Street

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern,

My name is Aria Griffis and I'm writing you today regarding the parklet at 114 West Main Street. I have some major concerns about the complete closure of the public city sidewalk on the uphill side.

My business, Make Local Habit resides at 112 West Main Street next door. When coming to work on October 10th I looked up the sidewalk to see it completely blocked off by a large planter that looked to be an accident, like it got pushed into the way unintentionally. Come to find out, it was not and it is subject to stay this way. Since this incident, I have remained close to the front door to observe the confusion and safety risks this is causing. It also forces people to walk directly around my store and bypass looking in my window. Similar to putting in a highway next to a small town that you used to have to drive through.

The design of this parklet does not put public safety as a top priority. The space is inadequate to let the normal flow of traffic pass by each other. Now that the public is being forced to walk right to the edge of vehicle traffic, you can't step off the side walk to let a wheel chair, stroller, dog on a leash, or child holding a hand. Day after day, I am witness to the general public wondering how they are allowed to just close the public side walk. As a business owner in downtown, not so much of an A-frame sign can be placed on the sidewalk in front of my business. But you can infact choose to block the entire city sidewalk and cause an inconvenience for the general public? When reading over the information in the hand book for the city planning. I found many statements to be questioned as how the plan for this parklet came about.

The concerns I have for the lack of foot traffic since this debacle are very worrisome. I have had my business downtown for 14 years and I come to know my numbers. This is devastating to my business. Our busiest time of year is quickly approaching and those tables will be sitting out there empty, due to weather. While I stand in my store watching the people walk around my front door. Being a small business in today's world and economy is tuff and added hurdles like these are detrimental.

When a project like this is in the planning phase and will have direct affects on surrounding properties, it should involve these parties. As stated by the handbook. My landlord or myself heard nothing of this in the planning phase. There is even a very large planter encroaching under our awning, also not to be mentioned it was coming.

My hope is to have the city sidewalk open to the general public once again. For many reasons this sidewalk closure is unnecessary and brings more inconvenience and safety risks than before.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Aria Griffis

Miranda Bacon

From: Courtney Williams [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 11:55 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Public Comment re: Parklet at 114 W. Main St.

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City Council Members –

I am a tenant at 112 W. Main St, where I do my remote work for FREED. My family also own this property.

I am writing to express concerns about the barricade of the west side of the parklet at 114 W. Main St. and the second planter blocking portions of the sidewalk extension around the parklet on the east side.

After several inquiries to City of Grass Valley staff I have heard multiple conflicting reports –

First that such a barricade would not be allowed, as there should be pedestrian traffic flow on both sides of the parklet.

Second that this barricade was placed there because ABC rules require an “enclosed patio” which is why the city placed the barricade. I spoke to an ABC employee working on the license for this property, and they had no knowledge of said parklet or it’s enclosure status. I have requested further inquiry from ABC as to their requirements for this parklet.

Finally, Tim Kiser reported to my father, Dave Williams, that the barricade was placed there due to the historic path of travel on the city sidewalk being non-ADA compliant. Apparently, the barricade is the solution that the city thinks will force the path of travel to the newly constructed, ADA compliant sidewalk. If the city was aware of this non-compliant area of sidewalk, that should have been corrected during the construction of the parklet.

I met with City of Grass Valley Fire Inspector, Rob Arnad, regarding the barricade being a potential fire code violation, as it blocks the means of egress from the building to the public sidewalk. Although the barricade itself is not a violation, the second planter on the east side of the parklet does partially block the newly constructed path of travel, which is an issue because it needs to have the full width available if it is going to remain in compliance.

A few issues here –

--The planter on the east side of the parklet needs to be moved so it no longer blocks the path of travel.

--The barricade planter may solve an issue with ADA accessibility on the sidewalk for those with mobility disabilities, but placing a large barricade in an historic path of travel with no indication for blind or visually disabled pedestrians of the new path of travel certainly is NOT accessible.

--The newly constructed path of travel may be technically accessible, but it creates a situation where pedestrians have to funnel from the much wider sidewalk east and west of the parklet to travel around it. For anyone with small children, pets, mobility aids, or service animals, this makes travel more difficult. It also feels quite unsafe to be walking so close to traffic with no barriers between the traffic and the sidewalk. Of course, there was no barrier on the historic path of travel, but with the much wider sidewalk, and a parking space between pedestrians and traffic, it did not feel unsafe to walk along the path.

