

11. Consider approving in concept an “Ordinance Amending Section 4.65.030 Of The Santa Cruz County Code Relating To The Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, And Wildlife Protection Act”, and take related actions ()



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: Parks, Open Spaces, and Cultural Services and the Office of Response, Recovery and Resilience

Subject: Approve in Concept an Ordinance Amending Chapter 4.65.030 of Santa Cruz County Code

Meeting Date: May 6, 2025

Formal Title: Consider approving in concept an “Ordinance Amending Section 4.65.030 Of The Santa Cruz County Code Relating To The Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, And Wildlife Protection Act”, and take related actions

Recommended Actions

1. Approve in concept an “Ordinance Amending Section 4.65.030 Of The Santa Cruz County Code Relating To The Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, And Wildlife Protection Act” related to the collection of the Special Parcel Tax, as set forth in attachment, incorporated herein by reference;
2. Schedule the ordinance for a second reading and final adoption on May 20, 2025; and
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish the Notice of Proposed Ordinance Summary in a newspaper of general circulation, pursuant to Government Code Section 25124.

Executive Summary

The Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services (Parks) and the Office of Response, Recovery and Resilience (OR3) propose amendments to Santa Cruz County Code Chapter 4.65.030 (Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Act) related to the collection of the Special Parcel Tax to allow the County distribute taxes based upon their calculated share of the property tax roll, consistent with the Teeter Plan.

Discussion

In the November 2024 election, the Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction and Wildlife Protection Act, referred to herein as Measure Q, was approved by over 60% of voters, and is now incorporated into the Santa Cruz County Code.

The funding mechanism for this Measure is described in section 4.65.020, Imposition of Special Parcel Tax, and is attached in full in redline. The measure states that all revenues generated by the Special Parcel Tax, together with any interest and penalties thereon, shall be collected each fiscal year and deposited into the Fund.

The requirement to deposit interest and penalties is inconsistent with the Teeter Plan Resolution approved by the Board in 1993. In October 1993, the Board adopted Resolution Number 541-93 authorizing the Alternative Method of Tax Distribution (the “Teeter” plan). The plan allows the County to distribute taxes to cities and special

districts based upon their calculated share of the property tax roll. This allows cities and special districts to rely on a definite amount of tax revenue, with the County absorbing the risk of delinquencies along with retaining any late penalties and interest received when the delinquent assessments are eventually paid.

Since the passage of the Teeter Resolution, the County has been “Teetered”, meaning charges placed on the tax bill for collection are treated this way with very limited exceptions.

In the example of Measure Q funds, the full amount of this Special Parcel Tax placed on the bills would be assumed to be 100% collected and 100% available for distribution in December (50%), April (45%) and June (remaining 5% after any corrections post) of each fiscal year. If the funds are not teetered, the amount distributed would be the amount of Special Parcel Tax actually collected at the time of distribution. In general, if not part of the Teetered Plan, the amounts collected and distributed may be lower than what is distributed under the Teeter Plan.

Measure Q, Ch. 4.65.100, allows for amendments to this requirement to be modified by Board action if it is consistent with the Act and does not change the amount of the Special Parcel Tax collected or the use of the funds so the Board can resolve this conflict. An Ordinance is attached for the Board's review and consideration which eliminates the specific reference to “together with any interest and penalties thereon” language and, in so doing, would allow for Measure Q funds to be managed as part of the County's Teeter plan.

Financial Impact

Implementation of the updated Santa Cruz County Code will align with the County's Teeter Plan.

Strategic Initiatives

Equity Framework - County Facilities & Infrastructure, Plans, Policies & Budgets
Operational Plan - Operational Excellence

Submitted By:

Jeff Gaffney, Director of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services
David Reid, Director of the Office of Response, Recovery and Resilience

Recommended By:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Executive Officer

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) did not significantly contribute to the development of this agenda item.

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 4.65.030 OF THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CODE
RELATING TO THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SAFE DRINKING WATER, CLEAN
BEACHES, WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION, AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION ACT**

The Board of Supervisors of Santa Cruz County hereby finds and declares the following:

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that it is appropriate to amend Chapter 4.65.030 of the Santa Cruz County Code to modify language related to the collection of the Special Parcel Tax imposed by section 4.65.020.

NOW THEREFORE the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz ordains as follows:

SECTION I

Section 4.65.030 of the Santa Cruz County Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

4.65.030 Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Fund.

There is hereby established in the County Treasury a special fund entitled the Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Fund. All revenues generated by the Special Parcel Tax shall be collected each fiscal year and deposited into the Fund. The Office and the Department, or a successor agency, may create any other funds, accounts, or subaccounts necessary or desirable for purposes of accounting for the monies in the Fund. Revenues in the Fund shall be used exclusively to carry out the purposes of this Act. Revenues in the Fund may also be used to enforce and administer the Special Parcel Tax, including to pay costs for submission of any measure to the voters for the establishment or alteration of the tax and to pay any costs associated with the collection of the tax.

