



# Proposition 218 Benefit Assessment

**Branciforte Fire Protection District  
Fire Protection and Emergency Response  
Services Assessment**

# Introductions

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## **Branciforte FPD Fire Chief:**

Interim Fire Chief, Nate Lackey - [natel@branciforte-fire.com](mailto:natel@branciforte-fire.com)

## **Branciforte FPD Board of Directors**

Larry Pageler (Board Chair) – [larryp@branciforte-fire.com](mailto:larryp@branciforte-fire.com)

Pat O'Connell – [pato@branciforte-fire.com](mailto:pato@branciforte-fire.com)

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## **Branciforte FPD Consultants**

John Bliss, P.E. President, SCI Consulting Group – [john.bliss@sci-cg.com](mailto:john.bliss@sci-cg.com)

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# Agenda of Today's Meeting

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Introductions



Intro to  
District



Annexation



District  
Finances



Engineering  
Methodology

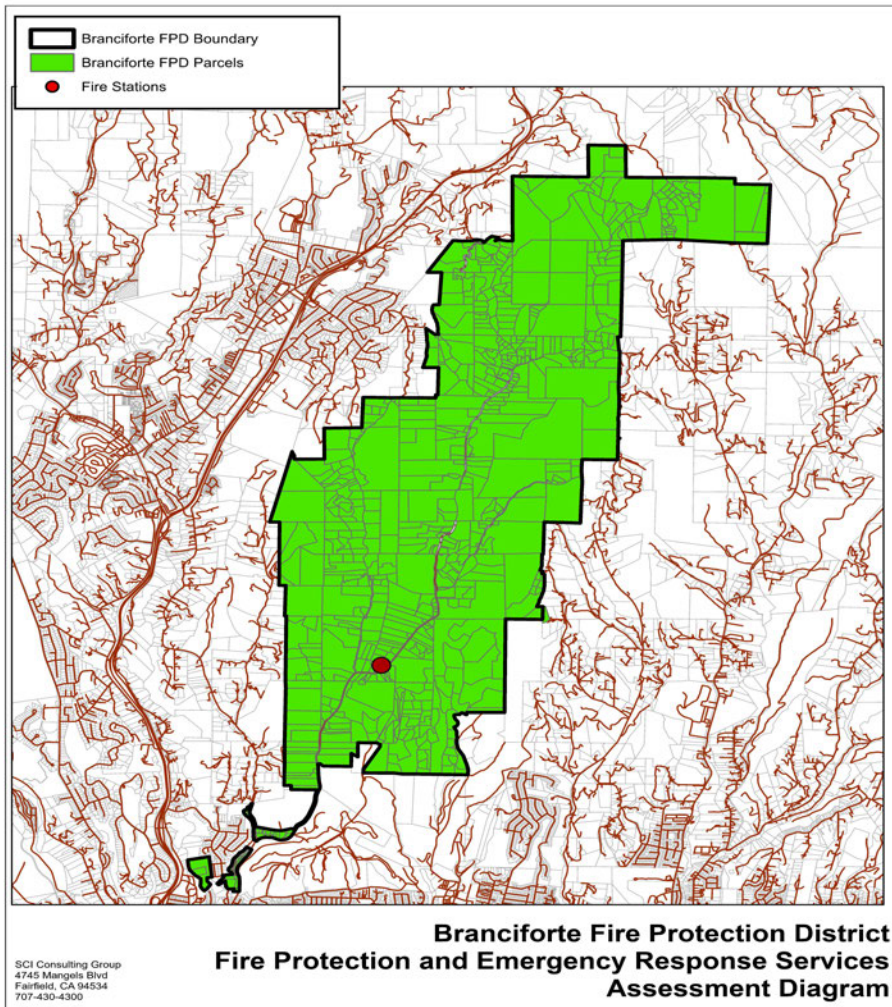


Q&A & Next  
Steps

# BRANCIFORTE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



- Splintered off from Scotts Valley Fire Protection District in 1942
- Began with a 1939 GMC truck equipped with 450 gallons of water, 950 feet of hose, and a 500 GPM water pump
- Was once an all-volunteer department
- Currently rely on three full-time staff: the Interim Chief and two full-time Captains
- Assisted by a team of 10-12 volunteer firefighters
- Serves approximately 2,000 residents and responds to approximately 150 calls on average per year



