



Notice of Public Hearing & Proposed Parks and Recreation Assessment

Why did you receive this ballot?

You are a record property owner to be served by the Scotia Community Services District (SCSD) and are being asked to vote on a proposed funding measure to establish and maintain parks and recreation services for the community of Scotia.

The enclosed ballot is your opportunity to participate in deciding whether local funding will be approved for establishing parks and recreation services by the SCSD. Your vote is important because only returned ballots will be counted.

Who is the Scotia Community Services District?

Scotia was built in the 1880s and has been maintained since then as a true company town located in the heart of California redwood country. Today Scotia is owned and operated by the Town of Scotia Company, LLC (TOS) which owns and leases out all residences and most businesses. However, the Town of Scotia is in the process of subdividing the properties and selling them into private ownership. To facilitate this transition to private ownership, the SCSD was formed to provide the town with essential services including parks and recreation.

Why is a funding measure needed?

The community of Scotia has many parks and recreation opportunities, including the baseball and soccer parks, Fireman's Park, the Community Forest, the Winema Theatre, the Scotia Museum, and various pocket parks within the community. These facilities have hosted many community events, including annual barbeques, Easter egg hunts, performances, graduation ceremonies, and many more community-oriented events. Parks and recreation services in the community of Scotia have been privately funded by TOS and are in the process of being transferred to the SCSD, to be funded by the community.

The SCSD is proposing to establish a long-term community-based revenue source (benefit assessment) for the express purpose of funding the ongoing operation and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities for the community, and endeavors to improve the overall park and recreational system that directly affect the properties and quality of life for residents, tenants, employees and owners of properties within the SCSD.

The future of parks and recreation services would be at risk if a consistent source of funding cannot be established through the SCSD. In absence of the assessments, improvements and maintenance will not be able to occur, and the parks and recreation areas in the District would be degraded due to insufficient funding for maintenance, upkeep, and repair.

Any funds collected from the benefit assessment shall be expended **only** for parks and recreation services provided by the SCSD. Any unexpended funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried over for the same use in the next fiscal year.

What would this measure provide?

The proposed assessment will provide a stable revenue source to fund the ongoing operations, maintenance, renovation, and potential debt service of the SCSD parks and recreation facilities that provide special benefits to properties within the SCSD. The continued operations and maintenance of parks and recreation services will allow for the distinct ownership of separate lots.

A more detailed description of the proposed improvements, budget and assessment can be found in the Engineer's Report, which is available for public inspection at the SCSD office. According to Community Services District law, assessments may only be levied to recover the actual cost of providing services. The District will conduct annual financial audits to ensure that revenues are expended as authorized.

What are the benefits to the community?

The National Parks and Recreation Association has shown that proximity and access to parks provides unique and direct benefit to property owners. The District's proposed assessments will fund improvements, projects, and expenditures for parks and recreation services that specially benefit properties within the District, which may include:

- Operation and maintenance of park and recreational improvements throughout the District.
- Acquisition of land or facilities for park or recreational purposes.
- Resource Development including construction, installation, and/or expansion of various park sites, trails, open spaces, halls/activity centers (community centers) and related recreational facilities within the District.
- Facility Enhancements/Rehabilitation including periodic repairs and renovations of recreational sites and facilities (parks, trails, community centers) including, but not limited to signage, playground and tot-lot equipment; sports field fencing; portable soccer goals; ball fields; sports facility lighting; parking facilities; restrooms, kitchens and related equipment and amenities such as electrical, irrigation and drainage systems, tables, benches, etc.
- Capital Improvements including major repairs of recreational buildings and facilities that may include repair or replacement roofs, interior building repairs, replacement of permanent fixtures, structural repairs, internal building remodels, as well as the construction and installation of new facilities.

How much is the proposed assessment?

The proposed assessment amount to be levied against your parcel is printed in the accompanying Official Assessment Ballot. Proposed parks and recreations assessments were calculated on the following basis:

\$199.88 per Equivalent Benefit Unit (EBU) per year (\$16.66 per month) x Apportioned EBU's = Total Annual Cost

The proposed assessment uses a weighted method of apportionment, known as an Equivalent Benefit Unit (EBU) methodology, which uses a single-family home as the basic unit of assessment. The average structural area for residential properties in the District is represented by one EBU, which is calculated as 1,500 square feet (ft²). The EBU methodology for assigning proportionality of benefit assessments was chosen because a majority of structures located within the District are of similar wood frame construction and all installed within a similar time period. Other land uses are converted to a weighted EBU based on an assessment formula that equates the property's specific characteristics associated with density factors to compare the proportional benefit of each property as compared to a single-family home. Further details may be found in the Engineer's Report.

The total amount of parks and recreation assessments proposed to be collected from identified parcels within the SCSD for fiscal year 2016-2017 is \$152,110. If approved, the first annual assessment will appear on your 2016/2017 property tax bills, should the infrastructure be transferred to the SCSD by the assessment tax roll deadline. The proposed assessments will be levied for fiscal year 2016-17 and continued every year thereafter.

Will this assessment increase in the future?

The District's proposed assessments are established with an annual 1.5% escalation factor to account for cost of living increases for an initial five-year period. The proposed assessments may also be increased to an amount not to exceed 3% based on the consumer price index (CPI) if approved by the SCSD. This will allow the SCSD to budget for inflation.

Additionally, proposed changes to assessments may also occur based on "pass through" costs, which include the purchase of uncontrolled, mandatory services (such as, utility costs). Further details and explanations may be found in the Engineer's Report.

Any new or increased parks and recreation assessments above the allowed CPI increase would require another Proposition 218 proceeding and property owner approval.

If I have questions, concerns, or want to return my ballot in person, where can I go?

On **Thursday, June 16, 2016, at 5:30 p.m.**, the Board of Directors of the SCSD will hold a **noticed public hearing** on the proposed assessment at the SCSD Office, located at 122 Main Street in Scotia.

At the hearing, the Board will consider all oral and written testimony (and written objections and protests) regarding the proposed assessments. The enclosed assessment ballot for parks and recreation services may be returned to the SCSD at the public hearing prior to the end of public comment period, or may be mailed or hand delivered to the SCSD prior to the public hearing.

In tabulating the ballots, the ballots will be weighted according to the proportional financial obligation of the affected property (i.e. the total amount of the assessment, as shown under “parcel information” on the ballot). Upon the conclusion of the public hearing, the Board will not impose the assessment if ballots submitted in opposition to the assessment exceed the ballots submitted in favor of the assessment (majority protest).

If you have questions about this notice or the proposed assessment, please contact SCSD at **(707) 506-3030** Mondays and Thursdays from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. or at **infoscotiacsd@gmail.com**. Completed Assessment Ballots, as well as written comments and protests for the Board’s consideration at the hearing, can be delivered to the SCSD Office or mailed to P.O. Box 104, Scotia, CA 95565.