

Fire Protection and Emergency Response Services Assessment

Community Meeting



Public Hearing: July 8, 2026

Today's Agenda



Who We Are

About GCSD Fire and our CAL FIRE partnership



The Challenge

Why current funding is not keeping up



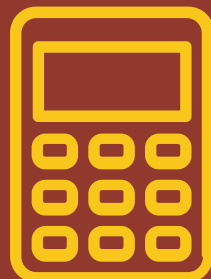
What is Prop 218?

A fair, legal process - property owners decide



What it Funds

Staffing, equipment and operations



How Rates Are Set

The factors that determine your amount



The Ballot

How to vote and key dates

Who We Are: GCSD Fire Department



Groveland CSD

- Fire department established in 1973.
- Service area: 14.9 square miles in Tuolumne County.
- One fire station: Station 78 in Groveland.
- GCSD owns and maintains the station, engines, and all equipment.
- Responds to structure fires, wildfires, vehicle crashes, medical emergencies, and hazmat calls.
- GCSD pays for the staffing provided by CAL FIRE.
- GCSD is solely dedicated to fire protection within the District Boundaries.

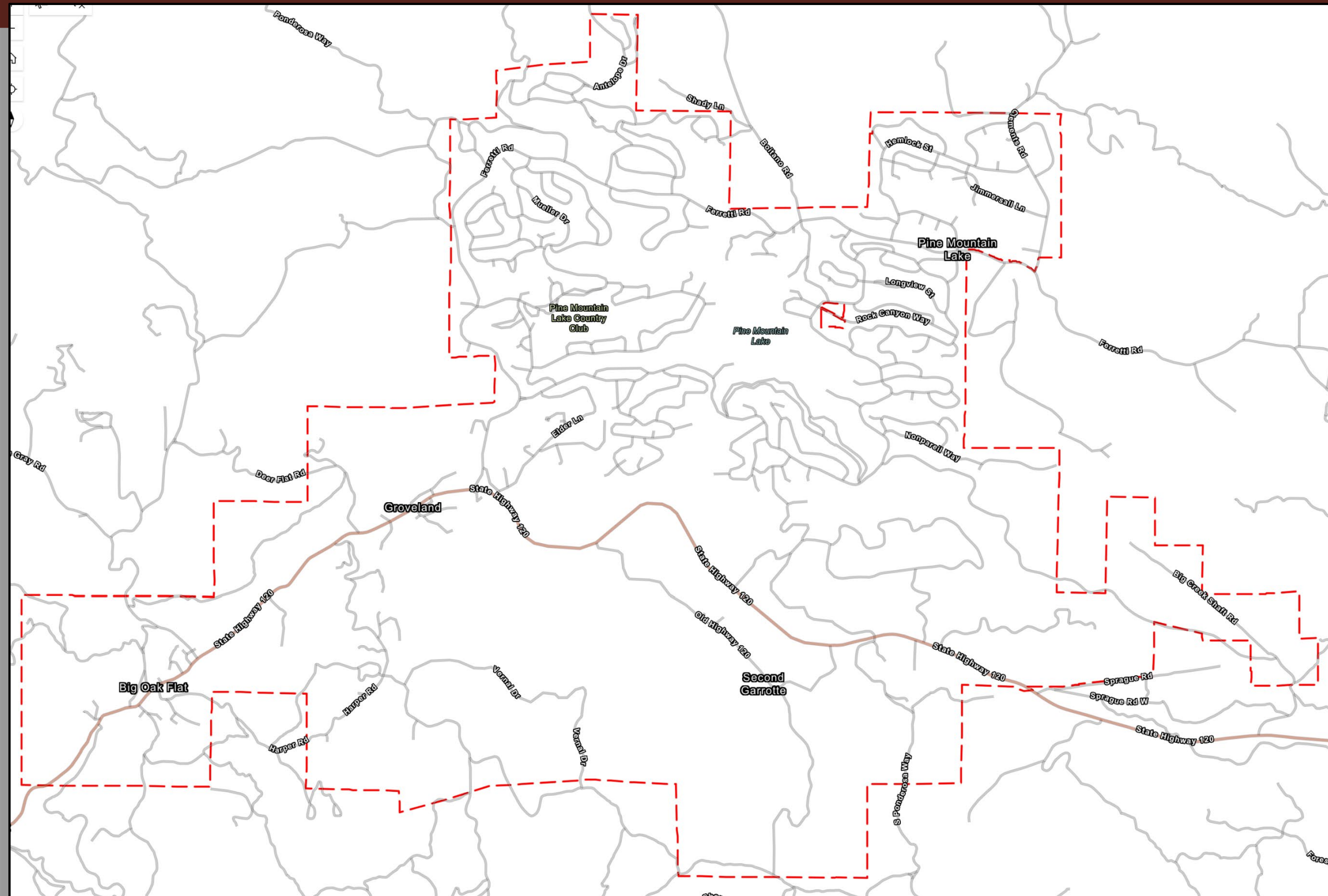
CAL FIRE Partnership

GCSD uses a Schedule A contract with CAL FIRE. This means CAL FIRE provides all on-duty firefighters at Station 78.

- Current crew: 1 Captain + 1 Engineer on every response (called 2/0 staffing).
- Required crew: The District adopted a plan in November 2024 to move to 1 Captain + 1 Engineer + 1 Firefighter (3/0 staffing). This meets national safety standards.

⚠ Without this contract, Groveland has no dedicated fire coverage within District Boundaries.

Groveland CSD Boundaries



3/0 Staffing Requirement Explained



The CAL FIRE Requirement

CAL FIRE updated its contract on November 1, 2024

1 The new 66-hour work week model requires a minimum of 3 firefighters on every response. This is now a contractual obligation, not a policy preference.

GCSD has no authority to override this.

2 The District does not control CAL FIRE staffing decisions. If the contract requires 3/0, the District must fund 3/0 or risk losing the contract entirely.

There is no 2-person option going forward.

3 Allowing only 2 firefighters on site is no longer permissible under the updated Schedule A contract.

3/0 Outcomes



Firefighter Safety

This standard exists because 2-person crews cannot safely enter a burning structure. A third crew member means firefighters can go inside, rather than waiting outside for backup.



Faster, More Effective Response

3-person crews can simultaneously attack a fire, search for occupants, and control utilities. A 2-person crew must choose-ultimately slowing the response and increasing potential for property loss.