SECTION II

This ordinance shall take effect on the 31st day after the date of final adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2025, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:


ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

FELIPE HERNANDEZ
Chair of the Board of Supervisors

Attest: _____
Full Name
Clerk of the Board

Approved as to Form:

Signed by:


Negine Mansour Sewitsky
Office of the County Counsel

cc:


Certificate Of Completion

Envelope Id: 6A2B1843-F831-46F6-945B-B0524C15BB7A	Status: Sent
Subject: Complete with Docusign: DRAFT ORDINANCE AMENDING 4.65.030_REVISIED FINAL.docx	
Source Envelope:	
Document Pages: 2	Signatures: 1
Certificate Pages: 5	Initials: 0
AutoNav: Enabled	Envelope Originator:
Envelopeld Stamping: Enabled	Kelly Mercer-Lebov
Time Zone: (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)	701 Ocean Street
	Santa Cruz, CA 95060
	Kelly.Mercer-Lebov@santacruzcountyca.gov
	IP Address: 10.103.81.9

Record Tracking

Status: Original	Holder: Kelly Mercer-Lebov	Location: DocuSign
5/1/2025 10:15:32 AM		
	Kelly.Mercer-Lebov@santacruzcountyca.gov	
Security Appliance Status: Connected	Pool: FedRamp	
Storage Appliance Status: Connected	Pool: County of Santa Cruz	Location: Docusign

Signer Events

Signer Events	Signature	Timestamp
Negine Mansour Sewitsky		Sent: 5/1/2025 10:20:28 AM
negine.mansoursewitsky@santacruzcountyca.gov	<small>Signed by: C1EA3B3FB75D476...</small>	Viewed: 5/1/2025 10:21:16 AM
Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)		Signed: 5/1/2025 10:21:36 AM
	Signature Adoption: Pre-selected Style	
	Using IP Address: 71.198.223.195	

Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:

Accepted: 5/1/2025 10:21:16 AM
ID: 5ae74d23-8029-450e-90aa-5753690f4a1c

CBD eSignature

cbd.esignature@santacruzcountyca.gov
Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:

Accepted: 6/20/2024 3:08:48 PM
ID: 4b7794de-1393-406f-a9a3-56a92d4b90d7

In Person Signer Events	Signature	Timestamp
Editor Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Agent Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Intermediary Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Certified Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Emilia Gamboa		Sent: 5/1/2025 10:21:37 AM
Emilia.Gamboa@santacruzcountyca.gov		
Dept Fiscal Officer		
County of Santa Cruz		
Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)		
Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:		
Accepted: 8/20/2024 11:25:43 AM		
ID: 54439baa-4022-4fec-9f59-b0b4aa85d2de		
Carbon Copy Events	Status	Timestamp

Carbon Copy Events	Status	Timestamp
Ann Jackson ann.jackson@santacruzcountyca.gov Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None) Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure: Accepted: 10/16/2024 4:07:03 PM ID: 91dacd55-7b18-4ac8-8a46-5b525df71978		
Kelly Mercer-Lebov kelly.mercer-lebov@santacruzcountyca.gov Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None) Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure: Accepted: 12/23/2024 2:47:20 PM ID: 5f799af8-b478-4b40-95e6-f1588570b327		
Emilia Gamboa Emilia.Gamboa@santacruzcountyca.gov Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None) Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure: Accepted: 8/20/2024 11:25:43 AM ID: 54439baa-4022-4fec-9f59-b0b4aa85d2de		
Witness Events	Signature	Timestamp
Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp
Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps
Envelope Sent	Hashed/Encrypted	5/1/2025 10:20:28 AM
Payment Events	Status	Timestamps
Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure		

ELECTRONIC RECORD AND SIGNATURE DISCLOSURE

From time to time, County of Santa Cruz (we, us or Company) may be required by law to provide to you certain written notices or disclosures. Described below are the terms and conditions for providing to you such notices and disclosures electronically through the DocuSign system. Please read the information below carefully and thoroughly, and if you can access this information electronically to your satisfaction and agree to this Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure (ERSD), please confirm your agreement by selecting the check-box next to 'I agree to use electronic records and signatures' before clicking 'CONTINUE' within the DocuSign system.

Getting paper copies

At any time, you may request from us a paper copy of any record provided or made available electronically to you by us. You will have the ability to download and print documents we send to you through the DocuSign system during and immediately after the signing session and, if you elect to create a DocuSign account, you may access the documents for a limited period of time (usually 30 days) after such documents are first sent to you. After such time, if you wish for us to send you paper copies of any such documents from our office to you, you will be charged a \$0.00 per-page fee. You may request delivery of such paper copies from us by following the procedure described below.

Withdrawing your consent

If you decide to receive notices and disclosures from us electronically, you may at any time change your mind and tell us that thereafter you want to receive required notices and disclosures only in paper format. How you must inform us of your decision to receive future notices and disclosure in paper format and withdraw your consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically is described below.

