

# 2018-2019 Assessor's Annual Report



Office of Mark Church  
Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder & Chief Elections Officer

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## Message from the Assessor, Mark Church



I am pleased to announce that the 2018-2019 Property Assessment Roll increased year-over-year by \$16.5 billion, or 8.03 percent, to a record high of over \$222.5 billion in assessed value, again setting a new milestone for the county. 2017 marked another year of substantial roll growth for San Mateo County. The combined assessment roll has increased nearly 60% in the last eight years alone. This is the seventh consecutive year in which a new historical high has been set.

Commercial construction, major property transfers, and a continued strong residential market have all contributed to the roll's significant increase. With the lowest unemployment rate in the state and

continued growth of the labor force, San Mateo County's local economy is amongst the strongest in the nation. San Mateo County has the lowest unemployment rate in the state for the fourth consecutive year, at 1.9%, according to the California Employment Development Department.

The 2018-2019 Property Assessment Roll reflects consistent growth throughout the County. Total assessed values increased in all 20 cities and unincorporated areas, with increases ranging from 3.98% to as high as 11.4%. The County's unincorporated areas, which include San Francisco International Airport (SFO), experienced a growth rate of 6.06%.

The top 5 cities in percentage growth are East Palo Alto (+11.40%), Daly City (+11.33%), South San Francisco (+11.13%), Menlo Park (+11.06%) and Brisbane (+10.78%). Rapid value growth in East Palo Alto is largely due to new projects coming to market in the city and in neighboring Menlo Park. In the north-county areas, Daly City, South San Francisco, and Brisbane have all seen substantial increases due, in part, to construction of life science projects.

The shared property tax funding base is approximately 1 percent of the county's Property Assessment Roll and will thus increase to \$2.22 billion. Approximately 45 percent of revenue is allocated to schools within the county, 25 percent to the County, 18 percent to cities, 10 percent to special districts, and 2 percent to former redevelopment agencies. The county's share will be approximately \$556 million.

This annual report aims to explain our collaborative administration of the property tax and its impact on our community. I encourage you to contact us with any questions or suggestions that might improve future editions of this report.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Church".

Mark Church  
San Mateo County Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder & Chief Elections Officer

## An Introduction to the Assessment Roll and the Property Tax Process

The process that produces your property tax bill is complex and involves the interaction of many county agencies: assessor, assessment appeals board, tax collector and controller.

Today, California's schools, counties, cities and special districts depend on property tax as a primary source of revenue. The property tax raised \$2.06 billion for local governments within the boundaries of San Mateo County during fiscal year 2017-2018 and is expected to generate \$2.23 billion for fiscal year 2018-2019.

California's current property tax system is grounded in the "Proposition 13" statewide ballot initiative approved overwhelmingly by California voters in 1978. Prop 13 abolished the old system which taxed properties at locally-controlled rates based on current market value. Prop 13 established a statewide tax rate limited to one percent of assessed value, plus the rate necessary to fund local voter-approved bonds. Further, a real property's annually adjusted assessed value cannot be increased by more than two percent over the prior year, if the property did not qualify for temporary decline in value and did not undergo a change of ownership or new construction. Newly acquired property is assessed at its new market value (usually the purchase price) and the value of any new construction is added to the existing base value of a parcel. Personal property is assessed each year at fair market value.

Taxable real property values may be reappraised if:

- A change in ownership occurs; or
- A change in the use of property occurs; or
- New construction is completed; or
- New construction is partially completed on January 1; or
- The reappraisal is part of an annual review of properties having declining value; or
- The reappraisal is part of a land conservation contract (Williamson Act).

Since the passage of Proposition 13, the California legislature and the voters have continually altered, interpreted, and implemented changes in the property tax laws. This publication helps to explain some of the complexities of Proposition 13 and subsequent statutes that govern the property tax process.

For an overview of the property tax, see the State Board of Equalization's Publication 29 ([www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/pdf/pub29.pdf](http://www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/pdf/pub29.pdf)).

For an interesting look at the first 100 years of the Board, see the Boards' Publication 216 ([www.boe.ca.gov/info/pub216/index.html](http://www.boe.ca.gov/info/pub216/index.html)).



## Parcel Ownership and the Taxpayer

Annually, the owner(s) of a taxable property on January 1 (the lien date) becomes the assessee and is liable for property tax based on the value of the property. The assessed value for most real property is the prior year's assessed value adjusted for inflation, up to two percent. However, if there has been a change in ownership, the new assessed value will be the market value of the property that changed ownership. New construction value is added to the property's prior base value.

The top one hundred highest assessed parcels make up only about 8 percent of the total valuation on the secured roll, and the top ten highest assesseees make up about 5 percent of total valuation. This is an indicator of the economic strength of a highly diversified tax base.

The county's secured roll includes over 221,000 parcels including residential (homes, condominiums, and apartments) and non-residential business properties (hotel, retail, agricultural, etc.). Our roll does not include public utility and railroad properties which span multiple parcels; these are assessed by the State Board of Equalization. Our unsecured roll includes nearly 15,000 personal business property accounts (machinery and equipment), assessed where they have established "permanent status", as well as water vessels (boats), assessed where they are moored, and aircraft, assessed at their home airport.

Reappraisals based on ownership changes and new construction typically account for the major portion of roll value increase each year. The annual inflationary adjustment also contributes to the increase in base value.



## The County Assessor Values Property

By July 1 of each year, the primary responsibility of the county assessor is to determine the taxable value of each property so that each owner is assured of paying the proper amount of property tax for the support of local governments, and to publish that information in the local property assessment roll. It is important to note that California law allows for full and partial exclusions and exemptions from the property tax, providing tax relief to eligible taxpayers.

The local assessment roll is composed of “secured” and “unsecured” properties. A “secured” property is one that the county tax collector can claim and sell to pay a delinquent property tax debt. Typically, secured property is real property, but that is not always the case. Real property is defined as land, mines, minerals, timber and improvements such as buildings, structures, crops, trees and vines. Personal property includes moveable items such as boats, airplanes, machinery, equipment, office tools and supplies.