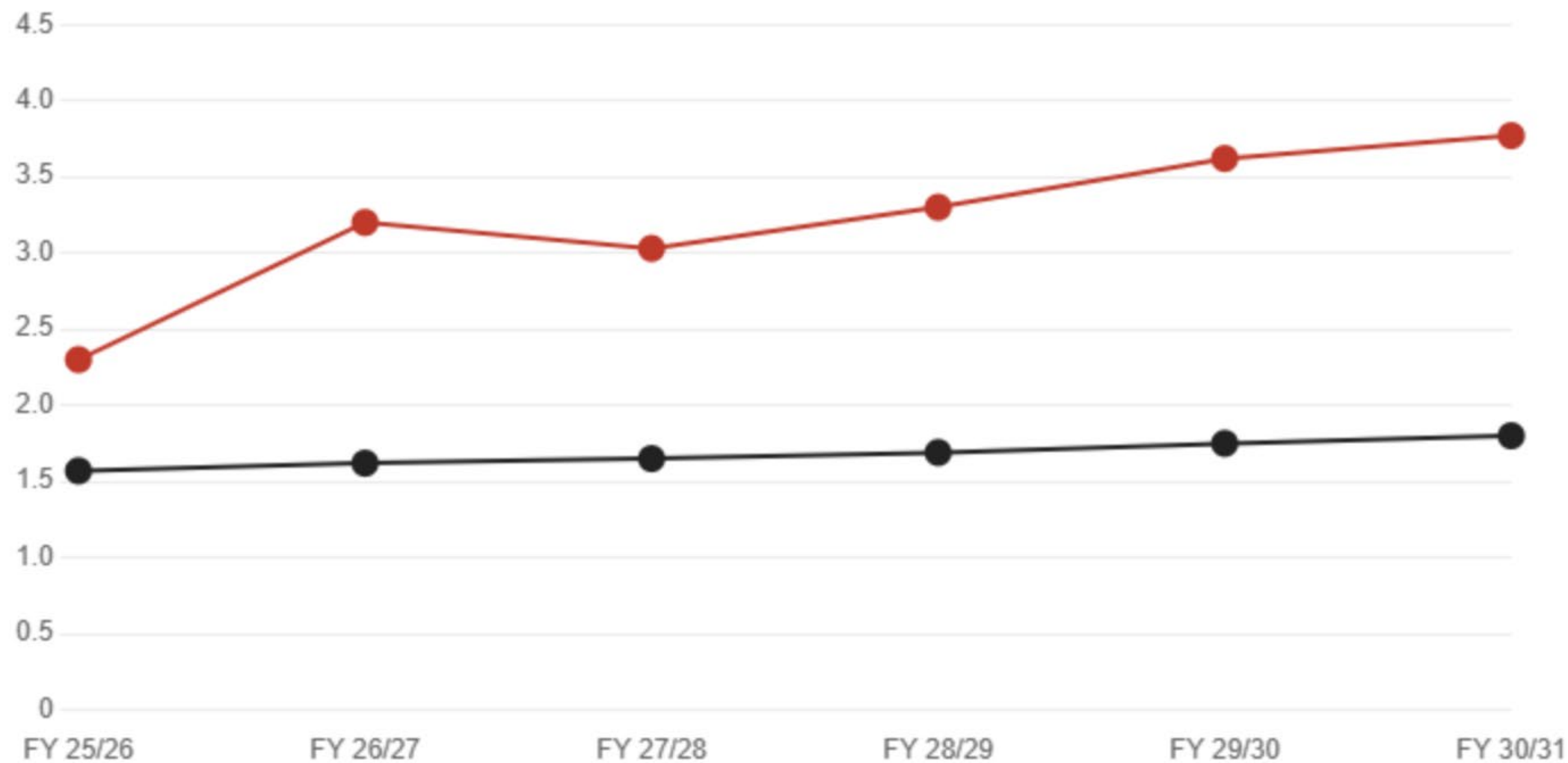


Sustained CAL FIRE Coverage

Funding 3/0 keeps the Schedule A contract intact. Without it, GCSD could lose its CAL FIRE partnership.

The Funding Gap: Revenue vs. Costs Over Time

Dollars in Millions



• **Property Tax & Other Revenue**

• **Total Fire Expenses**

From FY 25/26 to FY 30/31

- **16% Revenue Growth**
- **65% Expense Growth**

\$2M+ Annual Gap
Projected by FY 30/31

What is Proposition 218?



This is NOT a Tax

A benefit assessment is based on the specific benefit a property receives from fire protection - not a general tax.



Property Owners Decide

Every property owner receives a ballot in the mail. You vote by returning it. Not returning your ballot is NOT a no vote - only returned ballots count.



Funds Oversight

All assessment money goes into a separate account. It can only be spent on the services described in this assessment. It cannot be redirected.



What it Funds

Staffing, equipment and operations.

What is a Weighted Ballot?

When neighbors vote on a new assessment, not every vote counts the same - bigger properties pay more, so their vote counts for more (are weighted).

