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San Mateo Property Owners Approve Stormwater Fee for Flood Defense New Revenue Source Will Support Critical Infrastructure Improvements

San Mateo, CA – Property owners in the City of San Mateo voted in favor of the Community Flood and Storm Protection Fee, a testament to the commitment of residents to the community's collective safety and well-being.

This critical initiative, once ratified and enacted by the City Council, is expected to generate approximately \$4 million in its first year and will be dedicated entirely to improving the City's aging stormwater system. Much of the City's stormwater system is over 50 years old and includes 130 miles of storm pipelines, 20 miles of open creeks and drainage channels, 10 pump stations and a flood control lagoon. The City has never had a dedicated revenue source for the storm drainage system and the new funding will go toward upgrading storm pipelines and pump stations, assessing and restoring aging infrastructure, improving water quality in local waterways, and implementing proactive maintenance and system reliability measures.

For this fee to be approved, a majority of property owners that returned ballots had to vote in favor of the fee, as required by the California Constitution under requirements imposed by Proposition 218. Property owners were sent ballots in early November 2023 with a due date of December 17, 2023, with each parcel eligible for one vote. The results were counted by an independent tabulator with 5,195 votes or 51.78% in favor, and 4,837 votes or 48.22% against. The results of this initiative will be presented to the City Council on January 16, when they will consider adopting the fee for 2024-2025 property tax bills, which would equate to around \$8 per month or \$96 annually for a typical single-family home.

"We are grateful to the property owners of the City of San Mateo for passing the Community Flood and Stormwater Protection Initiative. They have entrusted their funds with the City to invest in long-term flood prevention that will benefit our entire community," said Mayor Lisa Diaz Nash. "We will use this investment efficiently and transparently, and make its impact greater by seeking matching funds from our State and Federal partners."

By approving this measure, San Mateo property owners have demonstrated a commitment to safeguarding the community against the increasing threat of severe weather and flooding. Every resident of San Mateo depends on the stormwater system when it rains. The City was hard hit by the severe storms of 2022-23 and has been educating residents on storm preparedness and flood protection issues. Reflecting on the challenges posed by last year's events, this initiative positions San Mateo to be better prepared and more resilient in the face of future weather uncertainties and more severe storms. While there is more work to be done, this is a significant step towards enhancing the safety and resilience of our community for the years ahead.

For further updates and information, including storm and flood safety tips, please visit
www.cityofsanmateo.org/stormwater.