Assessed value is determined and enrolled to the person owning it on January 1, which is the tax lien date. As an example, a change in ownership (sale) and a new construction (captured from permits) during the prior calendar year (2017) are valued and enrolled as of January 1, 2018. The inflationary adjustment (2 percent) is applied along with exemptions and other appraisable events. The net assessed value of \$222.6 billion as of January 1, 2018 is then taxed for the fiscal year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

Other significant processes include:

- A supplemental roll places the value difference between current assessed value of land and/or improvements and the new value from reappraisals into immediate effect on the date of transfer or the new construction completion date. This results in the capture of tax for the remaining portion of the current fiscal year, and for events between January 1 and May 31 for the prior fiscal year.
- A unitary roll contains properties such as railroads and utilities crossing the county and is valued each year by the State Board of Equalization.
- An assessment appeals process allows taxpayers to dispute values through administrative and judicial processes.

## The County Controller Prepares the Tax Roll

After the assessed are enrolled by the assessor, the assessment rolls are delivered to the controller by July 1. The unsecured roll triggers an immediate tax bill, using the prior year's tax rate, which is delinquent if not paid by August 31. The secured roll is then processed by the controller, applying applicable tax rates to each assessed value to determine the tax amount(s) owed. The total tax bill includes the county property tax plus local fixed charges or bond measures approved by voters or permitted by legislation.

Typical local charges include sewer service, flood control, and library assessments, and voter-approved bond measures. Most outstanding bonds in this county are for school facilities. Since 1978, new bond measures require a supermajority vote (2/3), but a 2001 law reduces that threshold to 55% for certain school facilities bonds.

The tax roll is passed on to the tax collector for billing and collection by September 30.

## The County Tax Collector Issues Tax Bills and Collects Payments

The tax collector sends out annual unsecured tax bills when the enrollment is received from the assessor; payments are due by August 31. Secured tax bills are mailed by November 1. The secured bills can be paid in two installments, due November 1 and delinquent after December 10, and due February 1 and delinquent after April 10. (Note that payment due dates are well into the fiscal year, July to June, when they become due.) An additional supplemental tax charge may be billed when there is a change in ownership or when new construction is complete.

Penalties for late payments are significant: 10 percent for the first installment delinquency; 10 percent plus \$40 for the second installment delinquency; and an additional 1.5 percent per month beginning the following July 1. After six years of taxes being delinquent, property can be sold at a tax sale to pay the tax. As a result of the strong property values in San Mateo County, delinquency rates remain low.

## The County Controller Distributes Tax Revenues

After collection, the tax collector forwards the tax revenues to the controller for apportionment and distribution to all eligible jurisdictions in the county. The law requires the controller to allocate the revenue in accordance with specified formulas and procedures.

AB 8 (Assembly Bill 8 of 1979-1980), with many subsequent amendments, governs the complicated tax allocation process. As a result of Proposition 13, each taxing jurisdiction (entity) was assigned a base amount of property tax determined based on 1978-1979 revenue. Each year, the entity is then allocated an amount equal to the total received in the previous year plus a percentage of tax growth within the geographic tax area served by the entity.

Around October of each year, the controller provides each taxing agency an estimate of its property tax revenue. These estimates are based on the assessment roll compiled by the assessor and the utility roll provided by the State. During the year, the assessor and the Assessment Appeals Board approve tax roll corrections that change the original levy, some of which result in refunds to taxpayers. Due to changing economic conditions, as well as misfortunes and calamities, total refunds fluctuate substantially from year to year, making it imperative that taxing agencies budget conservatively and maintain an appropriate amount of reserves.





## The Annual Calendar of the Property Tax

<b>January 1</b>	Tax Lien Date as of which ownership and value is determined
<b>February 1</b>	Second installment of secured taxes due and payable
<b>April 1</b>	Business property statement due
<b>April 10*</b>	Delinquent date to pay second installment of secured tax bill. After 5:00 pm, a 10 percent penalty plus \$40.00 charge is added
<b>May 7</b>	Last day to file Business Property Statement without penalty
<b>June 30</b>	Last day of fiscal year
<b>July 1</b>	Fiscal year begins; secured roll done
<b>July 2</b>	Appeals Board filing period opens
<b>August 31</b>	Last day to pay unsecured property tax payment without delinquency penalty
<b>September-October</b>	Tax Collector issues annual secured tax bills
<b>November 1</b>	Due date to pay first installment of secured tax bill
<b>November 30</b>	Close of Assessment Appeals Board filing period (next business day if it falls on the weekend)
<b>December 10*</b>	Delinquent date to pay first installment of secured tax bill. After 5:00 pm, a 10 percent penalty is added.

*\* Other due dates may apply for supplemental and escape assessments.*





## Department Overview

San Mateo County's assessor operates as the Appraisal Services Division within the Department of the Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder. The assessor is responsible for determining the assessed value of all locally assessable taxable property within the county. With approximately 236,000 assessments each year, the Division creates the official record of taxable property (local assessment roll), shares it with the county controller and tax collector, and makes it publicly available. The local assessment roll is determined by identifying, mapping, inspecting, and calculating the assessed value for all real (land and structures), boats, aircraft and business properties. Typically, property tax is one percent of the assessed value, plus an amount to amortize voter-approved bonds, and any fees for special assessments or charges such as mosquito abatement or sewer fees.

Each year, the Division assesses approximately 221,000 units on the secured roll and 15,000 units on the unsecured roll. In addition, we process approximately 32,200 recorded documents, 27,600 building permits, 122,500 exemptions, and 11,800 business property statements.

San Mateo County claims within its boundaries a wealth of land, buildings, and other taxable properties with a combined assessed value of over \$222 billion. The property tax revenues generated from these assets are vital to maintaining local government operations and public services.

