

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025**

MINUTE ORDER NO. 2

**SUBJECT: NOTICED PUBLIC HEARING:
PUBLIC HEARING TO CONFIRM FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 LEVIES FOR
PERMANENT ROAD DIVISION ZONES, COUNTY SERVICE AREAS AND
ZONES, SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ZONES, AND
STORMWATER MAINTENANCE ZONES (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

OVERVIEW

Special districts are created by residents of a community to deliver specialized services that the local county or city does not provide. There are a variety of special districts, and each type is governed under different State laws. The County of San Diego (County), San Diego County Flood Control District (Flood Control District), and San Diego County Fire Protection District (Fire District) use special districts as a funding mechanism to provide services, such as fire protection, flood control protection, private road, landscape maintenance, parks, emergency communication and paramedic services across the unincorporated region and in six cities (Del Mar, Solana Beach, Encinitas, Santee, and portions of Poway and San Diego) in San Diego County.

These services are primarily funded by property owners through assessments or special taxes that are collected through annual property tax bills, reducing the cost to ratepayers by eliminating the administrative costs from annual billing and payment collection. District boundaries were established by voters at the time of formation or as a condition of development. The method for calculating how much each property owner pays per parcel varies based on the type of district and rules outlined within each ordinance adopted as the districts were formed. The most common method for calculating the rate per parcel is based on a variety of factors, including land use, parcel acreage, or use type (single-family or multi-family). The assessments or special taxes cannot exceed the maximum amount in the adopted ordinance without an additional vote of the community within the district's boundaries. At the time of formation, some of the ordinances included cost escalators, tied to a specific cost index, to allow special districts to increase the maximum rate each year to keep pace with inflation. The most commonly used cost indices are the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which measures the cost of consumer goods, and the Construction Cost Index (CCI) which measures the cost of construction materials and labor.

There are a total of 74 districts included in this Board letter and proposed actions; of these, 10 are proposing rate increases. Board of Supervisors Policy B-29 directs departments to recover full cost, to the extent legally possible, for services provided to agencies or individuals outside the County of San Diego organization under grants, contracts, or for which fees may be charged. Staff reviewed each district to determine if revenues were adequate for services or if rates should be increased or decreased based on the budget. Staff determined that the proposed rates for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 are needed to fund services and to ensure compliance with Board Policy B-29. Rates are also necessary to maintain financial reserves to fund future services, facility repairs, improvements, or replacements. All proposed rates are in accordance with Articles XIII A-D of the California Constitution (Proposition 218 The Right to Vote on Taxes Act) as amended to date and are within the maximum rates set forth in each district's adopted ordinance; therefore, they do not require voter approval from affected property owners. Under Proposition 218, voters must approve special district formations and the maximum amount that can be collected from property owners.

Permanent Road Division Zones (County District)

Permanent Road Division (PRD) Zones are managed by the County Department of Public Works (DPW) in various unincorporated communities. Forty-nine PRD Zones levy property owner assessments or special taxes. The amount each parcel is charged is determined by factors such as the type of land use, parcel size, and the number of dwelling units, which is represented by “benefit units.” Benefit units are used to quantify the specific level of benefit each parcel receives from the services. Rates will remain the same in 44 of the 49 PRD Zones that levy property owner assessments or special taxes. Three rate increases are being proposed to fund road resurfacing, culvert repairs, and future road replacements. Two PRDs will have a rate increase based on voter approval, and one of these PRDs (PRD 1016 - El Sereno Way) rate increase is due to a negative cash balance from prior road improvements that cost more than anticipated and that needs to be repaid to the County with interest. Three PRD Zones will have rate increases based on their approved cost escalators. The approved cost escalator for the three PRD Zones is the Los Angeles CCI, which measures construction labor and materials costs and is frequently used to account for inflation for construction projects in the San Diego region, as Los Angeles is the closest region to have a CCI for these zones. The five proposed annual rate increases for this upcoming Fiscal Year (FY) are:

1. PRD Zone 106 - Garrison Way is in the unincorporated community of El Cajon (District 2).
2. PRD Zone 117 - Legend Rock is in the unincorporated community of Hidden Meadows (District 5).
3. PRD Zone 133 - Ranch Creek Road is in the unincorporated community of Valley Center (District 5).
4. PRD Zone 1016 - El Sereno is in the unincorporated community of North County Metro (District 5).
5. PRD Zone 1017 - Kalbaugh/Haley/Toub Streets is in the unincorporated community of Ramona (District 2).

County Services Areas (County District)

1. There are nine County Services Areas (CSA) funded by assessments that are managed by multiple County departments based on the services provided. CSAs provide maintenance and operations for parks, landscaping, open space management, and emergency medical/paramedic services in multiple unincorporated communities and six incorporated cities (Del Mar, Solana Beach, Encinitas, Santee, and portions of Poway and the City of San Diego). Rates will remain the same in six of the nine CSAs that levy assessments because current revenues can fully fund planned services. The approved cost escalator for CSAs is the San Diego CPI, which is based on a broad range of labor costs, goods, and services. Three rate increases are being proposed, which are based on the voter-approved San Diego CPI increase of 3.12%:
2. CSA 83A - San Dieguito Local Parks District is managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation and provides park amenities and services in the unincorporated community of 4S Ranch (District 2).

