

# CONTRA COSTA TIMES

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## Tax for fire service on Contra Costa County horizon

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Contra Costa Times

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MARTINEZ -- Contra Costa supervisors took a step Tuesday toward asking voters next year to approve a parcel tax for fire services.

The Contra Costa Fire Protection District will pay political consultant Larry Tramutola up to \$115,000 to help develop public outreach for support a parcel tax that could pump as much as \$16.5 million a year into the struggling agency.

The district encompasses an area from Antioch westward, through all of central county and a small portion of West Contra Costa.

Public agencies may not use tax dollars for political campaigns, but they can to conduct educational campaigns.

The fire district has seen its post-recession revenues drop from \$100 million in 2007 to \$85 million this year as pension contributions have risen to cover increased benefits and market losses.

The tax amount has not been decided, although a pollster in February found strong support for a yearly fee of about \$70.

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