The multiple components of our business operations engage the skills of our certified appraisers and auditors, technical specialists in mapping/GIS and information technology, clerical specialists, and administrative managers, for example:

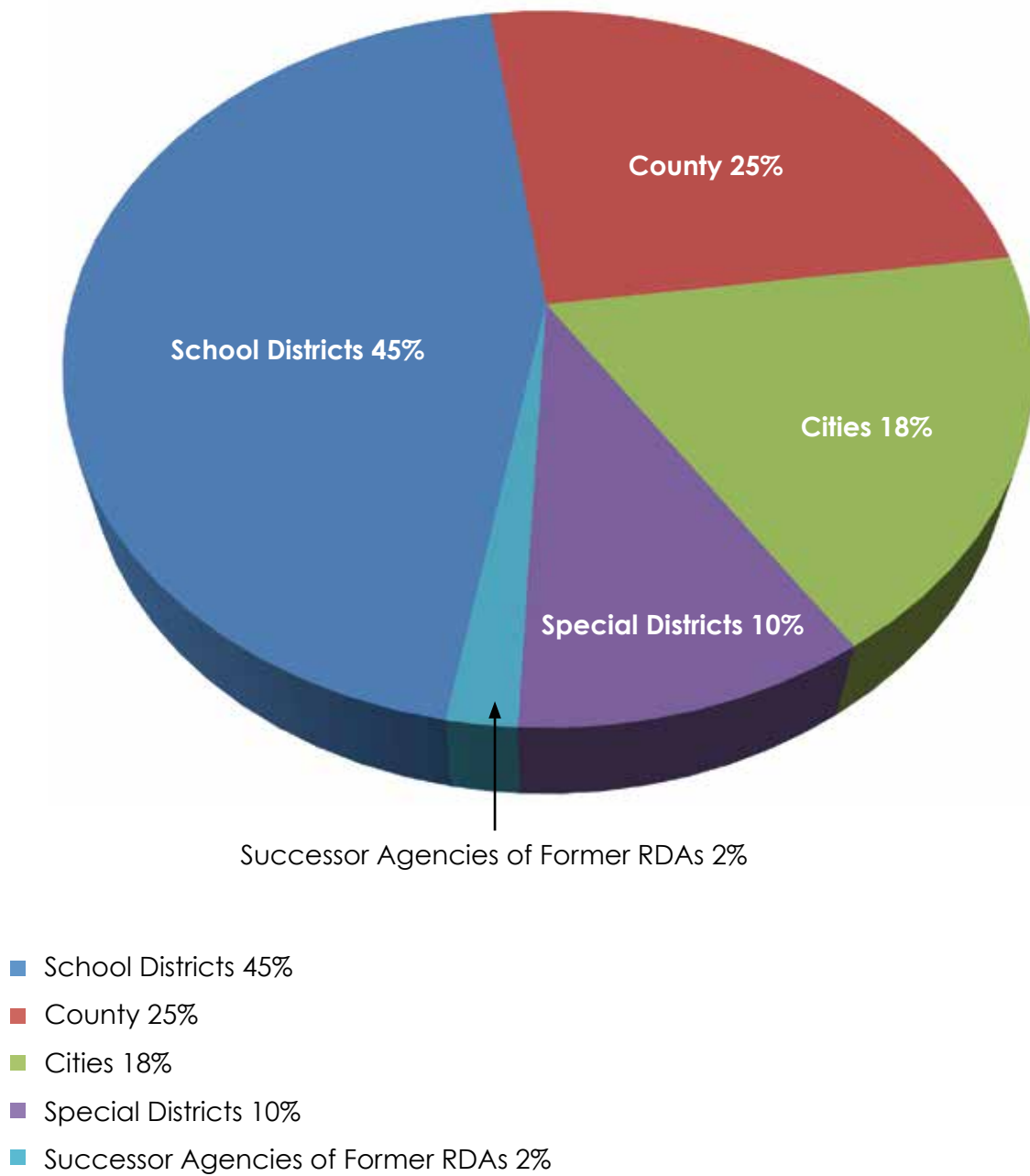
- Administration
- Determining Assessed Owners
- Reviewing Assessment Appeal Filings
- Valuing Boats, Planes and Mobilehomes
- Business Property Valuation and Information
- Change in Ownership Information
- Approving Exemptions
- Valuing Leased Equipment
- Updating Maps, Property Boundaries
- Collecting Property Characteristics
- Enrolling Supplemental Assessments
- Collecting Valuation Information

Our contact information is provided near the end of this report.



## Tax Revenue Allocation

Where Your Property Taxes Go



As a property owner, you may have wondered how your tax dollars are distributed. This chart shows the distribution of the funds captured in San Mateo County from the one percent property tax.