Consequences of changing your mind

If you elect to receive required notices and disclosures only in paper format, it will slow the speed at which we can complete certain steps in transactions with you and delivering services to you because we will need first to send the required notices or disclosures to you in paper format, and then wait until we receive back from you your acknowledgment of your receipt of such paper notices or disclosures. Further, you will no longer be able to use the DocuSign system to receive required notices and consents electronically from us or to sign electronically documents from us.

All notices and disclosures will be sent to you electronically

Unless you tell us otherwise in accordance with the procedures described herein, we will provide electronically to you through the DocuSign system all required notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you during the course of our relationship with you. To reduce the chance of you inadvertently not receiving any notice or disclosure, we prefer to provide all of the required notices and disclosures to you by the same method and to the same address that you have given us. Thus, you can receive all the disclosures and notices electronically or in paper format through the paper mail delivery system. If you do not agree with this process, please let us know as described below. Please also see the paragraph immediately above that describes the consequences of your electing not to receive delivery of the notices and disclosures electronically from us.

How to contact County of Santa Cruz:

You may contact us to let us know of your changes as to how we may contact you electronically, to request paper copies of certain information from us, and to withdraw your prior consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically as follows:

To contact us by email send messages to: nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us

To advise County of Santa Cruz of your new email address

To let us know of a change in your email address where we should send notices and disclosures electronically to you, you must send an email message to us at nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state: your previous email address, your new email address. We do not require any other information from you to change your email address.

If you created a DocuSign account, you may update it with your new email address through your account preferences.

To request paper copies from County of Santa Cruz

To request delivery from us of paper copies of the notices and disclosures previously provided by us to you electronically, you must send us an email to nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state your email address, full name, mailing address, and telephone number. We will bill you for any fees at that time, if any.

To withdraw your consent with County of Santa Cruz

To inform us that you no longer wish to receive future notices and disclosures in electronic format you may:

- i. decline to sign a document from within your signing session, and on the subsequent page, select the check-box indicating you wish to withdraw your consent, or you may;
- ii. send us an email to nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state your email, full name, mailing address, and telephone number. We do not need any other information from you to withdraw consent.. The consequences of your withdrawing consent for online documents will be that transactions may take a longer time to process..

Required hardware and software

The minimum system requirements for using the DocuSign system may change over time. The current system requirements are found here: <https://support.docusign.com/guides/signer-guide-signing-system-requirements>.

Acknowledging your access and consent to receive and sign documents electronically

To confirm to us that you can access this information electronically, which will be similar to other electronic notices and disclosures that we will provide to you, please confirm that you have read this ERSD, and (i) that you are able to print on paper or electronically save this ERSD for your future reference and access; or (ii) that you are able to email this ERSD to an email address where you will be able to print on paper or save it for your future reference and access. Further, if you consent to receiving notices and disclosures exclusively in electronic format as described herein, then select the check-box next to 'I agree to use electronic records and signatures' before clicking 'CONTINUE' within the DocuSign system.

By selecting the check-box next to 'I agree to use electronic records and signatures', you confirm that:

- You can access and read this Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure; and
- You can print on paper this Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure, or save or send this Electronic Record and Disclosure to a location where you can print it, for future reference and access; and
- Until or unless you notify County of Santa Cruz as described above, you consent to receive exclusively through electronic means all notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you by County of Santa Cruz during the course of your relationship with County of Santa Cruz.

Chapter 4.65
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SAFE DRINKING WATER, CLEAN BEACHES, WILDFIRE
RISK REDUCTION, AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION ACT

Sections:

4.65.010 Definitions.

4.65.020 Imposition of special parcel tax.

4.65.030 Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Fund.

4.65.040 Expenditure plan.

4.65.050 Implementation.

4.65.060 Oversight and accountability.

4.65.070 Property acquisition.

4.65.080 Sunset date.

4.65.090 Severability.

4.65.100 Amendment.

4.65.110 Implementation date.

4.65.010 Definitions.

(A) “Act” means the Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Act.

(B) “Administrative costs” means those costs not directly associated with planning, development, management, and implementation of eligible projects intended to implement the goals of the Act. The activities of the Citizens Oversight Advisory Board are not administrative costs.

(C) “Advisory Board” means the Citizens Oversight Advisory Board established in SCCC 4.65.060.

(D) “Agricultural land use” means parcels that are zoned commercial agriculture (CA) or timber production (TP).

(E) “Board” means the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors.

(F) “Community development” means the feasibility, planning, design, permitting, and construction of recreational infrastructure and amenities.

(G) “County” means the County of Santa Cruz.

(H) “Department” means the Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Services.

(I) “Disadvantaged community” means either of the following two definitions. If either method of definition referred to in subsections (I)(1) or (I)(2) of this section is eliminated, or becomes obsolete, modifications to this definition may be made by the Board of Supervisors, upon recommendation by the Advisory Board.

(1) A census tract that ranks within the top 40 percent highest scoring census tracts in the County as identified in the current State’s CalEnviroScreen; or

(2) A census tract identified as disadvantaged in the United States Council on Environmental Quality Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool.

(J) “Eligible applicant” means “public agencies” as defined, “nonprofit organizations” as defined, and tribes.

