

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1) Why did I receive a ballot?

The ballot you received is your opportunity to vote on the South Bayfront Levee and Flood Control Facilities Measure from the City of San Mateo. Please review the notice included with your ballot for more information on this measure.

2) Why is this being decided by mailed ballot?

Proposition 218, the "Taxpayers Right to Vote on Taxes Act," which was approved by voters in 1996 as an amendment to the California Constitution, requires a mailed ballot proceeding for any proposed new or increased assessment. This ballot proceeding is being conducted according to the requirements established by Proposition 218. A ballot and this notice have been mailed to all property owners who would be asked to pay the proposed South Bayfront Levee and Flood Control Assessment. This mailed ballot proceeding gives property owners the opportunity to vote on this proposed assessment.

1) What zone is my parcel in?

The proposed dollar amount of the assessment indicated on your ballot should provide an indicator as to which zone your parcel falls in. If you are still unclear, please contact Tricia Toomey at (650) 522-7327. Or, if you would prefer, please contact John Bliss, Engineer or Jeanette Hynson, SCI Consulting Group at (800) 273-5167 to look up the your parcel.

3) What is the South Bayfront Levee and Flood Control Facilities Measure?

The City of San Mateo is working to improve our flood control system. This system protects local properties from "tidal flooding" caused by major storm surges and high tides along the San Francisco Bay shoreline. Your property would receive significantly improved flood control protection from tidal flooding if the South Bayfront Levee Improvements are completed.

In addition these improvements are required by FEMA in order to revise the local flood maps and reclassify specific San Mateo properties out of the Special Flood Hazard Area. Properties in Zone A will be removed from the Special Flood Hazard Area.

4) Are there any exemptions from the South Bayfront Levee and Flood Control Facilities Assessment?

The law does not allow exemptions or reductions for seniors or for other purposes. (These requirements are contained in Article XIID of the California Constitution and other laws governing benefit assessments).

5) Will any of this money go to the County or State to be used for other purposes?

No. All money collected by the City of San Mateo from the proposed South Bayfront Levee and Flood Control Facilities must be used for flood control facilities that protect properties in the assessment area.

6) How would assessment funds be spent? What are the public accountability and fiscal controls

The measure includes strong fiscal safeguards including annual public hearing and independent audits.

7) Is there a public hearing on the assessment? When will results of the ballot proceeding be known?

A public hearing will be held by the City of San Mateo City Council on Monday, June 15, 2009, commencing at 7:00 p.m., at the City Council Chambers, located at 330 West 20th Avenue, San Mateo, California. You are invited to attend the public hearing. Tabulation of the returned ballots will commence after the close of the public hearing. Results of the tabulation are expected to be announced at a public meeting scheduled for Monday, July 13, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the same location.

COMPLETING AND RETURNING BALLOT ISSUES

8) Overview of how to complete and return your ballot.

To be tabulated, your official ballot must be signed, marked "Yes" or "No," and received by the City Clerk before the conclusion of the public testimony portion of the public hearing, which begins at 7:00 p.m. on June 15, 2009.

9) How do I complete my ballot?

Please follow these steps to complete the ballot:

1. Verify that the owner name, addresses, and parcel number(s) listed on the ballot are correct. If they are not correct, please telephone the City of San Mateo at (650) 522-7327.
2. Mark or completely fill in the oval next to the word "YES" or "NO" to approve or disapprove of the proposed assessment. You may use a pencil or pen. Be sure to fill in only one oval, otherwise, your ballot may be disqualified.
3. Sign and date the ballot. After making your vote, simply FOLD the ballot so that your vote is on the inside of the fold. Then place the ballot in the return envelope provided and seal the envelope. No postage is necessary. Please see the response to the next question below for more information on how to return the ballot.
4. If you make a mistake in completing your ballot or wish to change or withdraw your ballot, please submit a request by mail or in person to the City of San Mateo, 330 West 20th Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94403; or by calling (650) 522-7327.

Please see the Official Notice of Ballot for further information.

10) How can I return my ballot?

You may return your ballot in either of the following ways:

1. Mail it to the address shown in the enclosed, postage-paid return envelope so it is received on or before June 15, 2009.
2. Deliver it in person by June 15, 2009 (before 7:00 pm and previous to the close of the public input portion of the public hearing) to the City Clerk, City of San Mateo, located at 330 West 20th Avenue, California.
3. Deliver it in person to the public hearing which is scheduled to begin at 7:00 pm on Monday, June 15, 2009, at the City Council Chambers, City of San Mateo, 330 West 20th Avenue, California.