# Branciforte Fire Protection District Boundaries & Service Area

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# Branciforte Fire Protection District Services

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- *The Branciforte Fire Protection District (BFPD) provides:*
- Fire protection, suppression, and community education and awareness
- Emergency Medical Services at a basic life support (BLS) level
- Drills and training for its existing and volunteer firefighting staff to hone their skills
- Mutual aid service throughout Santa Cruz County as well as California for some larger emergencies
- BFPD does not currently provide advanced life support (ALS) services – characterized by advanced and urgent care of those in critical condition



**SCOTTS VALLEY  
FIRE DISTRICT**

**BRANCIFORTE  
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**



## **Annexation with Scotts Valley Fire**

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Annexation



Dissolution



Staffing



The Impact



Considerations

## BRANCIFORTE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT REORGANIZATION KEY SUMMARY

Key Factors	Branciforte FPD	Scotts Valley FPD	Reorganization (One District with No New Benefit Assessment)	Reorganization (One District with New Benefit Assessment)
Population	1,715	20,171	21,886	Same as previous column
Area	5,756 acres (9 square miles)	13,465 acres (21 square miles)	19,221 acres (30 square miles)	Same as previous column
Governance	5 person elected board (at-large)	5 person elected board (at-large)	5 person elected board (at-large)	Same as previous column
Avg Calls/ year	140	2,146	2,286	Same as previous column
Cost/ call	\$1,075,458 /140 \$7,682 per call	\$8,111,350 /2,146 \$3,780 per call	\$9,186,800 /2,286 \$4,018 per call	SV Zone: \$402 B40 Zone: appx \$14,286
Cost Per Capita	\$627	\$402	\$420	SV Zone: \$402 B40 Zone: \$1,166



# BRANCIFORTE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT REORGANIZATION KEY SUMMARY

Key Factors	Branciforte FPD	Scotts Valley FPD	Reorganization (One District with No New Benefit Assessment)	Reorganization (One District with New Benefit Assessment)
<b>Employees</b>	3 full time perm 3 full time temp 9 Volunteers 1 part-time admin	26 full time perm 8 Paid-Call 2 full time + 1 part time admin	29 full time perm 20 Paid-Call 2 full time + 1 part time admin	32 full time perm 20 Paid-Call 2 full time + 1 part time admin
<b>Recurring Revenue 21/22</b>	General Fund \$908,458  Measure T \$167,000	General Fund \$8,111,350	General Fund \$9,019,800 Measure T \$167,000 Total \$9,186,800	SV Zone \$8,111,350 B40 Zone \$2M (approx.) Includes Measure T
<b>Station Staffing</b>	B40 1 = 1 (+1 Temp) B40 2 = Unstaffed	SCO 1 = 4 SCO 2 = 3 BC = 1	SCO 1 = 4 SCO 2 = 4 BRN 1 = Unstaffed BC = 1	SCO 1 = 4 SCO 2 = 3 BRN 1 = 2 BC = 1
<b>EMS Level</b>	EMT	ALS (paramedic)	ALS (paramedic)	Same as Previous column
<b>FireSafe/ FireWise</b>	Support	Support	Support	Same as Previous column

# BRANCIFORTE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT REORGANIZATION KEY SUMMARY

Key Factors	Branciforte FPD	Scotts Valley FPD	Reorganization (One District with No New Benefit Assessment)	Reorganization (One District with New Benefit Assessment)
Apparatus	BRN 1: (1) Type 1 (1) Type 3 (1) Type 6 (1) WT  BRN 2: Type 3 (Reserve)	SCO 1: (1) Type 1 (1) Type 3 (1) WT Type 1 Reserve  SCO 2: (1) Type 1 (1) Type 3 (1) HM	SCO 1: (1) Type 1 (1) Type 3 (1) WT Type 1 Reserve  SCO 2: (1) Type 1 (1) Type 3 (1) HM (1) Type 6*  *New Apparatus	SCO 1: Type 1 (1) Type 3 (1) WT (1) Type 1 Reserve  SCO 2: (1) Type 1 (1) Type 3 (1) HM  BRN 1: Type 6* (1) Type 1 Reserve (1) WT Reserve (1) Type 3 Reserve  *New Apparatus
ISO Class	5/5x (<5 miles)	2/2x (<5 miles)	2/2x (<5 miles)	Same as previous column

