



# BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA LETTER

**Agenda Number:**

## Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Department Name:** PW/Flood Control  
**Department No.:** 054  
**For Agenda Of:** June 3, 2025  
**Placement:** Set Hearing  
**Estimated Tme:** 10 minutes on June 24,  
2025 on the Dept  
Agenda and July 8,  
2025 on the Admin  
Agenda  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Directors, Flood Control and Water Conservation District

**FROM:** Department Chris Sneddon, Public Works Director, (805) 568-3010  
Director(s)  
Contact Info: Walter Rubalcava, Deputy Director – Flood Control, (805) 568-3436

**SUBJECT:** Flood Control Benefit Assessment Program for Fiscal Year 2025-26, All  
Supervisory Districts

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### County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

### Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

### Recommended Actions:

Set a hearing for June 24, 2025 (ESTIMATED TIME: 10 MINUTES) on the departmental agenda to consider recommendations regarding the Flood Benefit Assessment Program for Fiscal Year 2025-26 as follows:

- a) Consider and approve the introduction (first reading) of an Ordinance (Attachment A) amending Ordinance 3150, the Flood Control Benefit Assessment Ordinance, Relating to Benefit Assessments for Flood Control Services imposing a Flood Control Benefit Assessment for Fiscal Year 2025-26;
- b) Read the title of Ordinance and waive further reading;
- c) Receive and file a Report (Attachment B) regarding Flood Control Benefit Assessment for Fiscal Year 2025-26;
- d) Set a hearing for July 8, 2025 on the administrative agenda to consider the following recommendations:
  - i. Make a determination upon each assessment described in the Report filed by the Board at the June 24, 2025 meeting and direct staff to record the Report;

- ii. Adopt the Resolution (Attachment C) confirming Flood Control Benefit Assessment for Fiscal Year 2025-26 and direct staff to record the Resolution;
- iii. Consider and approve the adoption (second reading) of an Ordinance amending Ordinance 3150, the Flood Control Benefit Assessment Ordinance, Relating to Benefit Assessments for Flood Control Services imposing Flood Control Benefit Assessments for Fiscal Year 2025-26 (ordinance introduced on June 24, 2025); and
- iv. Find that the assessment revenue will be used for meeting operating expenses, including employee wage rates and fringe benefits, purchasing or leasing supplies, equipment, or materials, meeting financial reserve needs and requirements and obtaining funds for capital projects necessary to maintain service within existing service areas; and that the recalculation and imposition of the annual Flood Control Benefit Assessment are therefore exempt from California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15273(a)(1, 2, 3, and 4); and direct staff to file the attached Notice of Exemption (Attachment D) with the Clerk of the Board.

**Summary Text:**

This item is on the agenda to set the first hearing to introduce an ordinance entitled, "An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 3150, the Flood Control Benefit Assessment Ordinance, Relating to Benefit Assessments for Flood Control Services" and the second hearing for adoption of the ordinance and resolution confirming the Flood Control Assessment for FY 2025-26. It is proposed that the rates in each Flood Zone be increased by 3.02% for Fiscal Year 2025-26 (see page 5) as determined by the State Department of Finance. This increase represents the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all urban consumers for Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Anaheim.

The 2025-26 Benefit Assessment Report describes the concept and mechanism of the Flood Control Benefit Assessment Program and represents the continued need for financing flood control services. The report will be kept on file with the Clerk of the Board until the conclusion of the hearings.

**Background:**

The Flood Control Benefit Assessment Program was developed after Proposition 13 passed in 1978, which reduced the District's tax revenue by about 60%. In response to the District's imminent financial situation and the need for supplemental funding, the Board of Directors moved and adopted the Flood Control Benefit Program on March 24, 1980 and began the program in 1980-1981 prior to voter consideration. The Board believed that delaying the decision would have made it impossible to continue maintenance of essential facilities operated by the District and to avoid an increased risk in flooding. On the November 4, 1980 Statewide General Election, the Board placed a ballot measure in each of the Flood Zones to continue the Program.

On November 4, 1980, Santa Barbara County residents voted to approve the levying of benefit assessments in each of the Flood Zones to help pay the cost of providing flood control services. This list of services and programs were identified as program priorities:

- Emergency Response
- Operation and Maintenance
- Storm Emergency Rehabilitation
- Dam Safety
- Debris Control
- Major Repair
- Correction of Flooding and Erosion Problems (new construction)
- Flood Plain Management
- Countywide rain and river flow gauge system

The priorities established above were based on protection of life, protection of property, safety, economy, public service, and conservation.

The assessment brought the District funding to about 80% of the pre-Proposition 13 revenues. The ordinance that established the assessment program allows for annual increases in assessment rates up to the increase in the CPI for the preceding twelve months.

The CPI increases are intended to equalize service levels year-to-year by stabilizing buying power. The new benefit assessment rates prevent the devaluation of Flood Control District revenues from inflation. The CPI increase approved by the voters preserves the ability to deliver services to the public.