11) What is the deadline for returning my ballot?

To be counted, ballots must be received before the close of the public testimony portion of the public hearing scheduled to begin at 7:00 pm on Monday, June 15, 2009. This deadline applies regardless of whether the ballot is mailed or hand-delivered at the public hearing.

12) If my ballot has a June 15 postmark, will it be counted?

No. The ballot must be received before the close of the public testimony portion of the public hearing scheduled to begin at 7:00 pm on Monday, June 15.

13) Why won't a June 15, 2009 or earlier postmark guarantee that my ballot will be counted?

The law requires that assessment ballot proceedings close at a public hearing where the public can provide additional comment on the proposed assessment. The law specifically states that in order to count, assessment ballots must be received by the agency proposing the assessment before the close

of the public testimony portion of the public meeting. Ballots received after this time cannot be counted. As stated previously, for this proposed assessment, the public hearing is scheduled to begin at 7:00 pm on Monday, June 15, 2009.

14) Can I hand-deliver my ballot before June 15?

Yes. Ballots may be hand-delivered to the City Clerk of the City of San Mateo, during normal business hours through June 15 and prior to the close of the public input portion of the public hearing on June 15, 2009, at City of San Mateo, 330 West 20th Avenue, California.

15) Why must I sign the ballot?

The law specifically states that in order to count, all assessment ballots be completed and signed by the record property owner of the parcel(s) identified on this ballot or by the owner's authorized representative and must be received by the Ballot Tabulator before the close of the public testimony portion of the Public Hearing. Unsigned ballots cannot be counted. (Article XIID of the California Constitution and the Government Code)

16) Who can sign the ballot?

1. If the property is owned by an individual, the individual may sign.
2. If a property is owned by a husband and wife, either may sign for both.
3. If two or more persons own the property as joint tenants or tenants in common, any co-owner may sign for all.
4. If the property is owned by a corporation, the ballot may be signed by any corporate officer. It also may be signed by any other person authorized by a resolution or minutes of the corporation's board of directors or the corporation's bylaws.
5. If the property is owned by a partnership, the ballot may be signed by any partner authorized by law. For a general partnership or limited partnership, any general partner may sign.
6. If the property is owned by a public agency, the ballot may be signed by the chair, mayor or other head of the governing body. It may also be signed by any other person authorized by a resolution, board order, or minutes of the governing body.
7. If a property is owned by another legal entity, such as a trust or limited liability company, the ballot may be signed by any person authorized by law to make contracts for the entity.

17) I own several properties. Why did I receive only one ballot?

Ballots can list up to 14 parcel numbers. Property owners that own more than one piece of property with the same mailing address in the Assessment Area will receive/received one ballot with up to 14 of their properties listed on the ballot as well as the proposed assessment for each property. When you cast your ballot, you are casting for all of your properties listed on the ballot.

18) Are returned ballots a public record? What will be done to protect confidentiality?

Yes. Proposition 218 and the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association have clearly specified that the assessment ballots are of public record. However, the balloting procedure will be established so that, to the extent possible, any property owner's balloting information will not be distributed, except in the case of a specific request to review or audit the ballot results.

REQUESTS FOR BALLOTS AND BALLOT ISSUES

19) Replacement ballots

When a property owner calls for a replacement ballot, they must provide the following information:

- Property Owner Name
- Phone Number
- Parcel Number
- Mailing Address
- Need For Replacement Ballot
- Date Of Request

In addition to providing the above information, property owners may also need to provide additional documentation depending on the type of replacement ballot they are requesting. The following sections describe the main issues causing property owners to request a replacement ballot and the type of documentation they must provide.

20) Proportional ballots

If a parcel has multiple owners, one owner may complete and sign a ballot on behalf of all owners. However, if an owner wishes to vote separately from the other owners of a property, an owner may request a proportional ballot. The law stipulates that any property owner requesting a proportional ballot must also provide information regarding the share of ownership for each owner. A Property Deed is an acceptable form of documentation.

21) Corrected ballots

If a property owner claims that their assessment is incorrect, this claim and any supporting information should be provided to the City and then forwarded to SCI, the Assessment Engineer. SCI will research the claim. If SCI agrees that the assessment should be revised, SCI will issue a Corrected Ballot with the revised assessment amount.