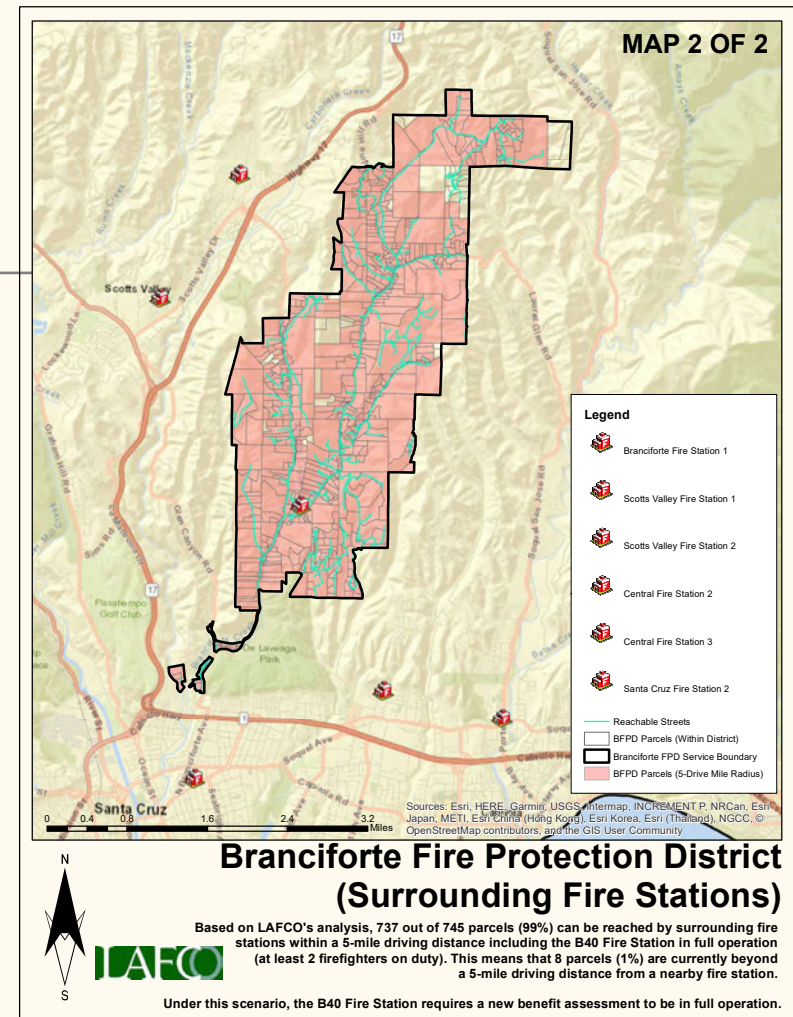
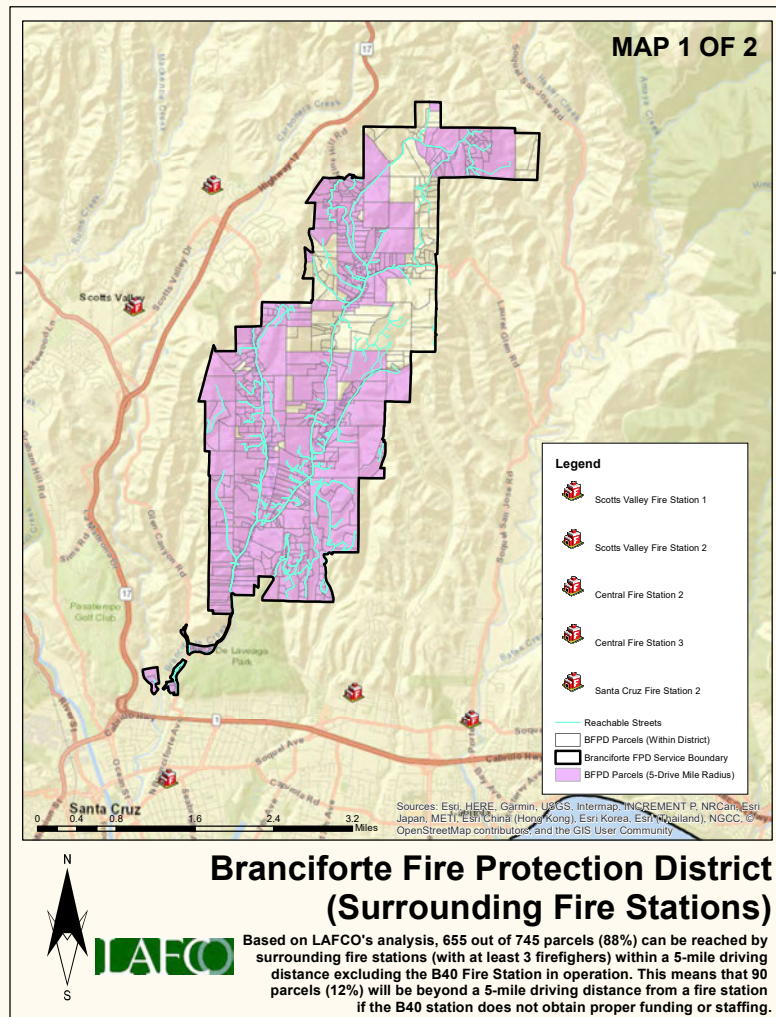
## BRANCIFORTE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT REORGANIZATION KEY SUMMARY