(K) “Eligible project” means a project intended to implement the goals of the Act and which meets the requirements of the Act, and includes pre-project assistance and feasibility, planning, acquisition, construction, development, improvement, restoration, rehabilitation, maintenance, stewardship, or any combination thereof.

(L) “Fund” means the Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Fund.

(M) “Nonprofit organization” means any charitable organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

(N) “Office” means the Santa Cruz County Office of Response, Recovery, and Resilience.

(O) “Parcel” means a lot, unit, or plot of real property having identified boundaries and an identified owner and that is documented for property tax purposes and given an assessor’s parcel number by the Assessor of the County of Santa Cruz, excluding those designated as agricultural land use and public agency.

(P) “Property tax collection fee” means an administrative fee of one percent of the funds collected through the special parcel tax to provide for billing, collecting, apportioning, and reporting the special parcel tax charges on the property tax roll.

(Q) “Public agency” means any city, county, district, other local authority, or public body of or within the State.

(R) “Special parcel tax” means the tax imposed by SCCC 4.65.020.

(S) “State” means the State of California.

(T) “Treasurer” means the Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector of the County.

(U) “Working lands” means areas that are utilized for timber production, grazed grassland or rangeland, or cultivation of crops that benefit the broader public for economic or humanitarian purposes beyond individual use. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.020 Imposition of special parcel tax.

(A) Commencing with fiscal year 2025–2026, an annual special parcel tax in the amount of \$87.00 is hereby imposed on each parcel located within the County.

(B) The special parcel tax is levied on each parcel as of January 1st of each year and shall be levied on the owner who owned the parcel on that date unless the parcel is excluded from taxation.

(C) The special parcel tax shall be collected at the same time and in the same manner as ad valorem property taxes.

(D) All laws, regulations, and procedures regarding exemptions, due dates, installment payments, corrections, appeals, refunds, late payments, liens, and collections for secured roll ad valorem property taxes in the County shall be applicable to the collection of the special parcel tax.

(E) Properties owned by a public agency or designated as agricultural land use shall not be subject to the special parcel tax. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.030 Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Fund.

There is hereby established in the County Treasury a special fund entitled the Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Fund. All revenues generated by the special parcel tax, ~~together with any interest and penalties thereon,~~ shall be collected each fiscal year and deposited into the fund. The Office and the Department, or a successor agency, may create any other funds, accounts, or subaccounts necessary or desirable for purposes of accounting for the monies in the fund. Revenues in the fund shall be used exclusively to carry out the purposes of this Act. Revenues in the fund may also be used to enforce and administer the special parcel tax, including to pay costs for submission of any measure to the voters for the establishment or alteration of the tax and to pay any costs associated with the collection of the tax. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.040 Expenditure plan.

(A) The Board shall distribute the proceeds in the fund according to this section. The intended purpose of these expenditures is to confer the following benefits on the people of Santa Cruz County: water quality and protection including drought protection, drinking water quality, water supplies and availability, improvements to watersheds, and clean beaches and ocean; wildfire risk reduction including forest management, creation of defensible spaces, and fire resilience; wildlife and habitat protection including conservation of native biodiversity, restoring critical habitats and wildlife corridors, and stewarding natural and working lands; and safe recreation including developing, restoring, stewarding, or maintaining clean and safe parks, public access facilities, places to play, natural areas, trails, and other programmatic and recreational activities.

(B) The Board shall distribute the moneys in the fund each fiscal year according to the following schedule, after withdrawing and allocating the property tax collection fee and Advisory Board costs authorized under the Act:

(1) Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Program.

(a) Forty percent, on an annual basis, to eligible applicants for eligible projects in the County to be administered as a grant program by the Office and the Department, or a successor agency named by the Board if the Office or the Department cease to exist. The Office and the Department shall jointly award monies from the fund, through agreements and grants, providing for diversity in the types of projects awarded and the recipients of awards to support all geographic areas in the County.

(b) The Office and the Department shall make awards to eligible projects as defined in SCCC 4.65.010(K) for activities which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) Conservation of water supplies and groundwater recharge by enhancing watershed health, improved land management, and protecting land adjacent to County and city water sources.

(ii) Improving water quality through the control of soil erosion by restoring and repairing trails, culverts, drainage, water courses, floodplains, wetlands, and riparian areas.

(iii) Natural or nature-based flood protection and restoration projects, including green infrastructure to reduce neighborhood flooding.

(iv) Protection of public access to local beaches and enhancement of visitor experiences by ensuring that public beaches are safe, clean, and accessible.

(v) Development and implementation of green infrastructure solutions that protect coastal areas and estuaries from erosion and the impacts of sea level rise.