22) Address change

Replacement ballots will only be mailed to the official address on file with the County (San Mateo County Assessor Records). If a property owner requests that the ballot be mailed to a different address or if the current owner is new and is not shown on the records of the County, the property owner requesting the replacement ballot will need to submit evidence of ownership and mailing address. Following are acceptable forms of documentation:

- Property Deed
- Title Report
- Settlement Statement (HUD)

23) Lost ballot

If you lost your ballot, a replacement ballot will be sent to you if you request one. Ballots will only be sent to the name and address that appears on the San Mateo County property roll. If the mailing address on the property roll is not your current mailing address, you must provide proof of ownership and a current mailing address for a ballot to be sent to that new address. Following are acceptable forms of documentation:

- Property Deed
- Title Report
- Settlement Statement (HUD)

24) Property owners who own more than one property on their ballot

Ballots can list up to 14 parcels owned by one property owner. Property owners who own more than one property may request a replacement ballot be mailed to them including all properties they own. They must provide acceptable documentation for all properties they own. Following are acceptable forms of documentation:

- Property Deed
- Title Report
- Settlement Statement (HUD)

25) Property owners who own multiple parcels and have one parcel that they no longer own on their ballot

Property owners who own more than one property may have a parcel they recently sold on their ballot. (This is because the County assessor records legally required to be used for the ballot mailing often are several months behind in recording actual changes in ownership.) Such property owners may request a Replacement ballot be mailed to them including only properties they currently own.

26) Misspelled name – or previous owner name on ballot

Property owners may have the incorrect spelling or previous owner (*on recently purchased property*) on their ballot. **If the spelling is incorrect, the property owner can still vote on their ballot.** However, they may wish to contact the County Assessor at (650) 343-4500 to correct their name. If the property owner who received the ballot is the current owner but the ballot still lists the previous owner, the current owner can sign the ballot, because **ballots can be signed by the current property owner, or the owner's authorized representative**, under penalty of perjury. This would include a new homeowner, spouse or successor to someone who has passed away, or family member/other acting with the permission/authorization of the record owner.

27) What if a parcel has multiple owners? May the owners vote separately?

Multiple property owners for a single ballot can request proportional ballots to be mailed to each of the property owners. The proportional ballot will divide the total proposed assessment of the property among the multiple property owners based on the proportion of ownership of each property owner. This action is only needed if each property owner intends to vote differently on their proportional ballot. If each property owner is in agreement on how to vote, then only one property owner may sign and submit the ballot. To request a proportional ballot, each property owner must submit information that demonstrates proof of ownership, the proportional share of ownership, name, and mailing address.

If the ownership interest of the owner is not shown on the last equalized secured property tax assessment roll, a request for a proportional ballot must include evidence, satisfactory to the County, of the owner's proportional rights in the parcel.

28) My ballot was lost or destroyed or I never received it. How do I request a replacement ballot?

If your ballot was lost, destroyed or never received by you, you may request a replacement ballot. Any verbal request for replacement ballots will only be mailed to the address listed on the San Mateo County's records. A request for receipt of a ballot at another location must include proof of ownership of the property, such as a copy of the property tax bill, deed or escrow closing papers.

29) May I request that my replacement ballot be sent to an address other than listed in the County property roll?

Yes. If the mailing address on the property roll is not your current mailing address, your written request for a replacement ballot must provide proof of ownership and a current mailing address for a ballot to be sent to that new address.

30) May I withdraw my ballot after it is submitted?

Yes. The person who signed and submitted a ballot may withdraw the ballot by submitting a written request to the City Clerk of the City of San Mateo, by mail or in person at City of San Mateo, 330 West 20th Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94403; or by calling (650) 522-7327. Any such request for the withdrawal

of a ballot must be received before the conclusion of the public testimony portion of the public meeting. The City will immediately forward that request to SCI.

31) May I change my vote after my ballot has been submitted?

Yes. Please perform the following two steps to change your vote:

1. **Withdraw the previous ballot.** The person who signed and submitted a ballot may withdraw the ballot by submitting a request to the City of San Mateo, at the address (or phone number) listed above. Any such request for the withdrawal of a ballot must be received before the conclusion of the public testimony portion of the public hearing. The City will immediately forward that request to SCI.
2. **Request a replacement ballot.** Request a replacement ballot and submit it so that it is received before the close of the public hearing.

AMOUNT AND TERM OF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

32) How was the assessment determined?

The method used for apportioning the assessment is based upon the proportional special benefits to be derived by the properties in the assessment area conferred on real property. The apportionment of special benefit is a multi step process: the first step is to identify the types of special benefit arising from the improvements, the second step is to estimate the special benefits, and the third step is to allocate the assessments to property based on the estimated relative special benefit for each type of property.