Key Factors	Branciforte FPD	Scotts Valley FPD	Reorganization (One District with No New Benefit Assessment)	Reorganization (One District with New Benefit Assessment)
Parcels	745	8,835	9,580	Same as previous column
Parcels <5 miles (Number & Percentage)	737 99%	N/A	655 88% BRN	737 99% BRN
Parcels >5 miles (Number & Percentage)	8 1%	N/A	90 12% BRN	8 1% BRN
Volunteers/ Paid-Call	Yes	Yes	Yes	Same as previous column

# BRANCIFORTE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT REORGANIZATION KEY SUMMARY

Key Factors	Branciforte FPD	Scotts Valley FPD	Reorganization (One District with No New Benefit Assessment)	Reorganization (One District with New Benefit Assessment)
Drive Time Maps	Refer to the two 5-Driving Mile Maps created in March 2023, which were developed for discussion and illustration purposes only.			
Community Identity	Elected Board	Elected Board	Advisory Board for BRN Zone	Same as previous column
Condition of Facilities	BRN 1 Repairs needed BRN 2 Unknown	SCO 1 Seismic Upgrade planned SCO 2 Good Condition	TBD	TBD
Use of Facilities	BRN 1 Staffed* BRN 2 Unstaffed*	SCO 1 Staffed SCO 2 Staffed	SCO 1 Staffed SCO 2 Staffed BRN 1 Unstaffed	SCO 1 Staffed SCO 2 Staffed BRN 1 Staffed

\*Footnote: While BFPD Station 1 is within 5 driving miles of 737 out of 745 parcels, it is important to note that the station is currently understaffed and underfunded.



# Branciforte FPD – Finances & Need

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- Our historic reliance on volunteer firefighters is no longer viable as volunteers are becoming more difficult to obtain
- With only three professional staff, only one firefighter is available on any given shift
- To keep Branciforte Fire Station (B40) open and operating safely, we need **six**, rather than **three**, paid professional firefighters
- The current small portion of property taxes and existing Measure T revenues are inadequate to fund current and future capital and operating costs
- Cost of living and inflation has compounded these issues
- An **additional \$1.3 million** is needed to cover the cost of these additional firefighters, as well as to keep the B40 Station open

# Branciforte Property Owners

Know that you will have excellent fire and emergency medical services available to you.