3. CSA 17 - San Dieguito Emergency Medical Services is managed by San Diego County Fire and provides services to the cities of Del Mar, Solana Beach, Encinitas, and the City of San Diego communities of Del Mar Heights, and Del Mar Terrace, the unincorporated communities of Rancho Santa Fe, 4S Ranch, and a portion of Elfin Forest (Districts 2 & 3).
4. CSA 26 Zone A - Cottonwood Village is managed by DPW and provides open space fire-fuel management and landscape maintenance services in the unincorporated community of Rancho San Diego (District 4).

San Diego County Fire Protection District (Fire District)

There are 12 zones in the San Diego County Fire Protection District funded by assessments or special taxes managed by San Diego County Fire that provide funds to supplement the cost of fire protection and emergency medical services across multiple unincorporated communities. Rates will remain the same in 11 of the 12 zones that levy assessments or special taxes because current revenues are adequate to fully fund services; in addition, there is no voter approved cost price escalator for these 11 zones. One rate increase is being proposed:

1. Fire District - Palomar Mountain provides services within the unincorporated community of Palomar Mountain (District 5).

Flood Control District Stormwater Maintenance Zones (Flood Control District)

There are three Stormwater Maintenance Zones (SMZ) and one CSA funded by assessments managed by the Flood Control District in DPW that provide maintenance of flood control facilities in multiple unincorporated communities. Rates will remain the same in two of the three SMZ's and the one CSA zone that levies assessments because revenues can fully fund planned services. One rate increase is being proposed:

1. SMZ No. 4-4249-3-Lake Rancho Viejo is in the unincorporated community of Fallbrook (District 5).

This is a request for the Board of Supervisors to adopt resolutions to confirm assessments and special taxes and authorize levies for the 74 special districts administered by the County, the Flood Control District, and the Fire District. Upon adoption, the assessments and special taxes will be placed on the tax roll for FY 2025-26.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Acting as the Board of Directors, San Diego County Fire Protection District:

Adopt a Resolution entitled: RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT SERVICE ZONES, ADOPTING SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS AND CONFIRMING REPORTS RE: SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS TO BE COLLECTED ON THE TAX ROLL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26. (ATTACHMENT G)

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today's action continues the County of San Diego's commitment to providing programs and services that enhance our communities. Assessments and special taxes fund services that include fire protection, flood control protection, private road maintenance, landscaping, parks, emergency communication, and paramedic services which improve the health and safety of our local communities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today's action to confirm special district assessments supports economic stability, promotes the health and wellbeing of citizens, and provides equitable access to County of San Diego (County) services. Maintaining roads in a timely manner prevents more costly maintenance in the future, contributing to economic sustainability. Fire protection, flood control protection, emergency communication and paramedic services protect the health and wellbeing of citizens and their properties. County parks provide citizens with equitable access to outdoor recreation and nature opportunities. This action will help maintain a strong and resilient community.

FISCAL IMPACT

The proposed assessment revenues are included in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 Operational Plan for the Departments of Public Works (DPW), Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), Sheriff, San Diego County Fire (County Fire), San Diego County Flood Control District (Flood Control District), and the San Diego County Fire Protection District (Fire District). The proposed rate increases for a total of 10 special districts will result in increases in revenue from property owner assessments of \$430,830 in total for DPW, \$64,003 in total for County Fire, \$23,891 for DPR, and \$246,399 in total for the Fire District. There is no proposed change in rates for the remaining 64 special districts. The funding source is assessment levies on property owners within the identified districts. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

If the Board of Supervisors, acting on behalf of the County of San Diego and other independent districts, does not adopt the resolutions, the proposed assessments and special taxes cannot be placed on the tax rolls for FY 2025-26. Without the funds generated by assessments, services for flood control protection, private road maintenance, parks, and landscape services would be reduced, and maintenance would be suspended. Fund balance would be leveraged to fill the gap and maintain existing operations and service levels for public safety communications systems, structural fire protection, and emergency medical services, which would impact the funding available for working capital.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

(RELATES TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA ITEM 08 AND FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT ITEM FL01)

ACTION:

ON MOTION of Director Montgomery Steppe, seconded by Director Desmond, the Board of Directors of the San Diego County Fire Protection District closed the Hearing and took action as recommended adopting Resolution No. 25-077 entitled: RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT SERVICE ZONES ADOPTING SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS AND CONFIRMING REPORTS RE: SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS TO BE COLLECTED ON THE TAX ROLL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26.

AYES: Anderson, Lawson-Remer, Montgomery Steppe, Desmond

ABSENT: (District 1 Seat Vacant)

State of California)
County of San Diego)

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the San Diego County Fire Protection District.

ANDREW POTTER
Clerk of the Board of Directors



Signed
by Andrew Potter