- (vi) Wildlife and marine-life protection and habitat improvement.
 - (vii) Pollution reduction projects, such as litter removal or urban forestry to reduce air pollution.
 - (viii) Development of shaded fuel breaks, defensible spaces, or the reduction of hazardous fuels to prevent catastrophic wildfire, especially along roadways, trails, and in the wildland-urban interface.
 - (ix) Forest management to lower dangerous fuel loads and mitigate conditions that could lead to catastrophic wildfires.
 - (x) Stewardship of private lands in the public benefit for fire resiliency, water quality, erosion control, or other ecosystem services.
 - (xi) Conservation of native biodiversity by reducing invasive species and protecting or restoring critical habitats and wildlife corridors.
 - (xii) Restoration of wetlands and the recovery of anadromous fish species.
 - (xiii) Creation of wildlife bridges, culverts, directional fencing, or other wildlife-friendly infrastructure.
 - (xiv) Trail development, staging areas, and other access facilities on lands open to the public.
- (c) The Office and the Department shall prioritize awards for eligible projects that meet implementation priorities identified in SCCC 4.65.050(A) or that address extreme weather, natural disasters, climate change impacts, water pollution, or saltwater intrusion impacts.
- (d) An amount that equals not more than five percent of the funds allocated annually pursuant to subsection (B)(1)(a) of this section may be used to pay the administrative costs associated with subsection (B)(1)(a) of this section.
- (e) Funds shall be deposited in a separate account, or accounts, to be overseen by the Office and the Department, or a successor agency, and expended pursuant to this section. Any funds unexpended at the close of each fiscal year shall remain in the account, or accounts, and expended pursuant to subsection (B)(1)(a) of this section in the subsequent or future fiscal years. Funds may be accrued for expenditure in future years to enable sufficient funding for larger or long-term projects.
- (2) Neighborhood Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Safe and Clean Parks Program.
- (a) Twenty percent, on an annual basis, to incorporated cities within the County for eligible projects conducted by the incorporated cities. The Board shall allocate funds to

incorporated cities on a per capita basis. However, if any city does not achieve a minimum allocation of \$200,000 annually on a per capita basis, no less than \$200,000 shall be made available to that city and the remainder shall be allocated on a per capita basis to the other cities meeting the minimum allocation.

(b) Each incorporated city shall use funds for eligible projects as defined in SCCC 4.65.010(K) for activities which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) Conservation of water supplies and groundwater recharge by enhancing watershed health, improved land management, and protecting land adjacent to city water sources.

(ii) Improving water quality through the control of soil erosion by restoring and repairing trails, culverts, water courses, floodplains, wetlands, and riparian areas.

(iii) Natural or nature-based flood protection and restoration projects, including green infrastructure to reduce neighborhood flooding.

(iv) Protection of public access to local beaches and enhancement of visitor experiences by ensuring that public beaches are safe, clean, and accessible.

(v) Development and implementation of green infrastructure solutions that protect coastal areas and estuaries from erosion and the impacts of sea level rise.

(vi) Pollution reduction projects, such as litter removal or urban forestry to reduce air pollution.

(vii) Development of shaded fuel breaks, defensible spaces, or the reduction of hazardous fuels to prevent catastrophic wildfire, especially along roadways, trails, and in the wildland-urban interface.

(viii) Forest management to lower dangerous fuel loads and mitigate conditions that could lead to catastrophic wildfires.

(ix) Stewardship of private lands in the public benefit for fire resiliency, water quality, erosion control, or other ecosystem services.

(x) Establishment, repair, construction, or maintenance of safe and clean parks.

(xi) Establishment, repair, construction, or maintenance of river parkways and other trails, restrooms, picnic areas, and public recreation facilities.

(xii) Park cleanliness, beautification, and litter removal.

(xiii) Equitable access to nature through increased mobility and public transportation services to local parks.

(xiv) After school and recreation programs, including sports and aquatic facilities, senior citizens programs, and high-quality environmental education and cultural programs.

(xv) Visitor services for parks and open space preserves to protect natural resources, enhance visitor safety and enjoyment, and support volunteerism and environmental education.

(xvi) Support of activities conducted by a community conservation corps as certified pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 14507.5.

(xvii) Trail development, staging areas, and other access facilities on lands open to the public.

(c) Priority shall be provided for eligible projects that meet implementation priorities identified in SCCC 4.65.050(A) or that:

(i) Address extreme weather and natural disasters, climate change impacts, water pollution, or saltwater intrusion impacts; or

(ii) Meet the greatest need of communities lacking adequate access to parks and recreational facilities in the incorporated cities; or

(iii) Repair or enhance existing parks and recreational facilities.

(d) Funds shall be deposited in separate accounts to be overseen by the incorporated cities and expended pursuant to this section. Any funds unexpended at the close of each fiscal year shall remain in the accounts and be expended pursuant to this section in the subsequent or future fiscal years. Funds may be accrued for expenditure in future years to enable sufficient funding for larger or long-term projects.

(3) County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Safe and Clean Parks Program.

(a) Twenty percent, on an annual basis, for eligible projects in the unincorporated parts of the County to the Office and the Department, or a successor agency named by the Board if the Office or the Department cease to exist. The Office and the Department shall jointly allocate funds to eligible projects.