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However, the key question is – **which option is best for you?**

- **Under Option 1:**
  - The Branciforte Fire Station closes
  - 2-3 paid professional firefighters are dispatched from **a nearby Scotts Valley Station** on every call
  - At least one of the firefighters dispatched will be a Paramedic (currently our firefighters do not have the same medical services as a Paramedic)
  - Response times may increase for many parcels within the Branciforte FPD
- **Under Option 2:**
  - The Branciforte Fire Station is administered and staffed by Scotts Valley FPD
  - Two paid professional firefighters will be dispatched from **B40 Station** on every call
  - At least one of the firefighters will be a Paramedic
  - Response times remain as they are now

# Proposed Assessment

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- To address this financial shortfall, the District has initiated a Proposition 218 Benefit Assessment process
- Assessment amounts vary by parcel and are based on several unique parcel characteristics and factors:
  - Each **parcel owner** will receive one ballot
  - Each ballot is weighted in proportion to the parcel's proposed assessment
- Your total assessment amount is the amount of 'votes' you have in this election
- Only **returned ballots** are tabulated, and they are weighted based on their proposed assessment
- A simple majority is required (50%+1) for approval and adoption



# Proposed Assessment

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- The proposed assessment is based on projected costs for the fiscal year 2023-24
- If approved, the assessment would be paid **on an annual basis**
- In order for assessment-derived revenues to keep up with rising costs, an annual adjustment tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) may be applied to each succeeding year—**not to exceed 4%**
- Any change in the CPI in excess of 4% shall be **cumulatively reserved** as the “Unused CPI” and shall be used to increase the maximum authorized assessment rate in years when the CPI is less than 4%
- If approved, the authority to revise the assessment annually will rest with the **Scotts Valley Fire Board**

# Proposed Assessment

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- The proposed assessment has “no sunset” – meaning **it does not expire**
- However, this assessment will only be charged if the Fire Board can **justify the budgetary need** to do so for Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- In addition to the possible increases described on the previous slide, the Fire Board may also **maintain** or **lower** the assessment rate in a certain fiscal year
- The Fire Board may also choose **not to levy the assessment** if funds are no longer needed