In 1996, a measure was brought back to the voters to increase Benefit Assessment rates above the CPI, and the measure passed only in the South Coast Flood Zone. This increased the rates in the South Coast Flood Zone, for a single-family residence, by \$5.70 permanently moving forward and allowed the District to construct several flood control improvements that were identified in the ballot argument. In 1980 in the original measure, a CPI was included and it allows the District to increase all the zone rates annually by the CPI in each Flood Zone including the South Coast.

#### **Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes

#### **Fiscal Analysis**

Narrative:

The FY 2025-26 Recommended Budget includes a total of \$4,455,100 in Benefit Assessment revenue across the Flood Control District's ten flood zones. These funds support maintenance and operations activities such as debris removal, vegetation management, facility inspections, and minor repairs that protect life, property, and infrastructure from flood-related risks. These assessments are collected annually and are essential to sustaining core flood control services throughout the County.

**Special Instructions:**

Noticing requirements of the hearings are subject to Government Code Sections 54716 and 6066 and publication of the Notice of Public Hearings (Attachment E) will be completed by the department.

After the July 8, 2025 Hearing direct the Clerk of the Board to:

1. File and post the Notice of Exemption (Attachment D).
2. Send a certified copy of the Resolution to the Property Tax Division of the Auditor-Controller's Office.
3. Email Christina Lopez at [clopez@countyofsb.org](mailto:clopez@countyofsb.org) to pick up: 1) a signed original of the Resolution, 2) copies of the signed Ordinance, stamped NOE, and minute order
4. Publish a copy of the amended ordinance (or summary of) with names of the members of the Board of Directors voting for or against the amendment in the Santa Barbara Independent within 15 days of adoption of the ordinance.

**Attachments:**

Attachment A -	Ordinance Amending Ordinance 3150
Attachment B -	BA Report FY 2025-26
Attachment C-	Reso FY 2025-26 (two originals)
Attachment D -	NOE
Attachment E -	Copy of Notice of Public Hearing
Attachment F -	Ordinance Amending Ordinance 3150 (strikethrough version)

**Authored by:**

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[wrubalc@countyofsb.org](mailto:wrubalc@countyofsb.org)

**PROPOSED RATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26**  
**FLOOD ZONE BENEFIT ASSESSMENT RATES & MINIMUM PARCEL ASSESSMENT PER CATEGORY**

	Group A		Group B		Group C		Group D		Group E	
	FY 2025-26		FY 2025-26		FY 2025-26		FY 2025-26		FY 2025-26	
	\$/Ac	Min \$ Assmt	\$/Ac	Min \$ Assmt	\$/Ac <sup>1</sup> (over 0.3 Ac only)	Min \$ Assmt	\$/Ac	Min \$ Assmt	\$/Ac	Min \$ Assmt
Bradley	\$ 57.25	\$ 17.18	\$ 42.93	\$ 12.88	\$ -	\$ 8.64	\$ 2.14	\$ 0.63	\$ 0.21	\$ 0.06
Guadalupe	\$ 30.31	\$ 9.08	\$ 22.74	\$ 6.84	\$ -	\$ 4.56	\$ 1.14	\$ 0.35	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.03
Lompoc City	\$ 127.88	\$ 38.37	\$ 95.90	\$ 28.76	\$ -	\$ 19.19	\$ 4.81	\$ 1.44	\$ 0.45	\$ 0.13
Lompoc Valley	\$ 49.94	\$ 14.97	\$ 37.43	\$ 11.22	\$ -	\$ 7.47	\$ 1.86	\$ 0.56	\$ 0.19	\$ 0.04
Los Alamos	\$ 63.50	\$ 19.06	\$ 47.64	\$ 14.28	\$ -	\$ 9.52	\$ 2.38	\$ 0.70	\$ 0.23	\$ 0.06
Orcutt	\$ 38.06	\$ 11.43	\$ 28.54	\$ 8.57	\$ -	\$ 5.72	\$ 1.42	\$ 0.43	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.04
Santa Maria	\$ 121.75	\$ 36.53	\$ 91.32	\$ 27.47	\$ -	\$ 18.25	\$ 4.58	\$ 1.38	\$ 0.43	\$ 0.13
SMR Levee	\$ 32.85	\$ 9.86	\$ 24.63	\$ 7.39	\$ -	\$ 4.94	\$ 1.22	\$ 0.38	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.03
Santa Ynez	\$ 28.05	\$ 8.42	\$ 21.04	\$ 6.31	\$ -	\$ 4.20	\$ 1.04	\$ 0.32	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.03
South Coast	\$ 213.71	\$ 64.12	\$ 160.28	\$ 48.08	\$ -	\$ 32.06	\$ 8.01	\$ 2.41	\$ 0.79	\$ 0.23

GROUP A - Commercial Industrial.

GROUP B - Institutions and Apartments

GROUP C - Single-family residential and small multiple (2 to 4 units), cemeteries.

GROUP D - Irrigated agriculture, golf courses.

GROUP E - Dry farmed agricultural, vacant ground.

Note: A \$1.00 per parcel assessment is added per Resolution No. 82-209 pursuant to Government Code Sections 29304 and 51800.

<sup>1</sup>Minimum assessment included up to 0.3-acre lot. Any single family "Group C" LOT AREA over 0.3 acres will be additionally charged in accordance with the schedule for "Group D".