Here are some examples on how the concept works in general:



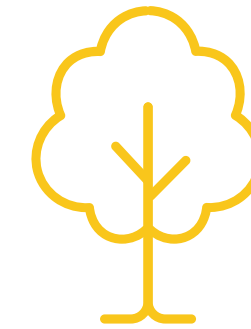
Small House

Weighted Vote/Pays:
\$100 per year



Large Commercial Building

Weighted Vote/Pays:
\$500 per year



Vacant Lot

Weighted Vote/Pays:
\$50 per year

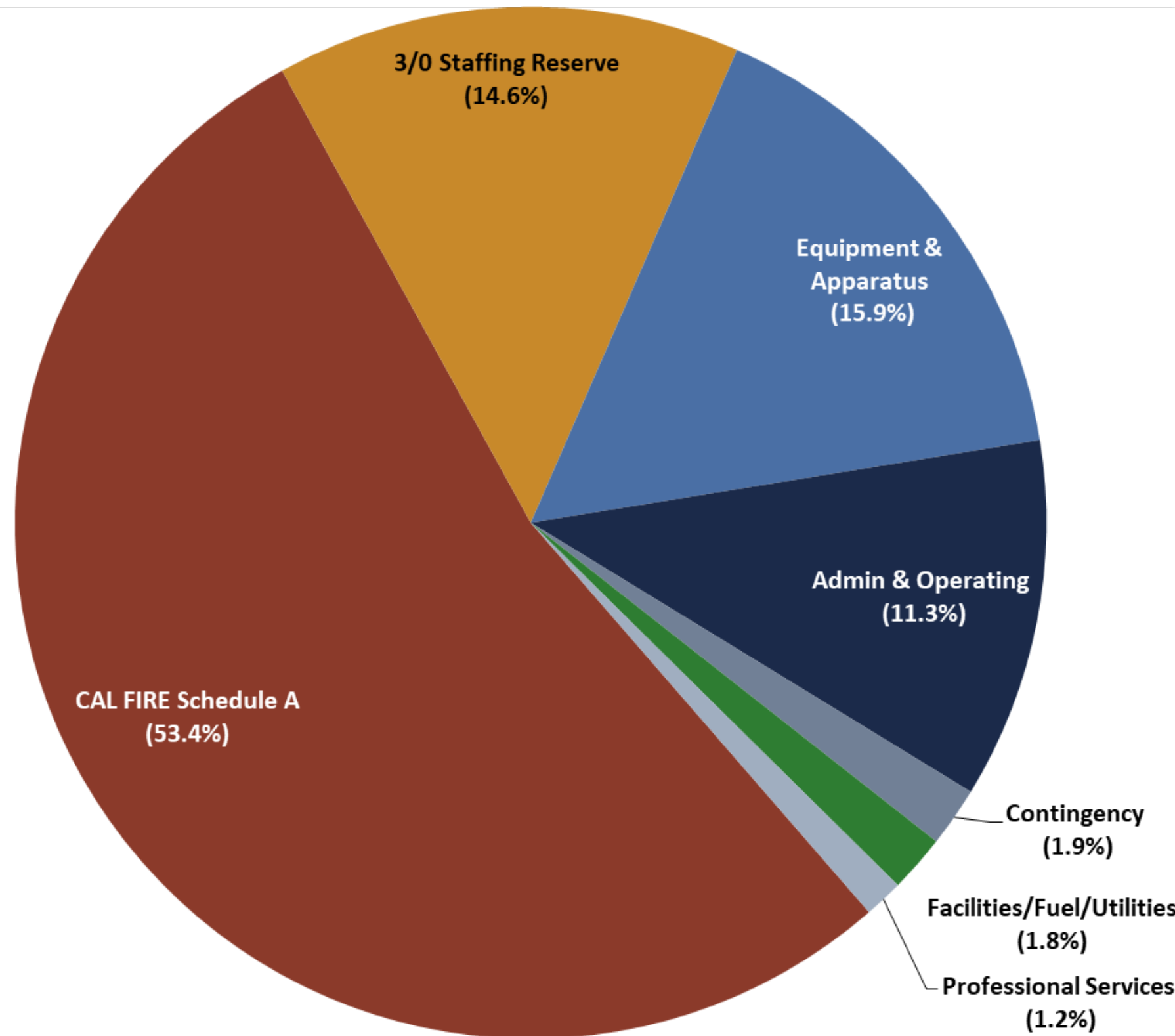
Why does this matter?