In order to determine the assessments, each property was assigned an estimated level of special benefit relative to a single family home. The method of benefit determination is based on the type of property and its size. After the level of benefit for each property was estimated, the total cost of the South Bayfront Levee improvements to be funded by the proposed assessments was allocated to each property based on the estimated special benefit received.

Properties subject to stormwater and tidal flooding have been determined to receive less benefit from the proposed improvements, therefore their assessment rates are reduced by 63%.

An engineer's report describing the proposed improvements, method of assessment, budget, benefits and proposed assessment for each parcel is available by request by calling the City of San Mateo at (650) 522-7327.

33) How much is this assessment?

The proposed assessment for your property for fiscal year 2009-10 is printed on the Official Ballot included with the notice and information item. The assessment rates by property type are provided in the following table. The proposed assessments would raise approximately \$530,000 for fiscal year 2009-10.

34) Proposed assessment rates by property type.

Property Type	Zone A Rate	Zone B Rate
Single Family Residential <1,500 sf	\$76.42	\$28.28
Single Family Residential >1,500 sf & <3,000 sf	\$89.41	\$33.08
Single Family Residential >3,000 sf	\$103.17	\$38.17
Condo <1,000 sf	\$45.09	\$16.68
Condo >1,000 sf	\$61.90	\$22.90
Multi Family	\$69.54	\$25.73
Commercial/Industrial	\$77.95	\$28.84
Office	\$255.25	\$94.44
Storage, Parking Lot	\$45.85	\$16.97
Vacant	\$10.70	\$3.96
Agriculture	\$10.70	\$3.96

35) Can the amount of the assessments be adjusted for inflation in future years?

If approved in this ballot proceeding, the assessment can be continued annually based on a majority vote of the City Council. The assessment rate can be adjusted by an annual amount equal to the change in the San Francisco-Bay Area Consumer Price Index, not to exceed 4% per year.

36) How long will the assessment last?

The assessment, which is initially proposed for the fiscal year 2009-10, may be continued on an annual basis with a majority vote of the City Council. Before the assessments can be continued in any future year, the City must first prepare a budget for upcoming fiscal year. Then the City Council must hold a noticed public hearing on continuing the assessments and the budget for the assessments before the assessments can be authorized for the upcoming year.

37) What are the annual continuation requirements?

The annual assessment continuation process requires that a new Engineer's Report and budget be prepared that lists the coming years expenditures and assessment. After the Engineer's Report is prepared and preliminarily approved, the City Council must hold a public hearing prior to continuing the assessments.

BALLOT TABULATION QUESTIONS

38) How will ballots be tabulated?

Only official ballots that are signed, marked with the property owner's support or opposition, and returned in a timely manner to the tabulator, will be counted. Ballots will be tabulated by an independent Certified Public Accounting Firm. The ballots will be mailed to the City Clerk of the City of San Mateo, and will hold the unopened ballots in a secure location until after the hearing on June 15. The tabulator will count the ballots after the hearing on June 15.

The City Council will not impose the assessment if there is a majority protest. A majority protest exists if, upon conclusion of the ballot tabulation, ballots submitted in opposition to the assessment exceed ballots submitted in favor of the assessment. Ballots shall be weighted according to the proportional financial obligation of the affected property.

39) How many ballots must be cast in favor of the proposed assessments for the assessment to be collected?

In order to be approved, the proposed assessments must be supported by a weighted majority of ballots returned by property owners.

40) How are ballots weighted during tabulation?

Each ballot is weighted by the amount of assessment it represents. In other words, if one property owner of two homes receives a ballot for \$148.04 in proposed assessment (\$74.02 per home times two) and another property owner of one home receives a ballot for \$74.02 in proposed assessment, the first property owner's ballot will count for twice that of the second property owner because the first property owner's ballot is for twice the proposed assessment amount.

41) How can we certify that the tabulation will be correct?

First, the ballots will be tabulated by an independent Certified Public Accounting Firm that will certify the results. Secondly, the ballots will be returned by mail directly to the City Clerk of the City of San Mateo. Third, by law, the ballots are a public record. Therefore, if anyone questions the ballot outcome, they tabulation can be independently reviewed and confirmed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information concerning the proposed South Bayfront Levee Improvements, the proposed assessment or the ballot proceeding, please contact the following:

- Tricia Toomey, Public Outreach Coordinator for the City of San Mateo at (650) 522-7327.
- Assessment and Ballot Proceeding: John Bliss, Engineer, or Jeanette Hynson, at SCI Consulting Group at (800) 273-5167.