(b) The County shall use funds for eligible projects as defined in SCCC 4.65.010(K) for activities which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) Conservation of water supplies and groundwater recharge by enhancing watershed health, improved land management, and protecting land adjacent to county water sources.

- (ii) Improving water quality through the control of soil erosion by restoring and repairing trails, culverts, drainage, water courses, floodplains, wetlands, and riparian areas.
- (iii) Natural or nature-based flood protection and restoration projects, including green infrastructure to reduce neighborhood flooding.
- (iv) Protection of public access to local beaches and enhancement of visitor experiences by ensuring that public beaches are safe, clean, and accessible.
- (v) Development and implementation of green infrastructure solutions that protect coastal areas and estuaries from erosion and the impacts of sea level rise.
- (vi) Pollution reduction projects, such as litter removal or urban forestry to reduce air pollution.
- (vii) Development of shaded fuel breaks, defensible spaces, or the reduction of hazardous fuels to prevent catastrophic wildfire, especially along roadways, trails, and in the wildland-urban interface.
- (viii) Forest management to lower dangerous fuel loads and mitigate conditions that could lead to catastrophic wildfires.
- (ix) Stewardship of private lands in the public benefit for fire resiliency, water quality, erosion control, or other ecosystem services.
- (x) Establishment, repair, construction, or maintenance of safe and clean parks.
- (xi) Establishment, repair, construction, or maintenance of river parkways and other trails, restrooms, picnic areas, and public recreation facilities.
- (xii) Park cleanliness, beautification, and litter removal.
- (xiii) Equitable access to nature through increased mobility and public transportation services to local parks.
- (xiv) After school and recreation programs, including sports and aquatic facilities, senior citizens programs, and high-quality environmental education and cultural programs.
- (xv) Visitor services for parks and open space preserves to protect natural resources, enhance visitor safety and enjoyment, and support volunteerism and environmental education.
- (xvi) Support of activities conducted by a community conservation corps as certified pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 14507.5.

(xvii) Trail development, staging areas, and other access facilities on lands open to the public.

(c) Priority shall be provided for eligible projects that meet implementation priorities identified in SCCC 4.65.050(A) or that:

(i) Address extreme weather and natural disasters, climate change impacts, water pollution, or saltwater intrusion impacts; or

(ii) Meet the greatest need of communities lacking adequate access to parks and recreational facilities in the County; or

(iii) Repair or enhance existing parks and recreational facilities.

(d) Funds shall be deposited in a separate account, or accounts, to be overseen by the Office and the Department, or a successor agency, and expended pursuant to this section. Any funds unexpended at the close of each fiscal year shall remain in the account, or accounts, and expended pursuant to this section in the subsequent or future fiscal years. Funds may be accrued for expenditure in future years to enable sufficient funding for larger or long-term projects.

(4) Water Quality, Ecosystem Protection, and Fire Resilience on Undeveloped and Working Lands Program.

(a) Twenty percent, on an annual basis, for eligible projects in the County to be administered, or implemented, or both, by the entities identified in SCCC 4.65.050(D). This program recognizes that a majority of lands in the County are in private ownership, and projects on these private lands to ameliorate flood risk, improve water quality, mitigate fire risk, or take similar actions for the public benefit are critical to steward natural resources to enhance resilience and reduce the overall risk of climate change and natural disasters.

(b) Funding allocated under subsection (4)(a) of this section shall be provided for eligible projects as defined in SCCC 4.65.010(K) for activities which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) Agricultural protection and enhancement of ecosystem function, soil health, water quality, drought, or flood resilience on working lands.

(ii) Implementation of climate-risk reduction and resilience stewardship programs.

(iii) Technical assistance, education, and outreach for natural resources planning, stewardship, and restoration on private lands, including working lands and agricultural, rural residential, forest, and undeveloped land.

- (iv) Conservation of water supplies and groundwater recharge by enhancing watershed health and improved land management.
 - (v) Improving water quality through the control of soil erosion by improving land and stormwater management, restoring and repairing trails, culverts, drainage, water courses, floodplains, wetlands, and riparian areas.
 - (vi) Natural or nature-based flood protection and restoration projects, including green infrastructure to reduce neighborhood flooding.
 - (vii) Development and implementation of green infrastructure solutions that protect coastal areas and estuaries from erosion and the impacts of sea level rise.
 - (viii) Development of shaded fuel breaks, defensible spaces, or the reduction of hazardous fuels to prevent catastrophic wildfire, especially along roadways, trails, and in the wildland-urban interface.
 - (ix) Stewardship of private lands in the public benefit for fire resiliency, water quality, erosion control, or other ecosystem services.
 - (x) Trail development, staging areas, and other access facilities on lands open to the public.
 - (xi) Conservation of native biodiversity by reducing invasive species, improving habitat quality, and protecting or restoring wildlife corridors.
 - (xii) Restoration of wetlands and the recovery of anadromous fish species.
 - (xiii) Creation of wildlife bridges, culverts, directional fencing, or other wildlife-friendly infrastructure.
- (c) Priority shall be provided for eligible projects that meet implementation priorities identified in SCCC 4.65.050(A) or that:
- (i) Address extreme weather and natural disasters, climate change impacts, water pollution, or saltwater intrusion impacts; or
 - (ii) Create habitat or green infrastructure buffers on lands impacted from climate change or natural disasters; or
 - (iii) Meet current State or Federal climate planning best management practices.
- (d) Funds shall be deposited in a separate account, or accounts, to be overseen by the entities identified in SCCC 4.65.050(D) and expended pursuant to this section. Any funds unexpended at the close of each fiscal year shall remain in the account, or accounts, and expended pursuant to this section in the subsequent or future fiscal

years. Funds may be accrued for expenditure in future years to enable sufficient funding for larger or long-term projects. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.050 Implementation.

