

Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 4

Proposition Election Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The Board of Commissioners (the "Board") of Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 4 ("BCESD 4", or the "District") has called for a sales and use tax proposition to be on the election ballot for Saturday, May 7, 2022. If approved by voters, this proposition would authorize up to one-and-a-half percent (1.5%) to be captured by the District in all areas not yet at the state maximum of 8.25%. If the proposition passes, the funds will be used to address the needs of the District to address the rapid population and commercial growth in the area.

To ensure that residents and other constituents of the District have accurate information regarding the proposed authorization and the Board's goals for the District, answers to common questions are provided below. This page will be updated periodically to address additional questions and provide additional information prior to the election.

What is Brazos County ESD 4?

An Emergency Services District (ESD) is a grass-roots government entity created by voters in an area to fund fire protection, emergency medical services, or both. More than 300 districts are operating in Texas, and more are added at almost every uniform election date.

Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 4 (BCESD 4, the District) is the government entity that collects property tax to fund Brazos County Precinct 4 Volunteer Fire Department (Precinct 4 VFD), providing fire suppression and emergency medical services to the residents within the District boundaries, and to neighboring reciprocal mutual aid partners (such as Robertson County,

Rellis Campus, etc.), as needed. These taxes fund stations, apparatus, personnel, and equipment the fire department utilizes to provide fire protection for the community. In turn, the Brazos County Precinct 4 Volunteer Fire Department provides the personnel to staff the stations and operate the vehicles.

The taxes collected come from an ad valorem tax, commonly known as property tax. Emergency Services Districts are capped by the Texas Constitution at \$0.10/\$100 valuation of taxable property; this year, BCESD 4 is currently authorized to collect \$0.067249/\$100 valuation. Often, this revenue source alone is insufficient to meet the emergency response needs of districts, and boards seek additional funding outside of property tax.

How is Brazos County ESD 4 funded?

BCESD 4 is currently funded through property tax of property owners within the District, collecting \$0.067249/\$100 valuation of taxable property. Texas State laws allows for voters to approve a tax rate up to \$0.10/\$100 valuation. All modern ESD's are created with the \$0.10/\$100 tax rate cap already in place.

Why does the District need more funding?

Through sound fiscal management and good stewardship, the Board of Commissioners of BCESD 4 has been able to purchase and maintain the current training, apparatus, and equipment to protect the community up to this point with a limited budget. However, there are four major issues facing the District which require additional funding:

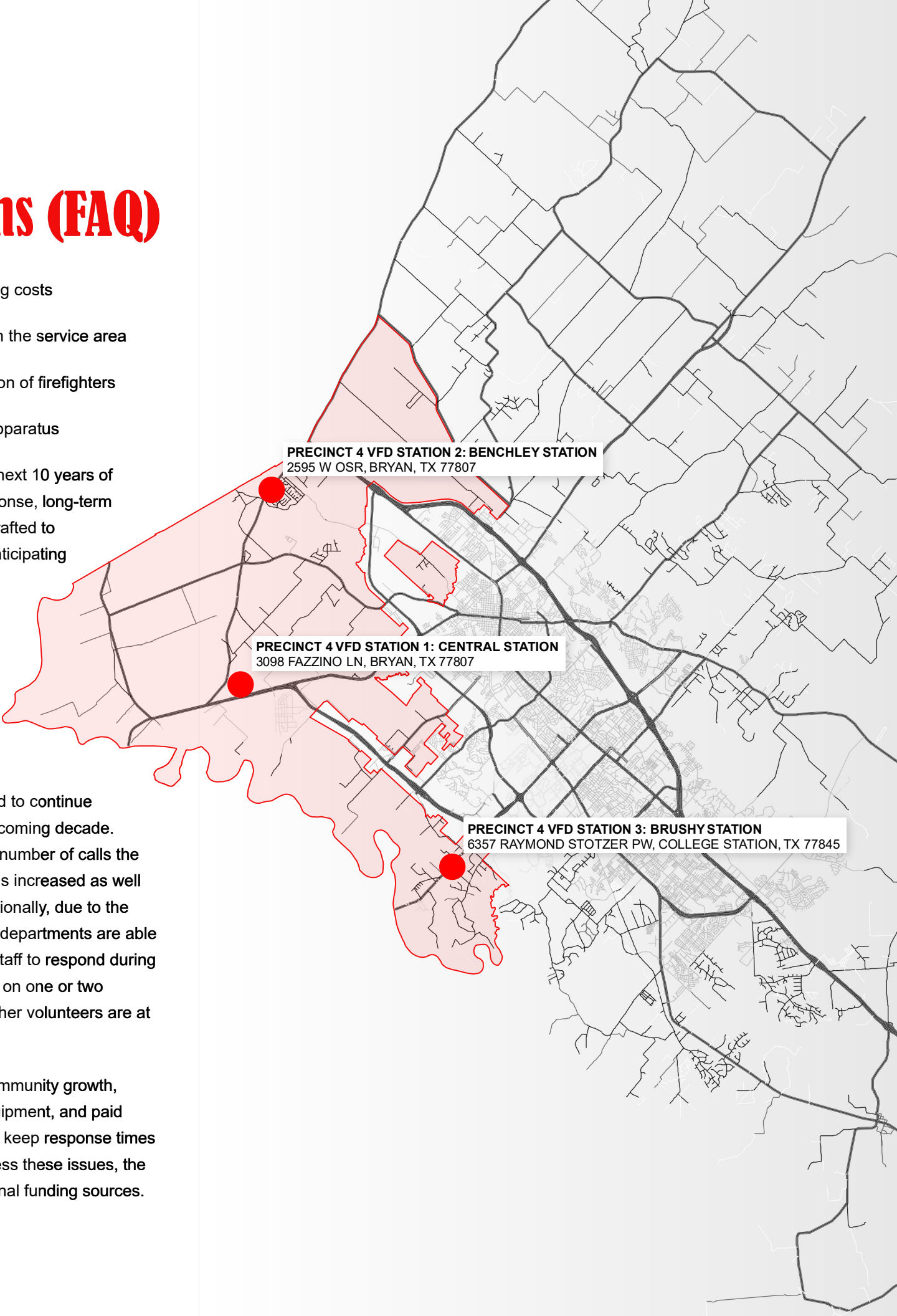
- Limited budget and rising costs
- Population growth within the service area
- Recruitment and retention of firefighters
- Aging equipment and apparatus

As the Board considers the next 10 years of growth and emergency response, long-term strategic goals have been drafted to highlight the next steps in anticipating the needs of the District.

What are the issues facing the district?

BCESD 4 has seen tremendous population and commercial growth over the past decade and is projected to continue similar growth trends in the coming decade. Because of this growth, the number of calls the District has responded to has increased as well over the last 10 years. Additionally, due to the nature of how volunteer fire departments are able to staff, there is a deficit in staff to respond during daytime, placing the burden on one or two specific responders while other volunteers are at their day jobs.

To meet the needs of the community growth, additional infrastructure, equipment, and paid personnel will be required to keep response times at the current level. To address these issues, the Board must consider additional funding sources.





What is the Long-Term Strategic Plan?

The Board of Commissioners of BCESD 4 has been working with the Brazos County Precinct 4 Volunteer Fire Departments’ administration, staff, and membership to address the issues facing the District by developing a strategic plan. The three overarching goals outlined in the long-range plan are:

- Paid daytime station staff and expanded stipends for volunteer firefighters
- Expand station bays for housing apparatus
- Purchase new pumper/water tender for responding

To fully realize these goals, additional funding will be needed, and sales tax is often considered by districts as a supplemental revenue stream.

Why a Sales Tax?