If MORE than half of the total votes say NO- the assessment does not pass.

Bigger payers get more say because they pay a larger portion of the overall assessment.

Everyone who pays gets a ballot in the mail.

What the Assessment Pays For



53.4%

CAL FIRE Schedule A Contract

Pays for on-duty firefighters at Station 78 - including the upgrade from a 2-person to a 3-person crew.

15.9%

Equipment & Apparatus Fund

First-ever dedicated fund for fire engine replacement. Our front-line engine is approximately 17 years old.

14.6%

3/0 Staffing Reserve

Held in reserve to cover the cost of adding the third crew member as CAL FIRE phases in the new contract.

11.3%

Administration & Operations

Station maintenance, GCSD administration, and county administration costs.

~5%

Contingency, Facilities & Professional

Station utilities, fuel, and professional services all account for ~1% each.

How Your Assessment Is Calculated



Three factors determine how much special benefit your property receives from fire protection services.

Property Type & Value

What kind of property it is: single-family home, multi-family, commercial, or vacant? What's its replacement value? A property with a higher value benefits more from fire protection.



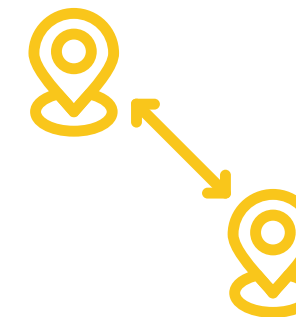
Fire Hazard Zone

Is the property in a Very High, High, or Moderate fire hazard zone? Properties in higher-risk areas get more benefit from fire protection and pay a bit more.



Distance From Station

How many minutes does it take for the fire truck to reach your property from Station 78? Closer properties get faster responses and therefore a greater benefit from fire services.





Examples of Special Benefit

Not all properties benefit equally from fire protection. The proposed assessment is designed to reflect those differences.

Lower Special Benefit

Example: Single-Family Home, Very High Zone



Fire Risk High - structure is present
Replacement Value High - structure to replace
Fire Hazard Zone Very High Zone
Travel Time ★ 10-15 minutes from station - longer response time

Assessment Example: \$413.81/year

Higher Special Benefit

Example: Single-Family Home, Very High Zone



Fire Risk High - structure is present
Replacement Value High - structure to replace
Fire Hazard Zone Very High Zone
Travel Time ★ Less than 5 minutes from station - faster response time

Assessment Example: \$475.64/year

Examples of Special Benefit



How the Ballot Works



One Ballot Per Parcel

Each property owner of record receives one ballot in the mail. If you own multiple parcels, up to 14 parcels may be listed on your ballot.



Simple Majority to Pass

If more than 50% of the dollar-weighted returned ballots support the assessment, the Board may adopt it at the July 8, 2026 public hearing.



Ballots Are Weighted

Each ballot counts in proportion to that property's assessment amount. A property with a higher assessment carries more weight in the vote.



Received, not Postmarked

Your ballot must be physically received before the public hearing closes on July 8, 2026. A postmark is not enough. Please return your ballots early.



Only Returned Ballots Count

Not returning your ballot is not considered a "no" vote. Only ballots physically returned before the public hearing is closed are counted.



Written Objections

Written objections are accepted under California law AB 2257. Property owners must submit written objections to the District by June 25, 2026.

Public Hearing & Ballot Tabulation: July 8, 2026. Ballots must be RECEIVED before the hearing closes.