(A) To the extent feasible, priority shall be given to eligible projects that do at least one of the following:

- (1) Serve as a local source of match funding that makes eligible or makes more competitive grant applications to other public or private sources.
- (2) Support multiple benefits that maximize climate resiliency and adaptation, including water conservation, air quality improvements, climate pollution reductions, habitat protection, and public health improvements.
- (3) Invest resources for stewardship, development, restoration, community development, and other improvements in disadvantaged communities for flood protection, drought protection, improved water quality, groundwater supplies, improved public access to resources, or recreation, including improvements to lakes, rivers, creeks, beaches, ocean, wetlands, and the coast.

(B) Recognizing the acute need to improve forest health and reduce fire risk in the forested northern area of the County, no less than \$600,000, on an annual basis, shall be made available from SCCC 4.65.040(B)(1) for eligible projects on the property protected by the largest conservation easement in the County. Funds shall be used for eligible projects that benefit the public, for activities that include, but are not limited to, enhancing forest health, increasing fire resilience, providing public access or recreational values, preserving clean water, conserving natural resources, or restoring natural habitats.

(C) Recognizing the acute need to improve watershed function and reduce flooding risk in the southern area of the County, no less than \$600,000, on an annual basis, shall be made available from SCCC 4.65.040(B)(1) for eligible projects that benefit the residents of the Pajaro Valley, as defined by geography that includes the City of Watsonville, the census defined urban area that borders the City of Watsonville, and areas within a mile of the following water bodies: the Watsonville Slough system, Pinto Lake, and the Pajaro River and its tributaries in Santa Cruz County. Funds shall be used for eligible projects that benefit the public, for activities that include, but are not limited to, improving watershed health, reducing risk of flooding, providing public access or recreational values, improving water quality, conserving natural resources, and restoring natural habitats. Consistent with this purpose, funds shall be awarded to between one and three eligible applicants, whether nonprofit organization or public agency.

(D) Projects funded pursuant to SCCC 4.65.040(B)(4) shall be implemented by the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County and a land stewardship implementation partner. Funds shall be allocated evenly between the two entities. If deemed appropriate and in furtherance of the public benefits of the Act, the land stewardship implementation partner may elect to work with a special district to administer their allocation of funds. The land stewardship implementation partner shall be selected based on criteria as described in SCCC 4.65.060(A)(3)(h).

(E) The Treasurer shall deduct a property tax collection fee of no more than one percent annually that shall be deducted from the fund before allocating the remaining proceeds pursuant to SCCC 4.65.040.

(F) Funds allocated pursuant to this Act shall be used to increase and enhance activities described within the Act. Funds shall not supplant expenditures from other Federal, State, or local sources or funds independently generated by the County, incorporated cities, or grant awardees. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.060 Oversight and accountability.

(A) The Board shall establish a Citizens Oversight Advisory Board.

(1) The Advisory Board shall be composed of nine members, five appointed by the Board with one selection from each of the five Board supervisorial districts, and four appointed with one selection from each incorporated city.

(2) The Advisory Board members shall not hold any elected office and shall have demonstrated expertise in the following areas:

(a) Water quality, water supply, or flood protection management.

(b) Wildfire or forest management.

(c) Wildlife, parks, or natural resources stewardship.

(d) Working lands or agricultural expertise.

(e) Environmental justice, park equity, or public health.

(f) Knowledge and expertise in evaluating financial transactions or program cost-effectiveness.

(3) The Advisory Board shall do all of the following:

(a) Conduct hearings and receive public input on allocations related to this Act.

(b) Receive reports annually from the County on projects funded pursuant to SCCC 4.65.040(B)(1) and (B)(3).