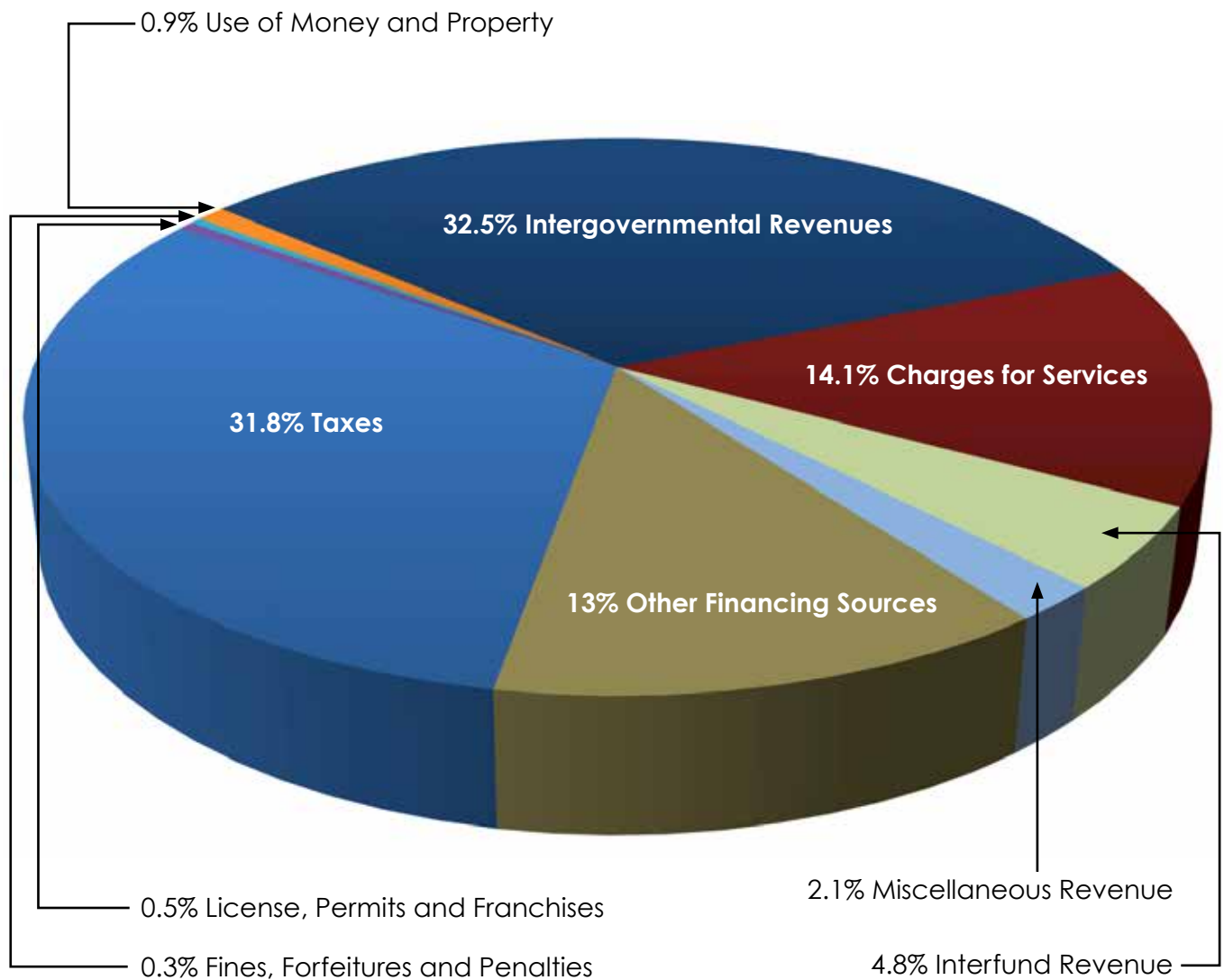
As can be seen, schools receive the largest portion, 45 percent of your tax dollars. Although schools continue to receive the largest portion of your property tax dollars, changes in state law have reduced their portion of state funding contributions. The county receives 25 percent and provides health, welfare, human services and criminal justice programs with its portion. Cities receive 18 percent and provide fire, police, and other community services. Special districts, such as Flood Control and Sequoia Healthcare District, provide other services to the community with the 10 percent they receive. Successor agencies of former redevelopment agency obligations account for the remaining 2 percent.





## County Revenue Sources

The county receives a share of property tax revenues for its own general fund and various dependent special districts. The districts' funds are allocated directly to them, to support specific district services within their geographic areas. The most significant district services are the public libraries and fire protection. The secured property tax is the largest discretionary general fund revenue source for the county's own operations. Historically, these fund county services for public safety, law and justice. Meanwhile, as an agent of the state, the county performs mandated state services such as health and public assistance, but not always with adequate state funding, creating competition for local revenues.



Sources of Revenue	Recommended FY 2018-19	% Total
Taxes	\$679,105,165	31.8
License, Permits and Franchises	\$10,550,134	0.5
Fines, Forfeitures and Penalties	\$7,475,026	0.3
Use of Money and Property	\$19,708,800	0.9
Intergovernmental Revenues	\$694,423,737	32.5
Charges for Services	\$300,176,509	14.1
Interfund Revenue	\$101,899,780	4.8
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$44,665,898	2.1
Other Financing Sources	\$278,198,694	13.0
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$2,136,203,743</b>	<b>100.0</b>



## The Assessment Roll: Key Factors Affecting the Bottom Line

The annual property assessment roll identifies the assessed values of all properties as of January 1 each year and reflects additions, removals and declines in property value from the previous January 1. A copy of the roll is available for public inspection at the front counter of our office.

The combined roll is comprised of two major sections: the secured roll and the unsecured roll. The secured roll makes up the largest share of the total value—approximately 95 percent—and includes commercial and residential real properties. This year's increase over last year reached 8.2 percent (\$16 billion), continuing the current economic recovery. The total value of the secured roll is generated by a combination of the following factors, for which we provide details later in this report:

### Secured Roll Factors:

**Increased Values in the Local Real Estate Market.** Sales and changes in ownership totaled \$7.2 billion, which is 45% of this year's Secured Roll increase. The median price of an existing single-family home in San Mateo County was \$1,770,000 as of April 2018, according to the California Association of Realtors. This is the highest median home price in the state and is an increase of 18% over the previous year, topping San Francisco County for the second consecutive year. San Mateo County also has the lowest unemployment rate in the State, at 2 percent. Our strong job market has produced greater demand for housing and commercial space. The high demand, combined with a limited inventory, is the driving force behind escalating real estate values throughout the county.

**New Commercial Development.** Major commercial projects in the county, consisting of 80,000 square feet or more, accounted for more than 1.1 million square feet of new development coming to market in fiscal year 2017-2018. Another 18.7 million square feet are under construction, 9.4 million square feet have planning approval, and 28.8 million square feet are under review. In all, 56.9 million square feet of new construction remain to be built. Approximately 5.5 million square feet of new construction have been completed in the last three years.

The following cities have the greatest amount of square footage of new commercial development, consisting of projects that are 80,000 square feet or more, that are either pending, approved, or under construction:

- Redwood City – 12.9 million square feet
- Menlo Park – 9.7 million square feet
- South San Francisco – 8.8 million square feet
- Brisbane – 8 million square feet
- San Mateo – 5 million square feet

Growth in the technology and life science sectors continues to drive the demand in office, housing, hotel and retail. Completed projects include the Marriot Springhill Suites in Belmont, Serramonte Center Phase I in Daly City, Gellert Market Place in Daly City, Belle Haven affordable housing and Greystar Haven apartments in Menlo Park, One Marina Hotel in Foster City, The Cove Hotel Marriot in South San Francisco, and Bay Meadows Station 4 in San Mateo.