How the Assessment Functions



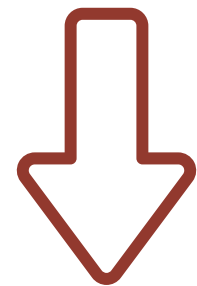
Community Oversight Committee

A citizen committee will be formed to review how assessment funds are spent. The committee reports to the Board each year, providing an independent check on expenditures.



No Automatic Rate Increases

The Board must vote every year to set the rate. There is no automatic escalator. If the Board does not act, the rate does not increase. The maximum is a ceiling, not a guarantee.



Rate Can Go Down

If costs come in lower than projected, or other revenue increases, the Board can reduce the rate. A lower rate requires the same Board action as an increase.



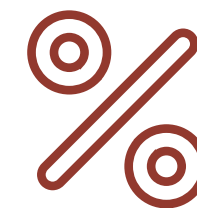
Funds Cannot Be Redirected

Assessment funds are kept in a separate account. By law, they can only be used for fire protection and emergency response services - not general operations.



Full Public Transparency

Annual budgets are public documents. Property owners may speak at any GCSD Board meeting. Financial reports will be available on the District website.



Maximum Increase: 5% Per Year

Even in the highest-cost year, the Board cannot raise rates by more than 5% from the prior year's maximum. No silent increase.

Timeline and Next Steps

April 8, 2026

Engineer's Report

Board receives and reviews the Engineer's Report. Preliminary approval initiates the assessment ballot proceeding.

May 7, 2026

Ballot Mailing

Official ballot notice and weighted ballot mailed to every property owner of record at least 45 days before the public hearing.

June 25, 2026

Written Objection Deadline (AB 2257)

Last day to submit a written objection that this assessment is not in compliance with the California Constitution.

July 2026

Board Approval & Levy

Board orders levy submitted to Tuolumne County for inclusion on the FY 2026-27 property tax roll.



April 8, 2026

Board Resolution

Board adopts a resolution calling for the assessment ballot proceeding and sets the public hearing date.

Apr 16 · May 14 · Jun 18

Community Meetings

Property owners can learn about the assessment and ask District staff questions directly. All are welcome.

July 8, 2026

Public Hearing & Tabulation

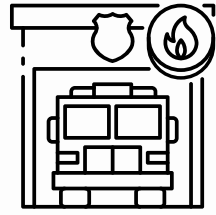
Public testimony received. Ballots tabulated. If weighted support exceeds opposition, Board may order the levy.

● Key milestones

● Community meeting

! Objection deadline

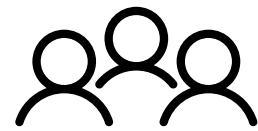
Key Takeaways



GCSD owns the only District-dedicated fire station. Without the CAL FIRE contract, we would have to rely on mutual aid from other agencies.



Property taxes grow ~3% per year. District costs grow much faster and the gap gets bigger every year. The gap cannot be closed by taxes alone.



Moving to a 3-person crew is a safety requirement-not an expansion. It is already required by the CAL FIRE contract adopted in November 2024.



The District's front-line engine is about 17 years old. A replacement engine costs \$1.3 million and takes up to 3 years to order and receive.



