



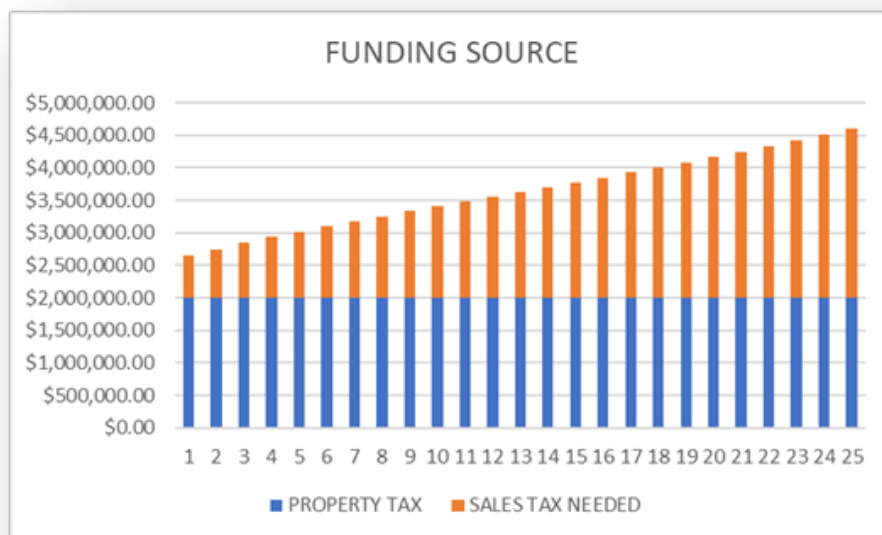
## Notice: Special Town Council Meeting - December 13, 2022

Over the past year, the Town of Carefree has been engaged in discussions regarding the provision of fire and emergency services within the Town. A citizen committee, public financial modeling experts, fire & emergency services, as well as citizens from the community were invited and participated in discussions regarding the provision of fire and emergency services with the Town of Carefree.

Through these discussions, citizens learned how Carefree has become isolated from regional fire and emergency service assistance (known as Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid) due to recent external decisions from nearby first responding agencies. This regional assistance is critical during simultaneous, long-duration and/or large-scale emergency events where life-safety issues are presented. However, under Carefree's current service model, this regional assistance is not automatic nor guaranteed and places the community at a higher level of risk. In order to address this risk, the Town can contract for services through an Automatic Aid partner, but the costs associated with this service model adjustment will increase the Town's annual operational costs in just the initial year by approximately \$1 million.

Additionally, such a shift comes with a long-term commitment of 25 years. Therefore, the Town needs to ensure a responsible, sustainable and solvent financial model to secure this long-term commitment. During five public citizen workshops recently held throughout the community, citizens have listened, asked questions, and relayed the need to consider a modest property tax to support this long term-financial commitment and ensure this risk is addressed in a financially solvent manner.

The attached report [Click to view: Fire Services in Carefree Consultant Findings](#) provides an extensive summation of this citizen driven process as well as two resulting Resolutions for the Town Council to consider on December 13th at 5 PM. The first Resolution, pursuant to state law, enables the citizens to consider a primary property tax on the May 2023 ballot. The second Resolution restricts this funding to pay for fire and emergency services to offset the financial liability of the long-term contractual commitment. In order to maintain the lowest possible tax levy, the sales tax will still be used to offset the overall costs (see chart below). As the costs of the contract increases with inflationary indexes (2%-3.5%) annually, the amount required from sales tax will increase.





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Based upon a \$2 million tax levy, the average valued household in Carefree will be paying approximately \$56 a month or \$670 annually. It is important to note that originally, residents paid annual subscription fee to Rural Metro of over \$750. Therefore, under the proposed property tax, the fees paid will be less than the original subscription service model while enjoying a higher level of service. The citizen approval of this property tax levy will support a sustainable model to pay for this long-term financial commitment. Without the support of a sustainable financial model, Rural Metro will continue to serve the community, but the community [JC1] will not qualify for the regional partnership and will be at higher risk during simultaneous events (such as medical emergencies), long-duration events (such as a house fire) and/or large-scale events (such as a wildland fire), all distinctive possibilities.

The Town would like to thank the countless citizens that have participated in this extensive citizen process over the past year and encourages all citizens to review the attached comprehensive report [Click to view: Fire Services in Carefree Consultant Findings](#). Additionally, for those who could not participate in the recent workshops, the following video, which was made available to the citizens prior to the citizens workshops this fall, further outlines the issues. [Click to view: Fire & Emergency Services Options Video](#).

**Special Town Council Meeting: discussing Fire & Emergency Services in Carefree**

**Date:** Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022

**Time:** 5:00 PM

**Place:** Carefree Council Chambers  
33 Easy Street, Carefree, AZ 85377