# Engineering Methodology Special Benefit Factors

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Fire Risk Factors



Structural  
Replacement Value



Fire Hazard Zone Risk



Travel Time

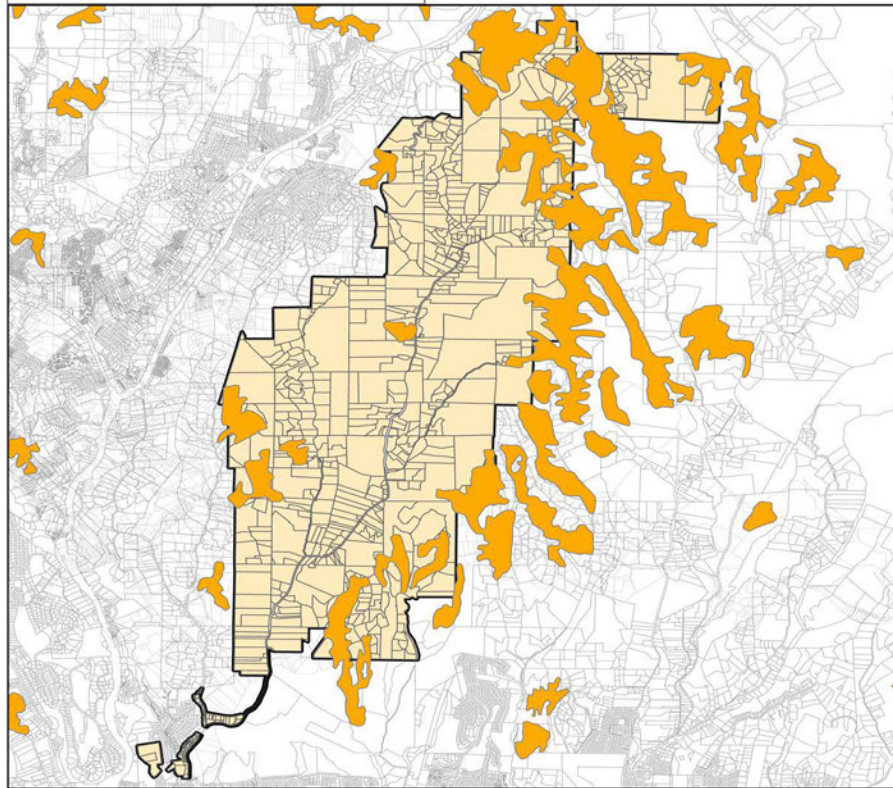
# Fire Risk & Replacement Cost Factors

Property Type	Fire Risk Factors	Replacement Cost Factors	SFE Factors	Unit
Single Family	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	each
Multi-Family	2.3220	0.3221	0.7479	res unit
Commercial/Industrial	5.2150	0.5991	3.1244	acre
Office	1.5524	0.7569	1.1750	acre
Storage	13.0438	0.5776	7.5342	acre
Parking Lot	0.3179	0.6044	0.1921	each
Vacant	0.3179	0.6044	0.1921	each
Agriculture	1.2310	0.0563	0.0693	acre
RV Park	3.4419	0.3954	1.3610	acre
Range Land & Open Space	0.0935	0.0462	0.0043	acre

*-Structure Fires by Occupancy 2012-2016 Annual Averages, NFPA, and an analysis of the percentage of properties by property type in the State of California by SCI*

*-Replacement values based on average land & Improvement values*

Branciforte Protection District - Fire Hazard Areas



Fire Hazard Zones



Very High  
High  
Moderate

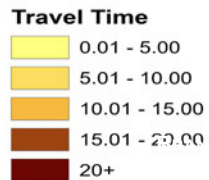
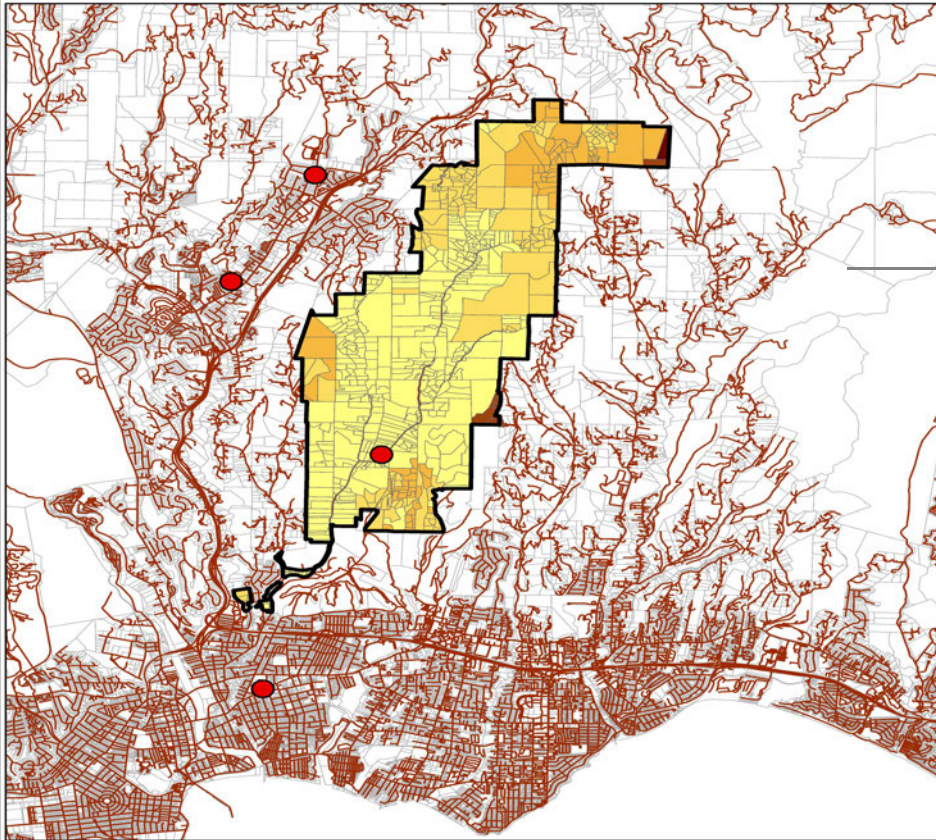
Branciforte FPD Boundary  
Branciforte FPD Parcels