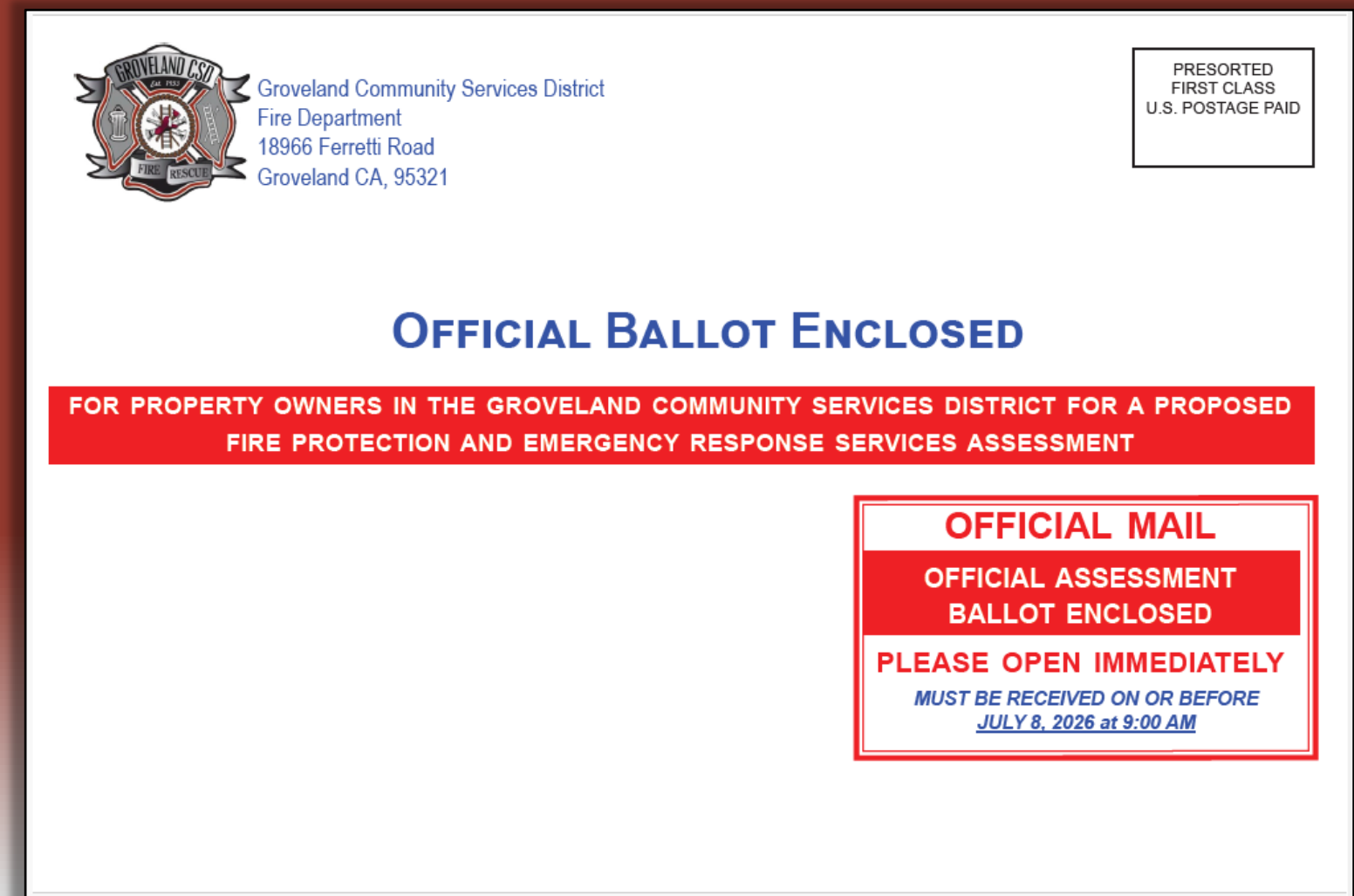
The base rate of \$475.64 per SFE was set at the minimum necessary, based on a 15-year fiscal analysis and a full Engineer's Report under Prop 218.

Questions?

Please be on the lookout for your ballot in the mail. They will begin arriving the second week of May.

Assessment Website

Scan QR Code to visit or head to GCSD.org to find the link there.



Groveland Community Services District

Contact the District Office with questions about your parcel, your ballot notice, or the assessment process.

SCI Consulting Group

Assessment Engineer of Record - responsible for the Engineer's Report and rate methodology.

Engineer's Report

The full Engineer's Report is a public document available from the District. It explains the complete rate methodology.