By levying a Sales and Use Tax, BCESD 4 would be shifting a portion of the funding for emergency services from property owners to anyone buying taxable goods and services in the District. The current property tax rate approved by voters is \$0.067249/\$100 valuation. Instead of seeking voter approval to increase the property tax rate to the state maximum for modern emergency

services districts of \$0.10/\$100 valuation, the Board of Commissioners has chosen to seek additional funding through sales tax.

Currently, the volunteer fire department and support services are funded through BCESD 4-collected property taxes, but they respond to calls that support a greater community of individuals and families traveling through or visiting the District. As most of the motor vehicle incidents (MVIs) the District responds to on highways are from people living outside of Brazos County, a sales and use tax places some of the funding for growth and response upon non-residents and non-property owners, allowing the District and the service providers to better serve the community as a whole.

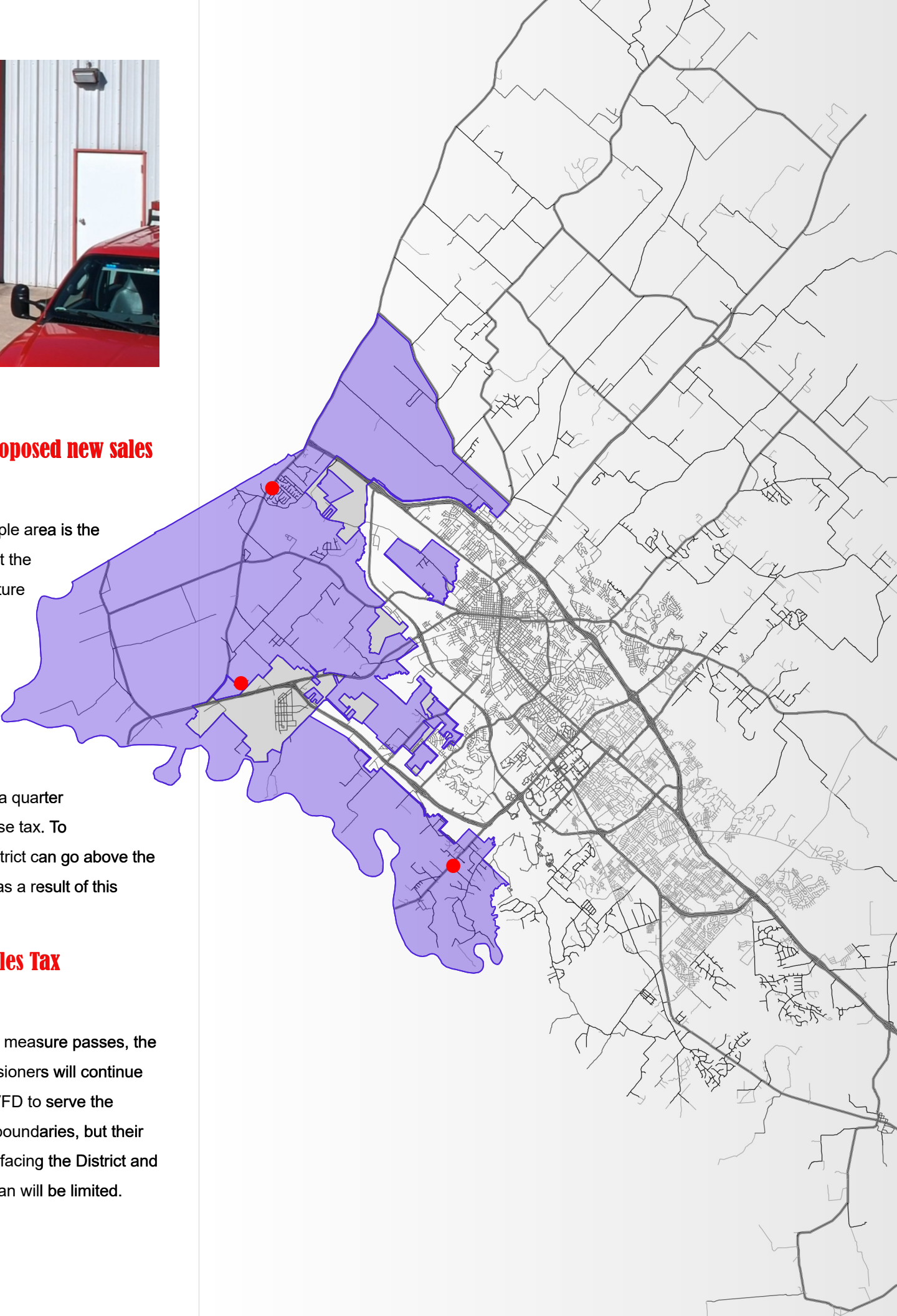
The Board of Commissioners has considered several sources of additional funding and the best option would be the implementation of a sales and use tax in the District. In Texas, the state captures \$0.0625 (6.25%) on every dollar spent but allows other local government entities to capture up to \$.02 (2%), with a state maximum of \$0.0825 (8.25%), to support community services. If the District levied an up to one and a half percent (1.5%) sales and use tax, it could supplement the existing funding of our emergency services from solely depending on residents’ property taxes to those people traveling to and through the BCESD 4 community, who may also use local emergency services.