Office development owned and leased by Facebook was the largest driver of increased assessment in Menlo Park, accounting for over \$700 Million of new



construction. These and other projects and transfers helped drive a significant increase in the combined roll value in Menlo Park and East Palo Alto.

In the north-county areas, South San Francisco, Brisbane, and Daly City have all seen substantial increases due, in part, to construction of life science projects such as The Cove, and expansions by Genentech and Prologis.

**Restoration of Assessed Value: Decline in Value Program (Proposition 8).**

This program provides property tax relief to both residential and commercial property owners when the market value of a property falls below its assessed value. The number of properties participating in the program is reflective of the strength or weakness of the local real estate market.

- **Residential Properties.** This year, approximately 1,250 properties were reviewed and about 490 received relief. Full and partial value restorations increased the roll value by \$117 million, generating \$1.17 million in tax revenue. For 2017-2018, 54 percent of the reviewed properties were fully restored and another 34 percent were partially restored and remained in the program. For 2018-2019, 59 percent were fully restored, and 23 percent were partially restored. The number of residential properties participating in the program has dropped significantly from a high of 34,700 in FY 2011-2012 to the current low of 490 for FY 2018-2019.
- **Commercial Properties.** We reviewed approximately 90 properties and about half received full or partial restoration, boosting roll value by \$23 million. 53 properties remain in the program which account for the gap of \$46 million that remains between their current market values and the values we would assess were it not for this program. Nevertheless, the number of commercial properties in the program is trending downward from 260 properties in 2015-2016 to 53 properties in starting off the 2018-2019 roll year.

**Annual Inflation Factor.** The rate of inflation is identified in the California Consumer Price Index (CCPI) issued by the California Industrial Relations Board. The annual inflation factor is the percentage we use to calculate the year-to-year adjustment of assessed value under Proposition 13, and we cannot use a factor higher than two percent, even if the CCPI's inflation rate exceeds that. This year the annual inflation factor of 2 percent was applied to the 2017-2018 assessed value of all real property that did not have a change in ownership or any new construction during 2017.

**Foreclosures.** There were 55 Trustee's Deeds recorded in calendar year 2017, a 36 percent decrease from the 86 recorded in 2016. Notice of Defaults decreased 11 percent from 524 in 2016 to 465 in 2017, continuing the downward trend in defaults since the peak of the recession high of 5,058 in 2009. This downward trend in foreclosure activities is another important indicator of the strength of the current market.

**Unsecured Roll Dynamics:**

The Unsecured Roll comprises approximately 5 percent of the Property Assessment Roll and includes the valuations of business/personal property and possessory interests (leased government property). This year, the Unsecured Roll increased to \$11.38 billion in assessed value, an increase of more than \$546 million or 5.05 percent more than 2017-2018. Most of the Unsecured Roll is personal property, which typically depreciates and is not limited to an inflationary value increase, as is real property on the Secured Roll.

## The Assessment Roll: A History of Change

Roll changes since last year	2018-2019	2017-2018	Difference	% Change
Land	\$104,714,299,543	\$96,886,862,043	\$7,827,437,500	8.08
Improvements	\$109,264,409,512	\$100,754,993,522	\$8,509,415,990	8.45
Fixtures	\$978,633,730	\$762,067,493	\$216,566,237	28.42
Personal Property	\$1,550,721,843	\$1,366,353,315	\$184,368,528	13.49
<b>TOTAL GROSS SECURED</b>	<b>\$216,508,064,628</b>	<b>\$199,770,276,373</b>	<b>\$16,737,788,255</b>	<b>8.38</b>
Less: Exemptions (Home Owner's)	\$842,446,075	\$849,568,015	(\$7,121,940)	-0.84
Less: Exemptions (Other)	\$4,453,969,337	\$3,712,005,355	\$741,963,982	19.99
<b>NET SECURED</b>	<b>\$211,211,649,216</b>	<b>\$195,208,703,003</b>	<b>\$16,002,946,213</b>	<b>8.20</b>
Land	\$434,540,868	\$474,376,462	(\$39,835,594)	-8.40
Improvements	\$3,179,346,856	\$3,047,944,928	\$131,401,928	4.31
Fixtures	\$1,719,512,720	\$1,554,616,583	\$164,896,137	10.61
Personal Property	\$7,351,086,235	\$6,692,376,254	\$658,709,981	9.84
<b>TOTAL GROSS UNSECURED</b>	<b>\$12,684,486,679</b>	<b>\$11,769,314,227</b>	<b>\$915,172,452</b>	<b>7.78</b>
Less: Exemptions (Home Owner's)	\$488,237	\$631,613	(\$143,376)	-22.70
Less: Exemptions (Other)	\$1,298,857,163	\$930,363,742	\$368,493,421	39.61
<b>NET UNSECURED</b>	<b>\$11,385,141,279</b>	<b>\$10,838,318,872</b>	<b>\$546,822,407</b>	<b>5.05</b>
<b>TOTAL LOCAL ROLL</b>	<b>\$222,596,790,495</b>	<b>\$206,047,021,875</b>	<b>\$16,549,768,620</b>	<b>8.03</b>