Thank you for considering alternative solutions to this issue that will create true accessibility and protect the safety of pedestrians with and without disabilities in our community.

~Courtney

"Only when we are brave enough to explore the darkness will we discover the infinite power of our light." ~Brenè Brown

****I do not expect a response outside business hours****

Courtney Williams

Pronouns: she/her

Executive Assistant

Disability Rap Production Assistant

FREED

Aging & Disability Resource Connection

www.FREED.org



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435 Sutton Way
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 477-3333 x215 voice
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(530) 477-8184 fax

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(530) 742-4474 Voice
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(530) 742-4476 Fax

Serving Nevada, Yuba, Sutter, Sierra & Colusa counties

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Memorandum

1451 Quail Street, Suite 201
NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92660

TEL (949) 851-0995

FAX (949) 851-3059

Date: October 26, 2023

To: Grass Valley City Counsel – Public Hearing #4 – Fire and Vegetative Management Tax

From: Mesa Management, Inc. Manager Grass Valley Shopping Center

Subject: Recommended Alternatives to Proposed Tax

Sent Via Email to public@cityofgrassvalley.com

Dear City Council Members ~

Mesa Management, Inc., and McKnight Crossing Shopping Center express gratitude to City staff for working with us on our Re-Imagine project to create a warm, inviting, destination so that people can enjoy an enhanced lifestyle experience.

There are two items we wish to share with the City Council.

1) We believe the new proposed tax increase will be an additional burden on local Grass Valley consumers and retail businesses at a time when local retail businesses and consumers are under extraordinary pressure due to inflation and the diminishing spending power of the dollar.

We believe that the added tax, although intended to raise revenue, will lead to higher prices in Grass Valley compared to surrounding communities, less sales due to the higher prices, and more retail sales leakage as customers flee Grass Valley to take their business to more lucrative surrounding communities.

2) We have evidence that in the past six months with the opening of just Target here at McKnight Crossing in Grass Vally, that Grass Valley has seen a projected increase in annual retail sales of just over \$13 million. This was leakage that had left Grass Valley and the surrounding communities for Auburn. See attached chart data from Placer.ai Labs.

In summary, we believe by keeping taxes low, by encouraging redevelopment, by reducing costly regulations, dynamic retail businesses will come to Grass Valley and attract consumers from all over to travel to Grass Valley to enjoy the enhanced lifestyle while spending their money. This will increase the tax revenues to the City while benefiting all.

Regards,

Josh Recalde, Legislative Affairs
Mesa Management, Inc.

1451 Quail Street, Suite 200, Newport Beach, CA 92660
jrecalde@mesamanagement.net www.mesamanagement.net

Supplementary Information

In the last HdL quarterly tax report, Target had not opened and was not in the Top 25 of Tax Contributors. And the Center was in the middle of our construction on a pathway to the vision the community is starting to see, with a Center Grand Opening in the spring.

The next HdL quarterly tax report is due out any day. What that will show is Target is now at the Top of the Top 25 Retail Tax contributors and is projected to alone contribute an incremental \$500,000 a year in Retail Tax contributions.

That is a meaningful contribution to offset a fiscal emergency and provide necessary funds for Fire mitigation without the burden of additional taxes.

Target Grass Valley is performing well:

Below are several graphics to indicate the solid performance of Target in Grass Valley, out performing Target Auburn since launch earlier this year. This creates convenience, reduces trips and miles travelled, consistent with the City's Strategic Goals, and creates meaningful jobs.

Thank you to the Grass Valley community and we are working hard to finalize our plans, introduce gathering spaces and put the final touches on the Center.

Observations:

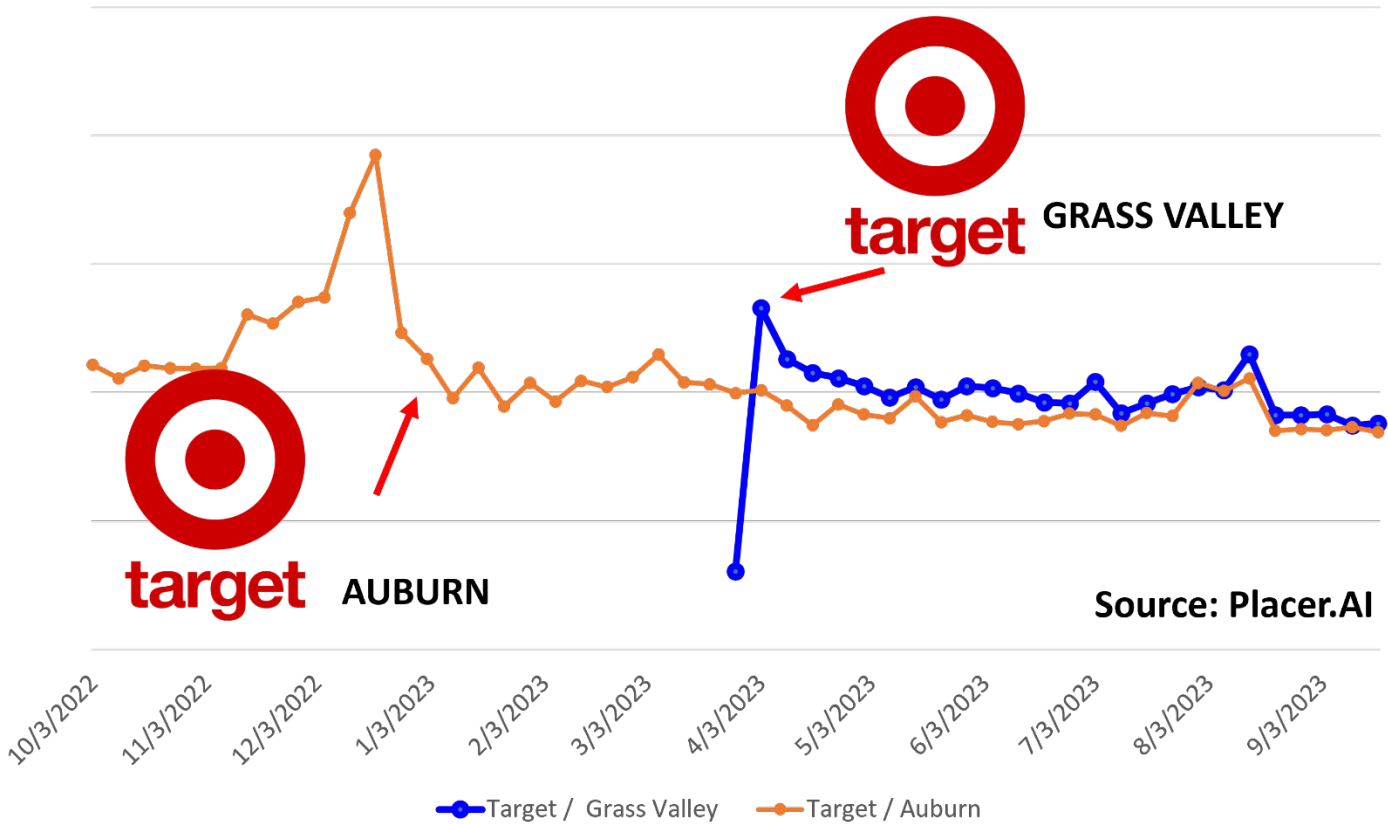
We have recent data that shows Grass Valley Target is outperforming Auburn's Target.

We believe this captures a correction of "leakage" (Sales tax dollars leaving the City).

This indicates Grass Valley residents are no longer traveling to Auburn and spending their money and spending their money here in Grass Valley to generate substantial and sustainable Retail Tax Revenue.

This also fits in well with the City's Strategic Plan to reduce trips and miles driven.