# Fire Hazard Zones

Fire Hazard Zone	Score	Impact Effect	Normalized Fire Hazard Zone Factor
Very High	2	120	1.20
High	1.2	112	1.12
Moderate	1	110	1.10
None	0	100	1

*Fire Hazard Zones in Descending Order of impact.*

# Branciforte Fire Protection District - Travel Response Time



Travel Time Group	Score (\$)	Impact Effect	Normalized Travel Time Factor
<5	43,690	138	1.15
5 to 10	63,810	126	1.05
11-15	83,930	120	1.00
16-20	104,050	116	0.97
20+	124,170	114	0.95
Outer*			0.90

- There is a linear function relationship ranking between response time and loss in dollars.
- Parcels closer to the Fire Station have higher special benefit, and a slightly higher rate
- \*Parcels in a travel time cluster closer to a Scotts Valley Station receive a reduction in their rate due to reduced special benefit.

# Preliminary Rates & Revenue Needs

- 967.66 Total 'SFE's' within the Branciforte FPD based on Assessment Engineering
- Residentials property owners control a large portion of the proposed assessment
- **\$1,353.47** per SFE yields **\$1,309,696** in revenue for BFPD's needs
- The average single family home assessment amount is \$1600
- Commercial, agricultural, and open space are assessed per acre.
- Vacant lots are assessed on a per parcel basis (regardless of acreage).
- Each assessable parcel's assessment is calculated with the formula below:

$$\text{Assessment} \approx \Sigma (\text{Assessment Rate}) * \Sigma (\text{SFE Benefit Factor}) * \Sigma (\text{Fire Hazard Zone Factor}) * \Sigma (\text{Travel Time Premium Factor})$$

*Calculation of Assessment using Fire Assessment Engineering & Methodology*



# Examples of Assessment Calculations

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**Case #1 - Single Family Residence** on 4.5 acres in Fire Hazard Zone “None” w/ <5-minute Travel time:

Assessment Rate = Annual Base SFE Rate x (1 unit x 1.0000 + (0.0043 x 4 acres)) x 1.0 x 1.15

= \$1,353.47 x 1.0172 x 1.0 x 1.15

= \$1,353.47 x 1.1698

= **\$1,583.26**

**Case #2 - Two-unit Residence** on 42.6 acres in Fire Hazard Zone “High” w/ 5-10 minute Travel Time:

Assessment Rate = Annual Base SFE Rate x (2 units x 1.0000 + (0.0043 x 42 acres)) x 1.12 x 1.05

= \$1,353.47 x 2.1806 x 1.12 x 1.05

= \$1,353.47 x 2.5644

= **\$3,470.84**



# Ballot Proceedings Timeline

Dec 2022 – February 2023 Develop draft Engineer's Report & outreach materials, ongoing research

**February 10, 2023**      **Board Study & Services Discussion**

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March 28, 2023      Draft of Engineer's Report to Board

April 14, 2023      Letter Mailed to Property Owners regarding this process

**April 20, 2023**      **BOARD MEETING** Passes resolution initiating assessment ballot proceeding & Prop 218 Compliance

April 22, 2023      Open House at the Branciforte Fire Station

May 11, 2023      Virtual Community Meeting

May 21, 2023      In-Person meeting at the Happy Valley Conference Center

**June 2, 2023**      **Mail Assessment Ballots**

June 7, 2023      Virtual Community Meeting

June 2 – July 19, 2023      Assessment Balloting Period (ballots must be out for at least 45 days)

**July 20, 2023**      **BOARD MEETING.** Public hearing & close of District's Board considers resolution ordering levying of proposed assessments for FY 2023-24 balloting period. Tabulation of ballots.

**August 10, 2023**      **Assessment levies submitted to County Auditor for Fiscal Year 2023-24 if proposed assessment is successful**



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APRIL 22, 2023

# Q&A