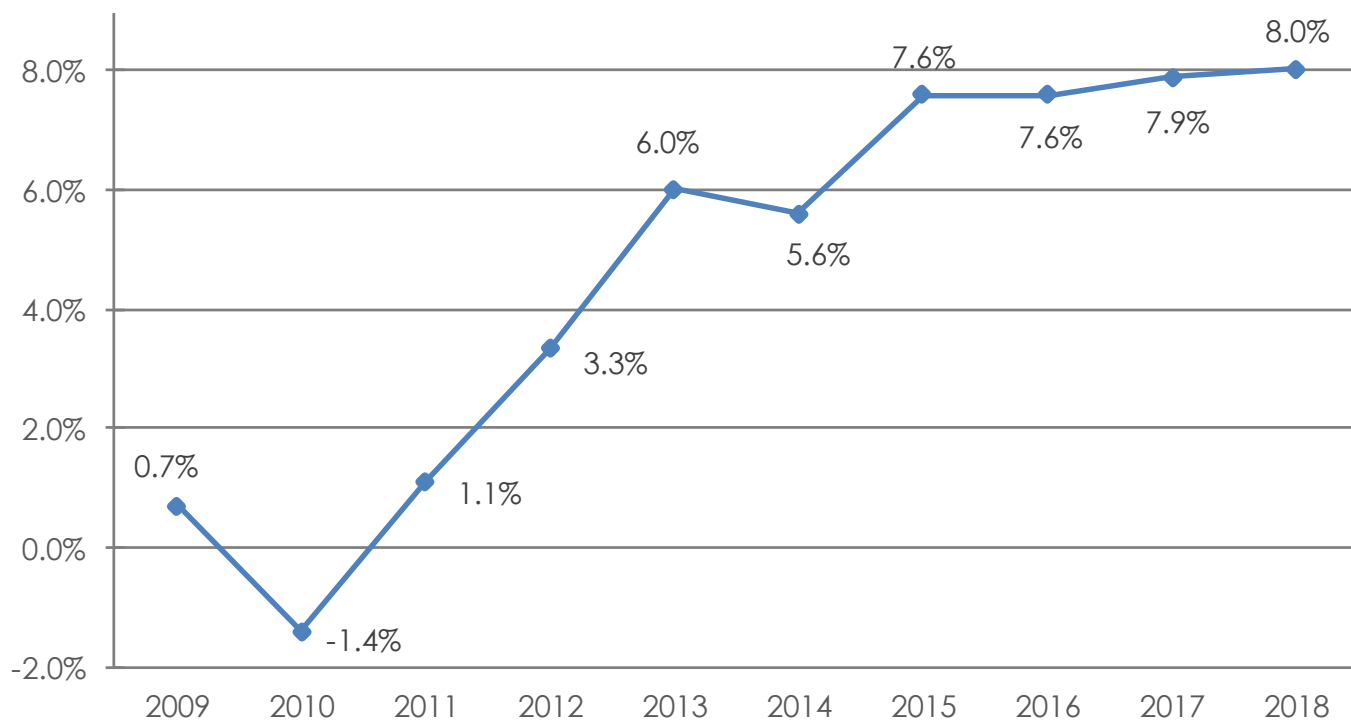
### 2018-2019 Highlights

236,091	Number of assessment parcels & accounts
221,355	Number of secured parcels
14,736	Number of unsecured accounts
27,579	Number of building permits processed
32,207	Number of deeds reviewed for change in ownership
11,824	Number of business accounts
3,047	Number of boat accounts
358	Number of general aircraft accounts

### The Last Ten Years: Net Combined Roll Value



### Rate of Change in Net Combined Roll Value (% Changed)





## City Assessment Roll Totals

City/Town	2018 Secured NET (Final)	2018 Unsecured NET (Final)	2018 Total NET
Atherton	\$10,927,675,348	\$3,529,705	\$10,931,205,053
Belmont	\$6,951,840,636	\$62,126,944	\$7,013,967,580
Brisbane	\$2,034,696,832	\$216,903,541	\$2,251,600,373
Burlingame	\$10,589,941,171	\$344,682,252	\$10,934,623,423
Colma	\$641,656,845	\$33,927,523	\$675,584,368
Daly City	\$12,442,278,786	\$258,769,798	\$12,701,048,584
East Palo Alto	\$3,218,263,056	\$70,949,766	\$3,289,212,822
Foster City	\$10,672,678,093	\$225,162,754	\$10,897,840,847
Half Moon Bay	\$3,078,918,760	\$44,156,277	\$3,123,075,037
Hillsborough	\$10,192,147,168	\$5,112,653	\$10,197,259,821
Menlo Park	\$17,874,469,254	\$941,142,287	\$18,815,611,541
Millbrae	\$5,463,612,723	\$78,599,912	\$5,542,212,635
Pacifica	\$6,165,740,538	\$51,741,256	\$6,217,481,794
Portola Valley	\$3,509,127,903	\$7,468,622	\$3,516,596,525
Redwood City	\$22,733,331,757	\$1,033,724,586	\$23,767,056,343
San Bruno	\$7,645,430,127	\$191,580,394	\$7,837,010,521
San Carlos	\$10,558,477,844	\$590,331,671	\$11,148,809,515
San Mateo	\$25,863,172,119	\$741,152,208	\$26,604,324,327
South San Francisco	\$17,341,459,559	\$1,764,886,134	\$19,106,345,693
Woodside	\$6,329,947,174	\$14,149,729	\$6,344,096,903
Unincorporated Areas	\$16,976,783,523	\$4,705,043,267	\$21,681,826,790
<b>County Total</b>	<b>\$211,211,649,216</b>	<b>\$11,385,141,279</b>	<b>\$222,596,790,495</b>

2017 Secured NET (Final)	2017 Unsecured NET (Final)	2017 Total NET	Change \$	Change %
\$10,207,013,788	\$2,880,453	\$10,209,894,241	\$721,310,812	7.06
\$6,477,727,547	\$56,079,812	\$6,533,807,359	\$480,160,221	7.35
\$1,838,011,850	\$194,462,758	\$2,032,474,608	\$219,125,765	10.78
\$9,983,467,431	\$338,411,794	\$10,321,879,225	\$612,744,198	5.94
\$616,757,559	\$32,961,152	\$649,718,711	\$25,865,657	3.98
\$11,167,466,461	\$240,561,744	\$11,408,028,205	\$1,293,020,379	11.33
\$2,893,016,361	\$59,703,566	\$2,952,719,927	\$336,492,895	11.40
\$9,912,339,187	\$200,383,775	\$10,112,722,962	\$785,117,885	7.76
\$2,852,675,547	\$40,418,385	\$2,893,093,932	\$229,981,105	7.95
\$9,654,616,478	\$5,220,467	\$9,659,836,945	\$537,422,876	5.56
\$15,543,198,544	\$1,398,795,673	\$16,941,994,217	\$1,873,617,324	11.06
\$5,143,120,437	\$72,388,542	\$5,215,508,979	\$326,703,656	6.26
\$5,829,968,739	\$49,997,129	\$5,879,965,868	\$337,515,926	5.74
\$3,322,514,665	\$8,026,063	\$3,330,540,728	\$186,055,797	5.59
\$21,338,921,906	\$973,883,246	\$22,312,805,152	\$1,454,251,191	6.52
\$7,102,951,464	\$193,402,416	\$7,296,353,880	\$540,656,641	7.41
\$9,672,987,378	\$399,049,241	\$10,072,036,619	\$1,076,772,896	10.69
\$23,854,490,050	\$683,382,784	\$24,537,872,834	\$2,066,451,493	8.42
\$15,769,421,001	\$1,423,146,707	\$17,192,567,708	\$1,913,777,985	11.13
\$6,037,811,667	\$12,424,594	\$6,050,236,261	\$293,860,642	4.86
\$15,990,224,943	\$4,452,738,571	\$20,442,963,514	\$1,238,863,276	6.06
<b>\$195,208,703,003</b>	<b>\$10,838,318,872</b>	<b>\$206,047,021,875</b>	<b>\$16,549,768,620</b>	<b>8.03</b>