Target - Grass Valley vs Auburn

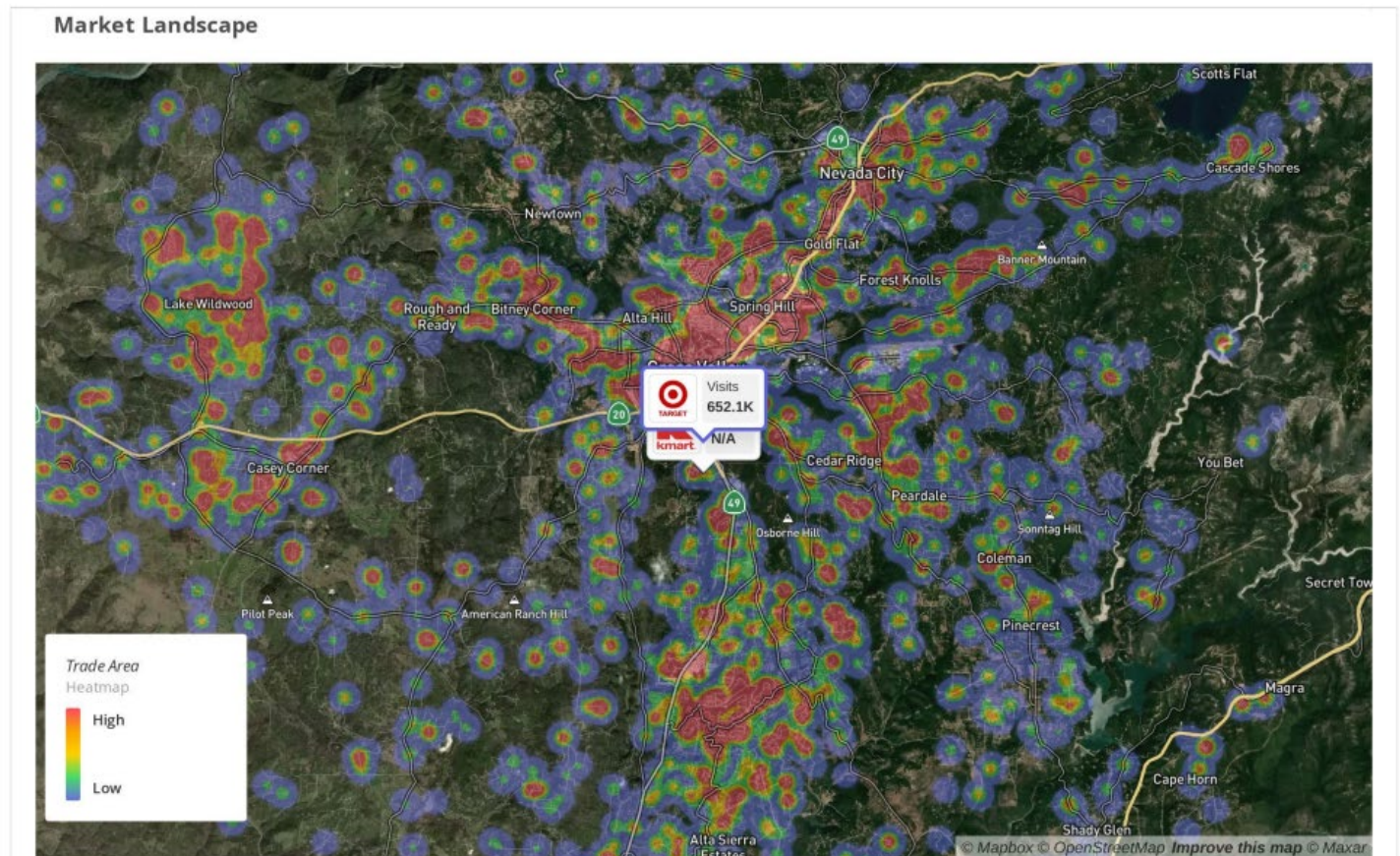


Observations:

This Heat Map indicates the Target at McKnight Crossing is servicing customers from both Grass Valley and the local Region.