What areas does the proposed new sales tax affect?

In the following map, the purple area is the portion of Brazos County that the District would be able to capture the one and a half percent (1.5%) sales and use tax. Residents and visitors making purchases in the non-colored areas are already paying the state maximum of eight and a quarter percent (8.25%) sales and use tax. To clarify, no area within the District can go above the state sales and use tax cap as a result of this election proposition.

What Happens If the Sales Tax Proposition Fails?

Whether or not the sales tax measure passes, the BCESD 4 Board of Commissioners will continue to work with the Precinct 4 VFD to serve the residents within the District boundaries, but their ability to address the issues facing the District and implement the long-range plan will be limited.



The May 7, 2022 ballot will ask residents of the District to vote for or against a Local Sales and Use Tax, for the entity known as Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 4. It will read as follows:

Proposition:

“The adoption of a local sales and use tax in Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 4 at a rate not to exceed one and a half percent in any location in the district.”

Voters will need to be looking for this language if they wish to cast their vote regarding the sales and use tax for BCESD 4.

When, where, and how can I vote?

Voting schedules and locations for the May 7, 2022, election can be found at this official Brazos County website <http://www.brazosvotes.org/>.

Use this link to find information on registering to vote:

<http://www.brazosvotes.org/node/15>

I have more questions...

Good! The goal is for the residents to have all the information at their disposal when voting approaches. Additional questions can be fielded through the “Contact Us” form on the District’s website: <https://brazoscountyesd4.org/contact.asp>

Stay in Touch with Us

The Board of Commissioners of Brazos County ESD 4 desires to provide excellent communication and transparency, and there are several ways to stay up to date about the District. Visit <https://brazoscountyesd4.org/> and follow us on Facebook [@pct4vfd](#).

Join us for the Resident Informational Event

Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 4 Board of Commissioners cordially invites you to our Resident Informational Events to discuss the upcoming Sales and Use Tax proposition election on the May 7 2022 ballot. These events will feature exhibits showing the plans and goals for the District, and the Commissioners and our consultants will be present to answer your questions. To prepare yourself for the event, be sure to review posted information regarding the election.

You may select from the dates designated below:

Friday April 22, 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
1775 Texas Pit BBQ Catering
8203 Raymond Stotzer Parkway, Suite C
College Station, TX 77845

Saturday April 23, 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Top of the Hill – Greasy Burgers
2444 Lakewood Drive
Bryan, TX 77807

How can I become a volunteer firefighter?

Volunteer firefighters have been, and will continue to be, the backbone of Brazos County ESD 4. Volunteers are critical to the District, and the departments are always recruiting new members. If you would like to serve your community through emergency service, please contact the District at <https://precinct4.com/recruitment/>