## City Assessment Roll Totals: 10-Years Historical

City	2009	2010	2011	2012
Atherton	\$6,173,657,417	\$6,169,645,487	\$6,361,378,177	\$6,937,183,418
Belmont	\$4,597,890,555	\$4,535,727,180	\$4,609,050,545	\$4,771,022,137
Brisbane	\$1,688,358,870	\$1,642,469,772	\$1,585,868,563	\$1,578,533,082
Burlingame	\$6,927,135,195	\$6,971,973,391	\$7,073,819,928	\$7,395,879,716
Colma	\$541,425,749	\$526,929,379	\$529,804,446	\$555,334,005
Daly City	\$8,406,357,814	\$8,460,447,335	\$8,529,672,895	\$8,628,390,404
East Palo Alto	\$2,120,733,924	\$2,030,719,472	\$1,962,785,583	\$1,913,527,609
Foster City	\$6,651,904,015	\$6,580,136,709	\$6,615,709,167	\$6,832,874,915
Half Moon Bay	\$2,285,147,910	\$2,262,115,919	\$2,289,995,648	\$2,330,718,858
Hillsborough	\$6,633,864,330	\$6,634,146,654	\$6,636,806,588	\$6,905,305,975
Menlo Park	\$10,016,523,183	\$10,138,544,813	\$10,169,244,059	\$10,620,369,817
Millbrae	\$3,589,068,730	\$3,614,738,921	\$3,672,392,992	\$3,813,129,510
Pacifica	\$4,353,684,332	\$4,353,695,185	\$4,398,866,001	\$4,449,139,154
Portola Valley	\$2,305,463,869	\$2,330,565,243	\$2,374,079,442	\$2,499,413,447
Redwood City	\$14,979,114,405	\$14,730,427,062	\$14,739,511,341	\$15,152,749,693
San Bruno	\$5,145,477,541	\$5,066,605,565	\$5,164,490,117	\$5,268,446,565
San Carlos	\$6,731,630,814	\$6,784,367,951	\$6,880,824,986	\$7,082,568,072
San Mateo	\$16,578,114,020	\$16,263,482,508	\$16,430,999,464	\$16,859,447,154
South San Francisco	\$13,928,100,310	\$13,555,928,948	\$13,739,436,109	\$13,906,416,880
Woodside	\$4,171,901,779	\$4,150,652,928	\$4,253,475,343	\$4,433,295,729
Unincorporated Areas	\$15,096,237,820	\$14,126,807,034	\$14,487,593,904	\$15,322,345,288
<b>County Total</b>	<b>\$142,921,792,582</b>	<b>\$140,930,127,456</b>	<b>\$142,505,805,298</b>	<b>\$147,256,091,428</b>
Change from prior year	0.7%	-1.4%	1.1%	3.3%

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
\$7,564,465,332	\$8,057,517,997	\$8,780,410,762	\$9,502,181,665	\$10,209,894,241	\$10,931,205,053
\$5,074,811,937	\$5,355,997,042	\$5,711,910,982	\$6,135,249,998	\$6,533,807,359	\$7,013,967,580
\$1,577,238,541	\$1,686,003,052	\$1,800,232,962	\$1,892,595,882	\$2,032,474,608	\$2,251,600,373
\$7,905,206,616	\$8,409,524,618	\$8,982,631,695	\$9,674,641,943	\$10,321,879,225	\$10,934,623,423
\$569,264,490	\$612,671,067	\$620,259,147	\$633,784,184	\$649,718,711	\$675,584,368
\$9,179,079,455	\$9,666,310,302	\$10,219,953,118	\$10,794,996,246	\$11,408,028,205	\$12,701,048,584
\$1,998,650,708	\$2,130,647,020	\$2,294,583,572	\$2,465,680,381	\$2,952,719,927	\$3,289,212,822
\$7,473,204,472	\$7,772,324,976	\$8,536,888,307	\$9,326,797,156	\$10,112,722,962	\$10,897,840,847
\$2,361,010,857	\$2,480,870,780	\$2,645,790,112	\$2,739,332,101	\$2,893,093,932	\$3,123,075,037
\$7,362,422,592	\$7,820,616,340	\$8,450,405,823	\$9,108,861,353	\$9,659,836,945	\$10,197,259,821
\$11,311,951,652	\$12,015,719,121	\$13,380,461,679	\$15,055,919,927	\$16,941,994,217	\$18,815,611,541
\$4,043,061,756	\$4,343,504,423	\$4,657,957,729	\$4,938,128,272	\$5,215,508,979	\$5,542,212,635
\$4,639,493,161	\$4,876,416,386	\$5,213,944,952	\$5,514,878,435	\$5,879,965,868	\$6,217,481,794
\$2,654,834,901	\$2,801,883,642	\$3,004,549,973	\$3,140,729,394	\$3,330,540,728	\$3,516,596,525
\$16,243,074,154	\$17,115,153,932	\$18,714,959,011	\$20,560,591,968	\$22,309,403,780	\$23,763,586,948
\$5,566,473,666	\$5,991,728,553	\$6,399,080,186	\$6,891,391,232	\$7,296,353,880	\$7,837,010,521
\$7,629,813,187	\$7,916,596,991	\$8,629,501,343	\$9,229,715,568	\$10,072,036,619	\$11,148,809,515
\$18,039,766,865	\$19,368,255,730	\$21,014,606,042	\$22,631,790,804	\$24,537,872,834	\$26,604,324,327
\$14,219,008,148	\$14,811,520,910	\$15,397,316,446	\$16,373,523,079	\$17,192,567,708	\$19,106,345,693
\$4,768,578,184	\$4,979,973,955	\$5,326,420,587	\$5,695,009,923	\$6,050,236,261	\$6,344,096,903
\$15,919,634,188	\$16,640,868,520	\$17,671,278,134	\$18,675,138,254	\$20,446,364,886	\$21,685,296,185
<b>\$156,101,044,862</b>	<b>\$164,854,105,357</b>	<b>\$177,453,142,562</b>	<b>\$190,980,937,765</b>	<b>\$206,047,021,875</b>	<b>\$222,596,790,495</b>
6.0%	5.6%	7.6%	7.6%	7.9%	8.0%