Property Overview

Apr 1 - Sep 30, 2023



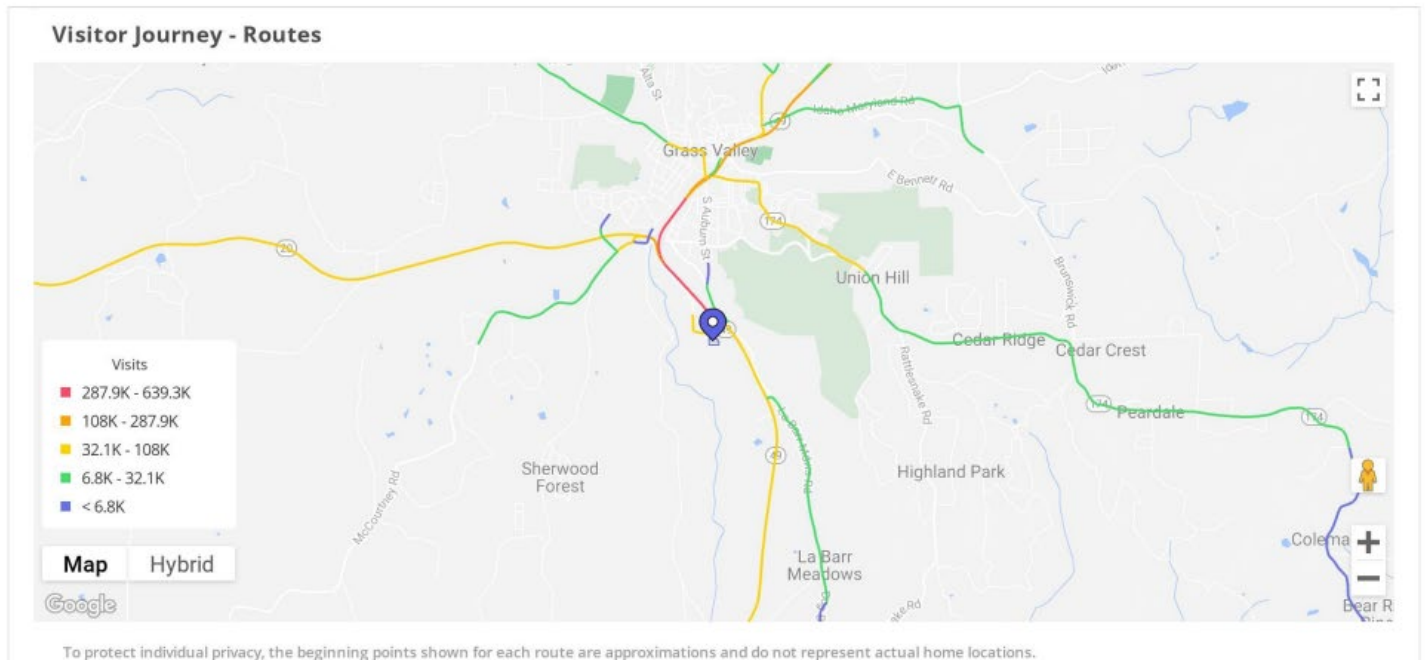
Source: Placer.AI

Observations:

The Primary Route of Travel is on the 49, servicing customers from the North.

Property Overview

Apr 1 - Sep 30, 2023



Miranda Bacon

From: HOFFMAN LARRY <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 5:18 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Voice Mail (2 minutes and 8 seconds)
Attachments: audio.mp3

My name is Larry Hoffman and I live at 266 N Auburn, St. My public comment is related to tonight's vote to put forward a sales tax increase on the March ballot. Most of US homeowners and residents of Grass Valley are either retired or employed in jobs much less lucrative than those in current government positions. Plus, we live here. Unlike most city staff who reside outside the city, we cannot afford to see our cost for living here increase and be able to maintain a decent, decent lifestyle. Lifestyle. Excuse me. Here are some of the increased costs we are seeing. Recent increases to the city water sewer rates will cost residents and businesses at least 25% or more in the next five years. We already pay 1% and put perpetuity for Measure E, which has been spent on more fire, police and residential expenses than the infrastructure improvements it said were needed. Living expensive have gone through the roof. Inflation has made food and gasoline prices go up almost exponentially. We drive around town and still pay over 50, \$75.00 a month just for gas. PG&E rates are amongst the highest in the nation and they want to increase it even more. Homeowners and car insurance rate increases have and will continue to make living here more and more unaffordable. Although I support the need for extra fire resources and mitigation efforts, I know the city should have foreseen these years ago and dealt it with them within the fiscal budgets it was given. For these reasons, the City Council. I hope the City Council votes to deny this measure. If not, I hope the city voters do.

You received a voice mail from [HOFFMAN LARRY](#).

Thank you for using Transcription! If you don't see a transcript above, it's because the audio quality was not clear enough to transcribe.

[Set Up Voice Mail](#)

Miranda Bacon

From: HOFFMAN LARRY <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 5:04 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Voice Mail (1 minute and 27 seconds)
Attachments: audio.mp3

Hi, my name is Joyce Hoffman. I live on North Auburn St. in Grass Valley. I don't know Matthew Coulter. I do know that he's been vocal in his opinions against the city staff and council members, and that part of his legal settlement with the city is that he has easy access to vocally participate in council meetings remotely. Many citizens have reasons for not being able to physically participate in the evening meetings. This can be due to physical disabilities, job or educational commitments, or family responsibilities. All of us deserve and have earned and need to have the same ease to participate remotely. Please make attendance in our City Council's planning committees, historic meetings, etcetera easier to participate in. Why do we have to wait to submit our comments until after 5:00 PM on the evening of the meeting? Is 1 phone contact enough for the limited time to submit? Since COVID prompted remote access to all public meetings, the Brown Act will support enabling equal access to all. Please make us all have equal access to our public meetings. Make it easier.

You received a voice mail from [HOFFMAN LARRY](#).

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[Set Up Voice Mail](#)