- (c) Receive reports annually from each of the incorporated cities on projects funded pursuant to SCCC 4.65.040(B)(2).
- (d) Receive reports annually from the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County and the land stewardship implementation partner on projects funded pursuant to SCCC 4.65.040(B)(4).
- (e) Report to the Board annually on the outcomes of the projects and programs funded through the Act as well as how the Act was used to leverage other public and private funds. Annual reports by the Advisory Board may also provide suggested direction on the types of projects to prioritize in the coming year.
- (f) Approve a five-year vision plan to support grant criteria and awards.
 - (i) The plan shall be published by July 1, 2025, and updated every five years thereafter.
 - (ii) The Advisory Board may provide recommendations on the development of the plan by the Office and the Department. The Office and the Department shall also consult the incorporated cities, the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, and the land stewardship implementation partner in the development of the plan.
 - (iii) The vision plan shall identify the activities and geographies prioritized for investment throughout the County in a concise format primarily based on content derived from existing plans, such as, but not limited to, the Santa Cruz County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy, Santa Cruz County Parks Strategic Plan, Santa Cruz County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, California Water Plan, California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, California Outdoors for All Strategy, California Pathways to 30x30 Strategy, California Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy, Santa Cruz County Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, city climate adaptation plans, city parks and open space plans, or similar County, State, or local plans.
- (g) Select the land stewardship implementation partner by July 1, 2025, who shall serve in this role for a period of five years. After this initial period, the Advisory Board shall renew the land stewardship implementation partner or select another partner.
- (h) Utilize the following criteria for selecting the land stewardship implementation partner:
 - (i) The land stewardship implementation partner shall have a mission generally consistent with the purposes of the Act and the capacity and expertise to implement projects in the public benefit related to land, habitat, ecosystem, and natural resources management and protection.

(ii) The land stewardship implementation partner shall be a nonprofit organization as defined in SCCC 4.65.010(M) that owns and stewards private lands on which eligible projects in the public benefit can be implemented.

(iii) The land stewardship implementation partner must be headquartered in Santa Cruz County with at least 10 years of experience working primarily in Santa Cruz County.

(iv) The land stewardship implementation partner must be able to submit annual reports to the Advisory Board and contribute to the development of the five-year vision plan.

(4) Members of the Advisory Board shall serve a term of four years at the pleasure of the Board or appointing city, and no member may serve more than two consecutive four-year terms. The Board, or appointing city, may, by order, extend this length of service or waive this limit for individuals that they appointed. A member's position shall become vacant upon their death, resignation, or removal by the Board or appointing city. In the case of such a vacancy, the Board or appointing city shall appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term.

(5) Costs associated with the Advisory Board shall be paid by revenues from the special parcel tax. Reasonably budgeted amounts to pay for the Advisory Board shall be taken from the fund and deposited in a separate account before monies from the fund are distributed to the programs outlined in SCCC 4.65.040. These funds shall be overseen by the Office and the Department, or a successor agency, in their role as staff support to the Advisory Board.

(6) The Office and the Department, or a successor agency, shall staff the Advisory Board, which shall comply with the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act, codified at California Government Code Section 54950 et seq.

(7) Each member of the Advisory Board shall receive a stipend as compensation for their public service in an amount as determined by the Board annually by resolution. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.070 Property acquisition.

All real property acquired pursuant to this Act shall be acquired in compliance with Chapter 16 (commencing with Section 7260) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the California Government Code. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.080 Sunset date.

The special parcel tax levied pursuant to this Act shall be levied until ended by voters. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.090 Severability.

If any provision of this Act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect any other provisions or applications. To that end, the provisions of this Act are declared to be severable. It is the intent of the voters that this Act would have been enacted regardless of whether any invalid provision had been included or any invalid application had been made. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.100 Amendment.

Except for amendments that would change the amount of the special parcel tax imposed by this Act, change the authorized uses of revenue generated by the special parcel tax, change the administering agency for reasons other than failure of performance, or extend the period for which the special parcel tax may be imposed, the Board of Supervisors may amend this Act without submitting the amendment to the voters for approval; provided, that the amendment is consistent with and furthers the purposes of this Act as enacted by the voters. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

4.65.110 Implementation date.

This Act shall take effect 10 days after the election at which it is adopted as certified by the Santa Cruz County Clerk (Elections Department) and reported to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. [Res. 143-2024 (Exh. 1 § 4), 2024].

**PUBLIC NOTICE
PROPOSED ORDINANCE
(SUMMARY)**

Board of Supervisors Information (for Clerk Use only):

Approved in Concept: Click or tap to enter a date.

AMS Item: Click or tap here to enter text.

Scheduled for Second Reading & Final Adoption: Click or tap to enter a date.

Ordinance Title:

ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 4.65.030 OF THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CODE RELATING TO THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SAFE DRINKING WATER, CLEAN BEACHES, WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION, AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION ACT

Ordinance Summary:

The proposed Ordinance amends Santa Cruz County Code Section 4.65.030 of the Santa Cruz County Code relating to the Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Act, which relates to the collection of the Special Parcel Tax. The amendment removes the specific reference to “together with any interest and penalties thereon” to allow the County to distribute taxes based on their calculated share of the property tax roll, aligning with the County’s Teeter Plan.

The full text of this ordinance is available for public review at the Office of the Clerk of the Board, Room 520, Governmental Center Building, 701 Ocean Street, 5th Floor, Santa Cruz, California 95060; and on the Internet at:

<https://santacruzcountyca.primegov.com/public/portal>

For Clerk Use Only:

By: Click or tap here to enter text.

Dated: Click or tap to enter a date.