## School District Assessment Roll Totals

District Name	2018 Secured NET (Final)	2018 Unsecured NET (Final)	2018 Total NET
Bayshore Elementary	\$945,958,299	\$50,917,791	\$996,876,090
Belmont Elementary	\$14,003,299,000	\$590,772,203	\$14,594,071,203
Belmont/Redwood Shores S.F.I.D.	\$6,334,125,887	\$214,232,372	\$6,548,358,259
Brisbane Elementary*	\$2,906,913,977	\$200,098,665	\$3,107,012,642
Burlingame Elementary	\$11,181,267,997	\$345,084,566	\$11,526,352,563
Cabrillo Unified	\$6,606,133,010	\$104,269,535	\$6,710,402,545
Hillsborough Elementary*	\$10,205,522,729	\$5,207,507	\$10,210,730,236
Jefferson Elementary	\$10,702,483,874	\$257,718,790	\$10,960,202,664
Jefferson Union High School*	\$20,594,372,483	\$560,445,869	\$21,154,818,352
La Honda-Pescadero Unified*	\$858,943,620	\$6,265,386	\$865,209,006
Las Lomitas Elementary*	\$8,747,382,567	\$236,079,075	\$8,983,461,642
Menlo Park Elementary*	\$16,840,854,788	\$177,226,592	\$17,018,081,380
Millbrae Elementary	\$5,792,032,701	\$3,937,998,379	\$9,730,031,080
Pacifica School District	\$6,039,016,333	\$51,710,623	\$6,090,726,956
Portola Valley Elementary*	\$5,426,145,298	\$11,263,652	\$5,437,408,950
Ravenswood Elementary	\$6,718,113,627	\$522,643,612	\$7,240,757,239
Redwood City Elementary	\$27,291,205,650	\$1,014,846,784	\$28,306,052,434
San Bruno Park Elementary*	\$7,167,400,246	\$865,220,909	\$8,032,621,155
San Carlos Elementary	\$9,664,000,002	\$261,559,605	\$9,925,559,607
San Mateo Community College*	\$211,211,649,216	\$11,385,141,279	\$222,596,790,495
San Mateo Union High School*	\$71,513,546,664	\$6,115,280,593	\$77,628,827,257
San Mateo-Foster City Elementary*	\$37,167,322,991	\$961,769,232	\$38,129,092,223
Sequoia Union High School*	\$92,584,794,702	\$2,825,067,673	\$95,409,862,375
South San Francisco Unified*	\$19,053,858,737	\$1,773,812,223	\$20,827,670,960
Woodside Elementary*	\$3,893,793,770	\$10,676,150	\$3,904,469,920

\* 2017-18 "basic aid" districts. Basic aid districts receive little state funding because their revenue from local property taxes exceeds what they would receive under the Local Control Funding Formula.

2017 Secured NET (Final)	2017 Unsecured NET (Final)	2017 Total NET	Change \$	Change %
\$895,496,791	\$52,512,900	\$948,009,691	\$48,866,399	5.15
\$13,213,802,885	\$393,532,488	\$13,607,335,373	\$986,735,830	7.25
\$6,076,395,108	\$189,927,353	\$6,266,322,461	\$282,035,798	4.50
\$2,614,550,167	\$171,584,718	\$2,786,134,885	\$320,877,757	11.52
\$10,548,620,579	\$338,802,594	\$10,887,423,173	\$638,929,390	5.87
\$6,220,247,704	\$98,094,761	\$6,318,342,465	\$392,060,080	6.21
\$9,667,696,632	\$5,259,451	\$9,672,956,083	\$537,774,153	5.56
\$9,622,475,194	\$236,388,646	\$9,858,863,840	\$1,101,338,824	11.17
\$18,842,306,454	\$510,451,812	\$19,352,758,266	\$1,802,060,086	9.31
\$817,097,632	\$4,891,938	\$821,989,570	\$43,219,436	5.26
\$8,256,329,407	\$247,865,112	\$8,504,194,519	\$479,267,123	5.64
\$15,636,672,683	\$175,149,822	\$15,811,822,505	\$1,206,258,875	7.63
\$5,453,493,520	\$3,512,503,040	\$8,965,996,560	\$764,034,520	8.52
\$5,709,784,302	\$49,965,548	\$5,759,749,850	\$330,977,106	5.75
\$5,148,685,969	\$11,159,487	\$5,159,845,456	\$277,563,494	5.38
\$5,349,753,152	\$969,886,575	\$6,319,639,727	\$921,117,512	14.58
\$25,123,008,933	\$1,010,253,728	\$26,133,262,661	\$2,172,789,773	8.31
\$6,653,400,320	\$991,278,711	\$7,644,679,031	\$387,942,124	5.07
\$8,889,611,538	\$245,169,770	\$9,134,781,308	\$790,778,299	8.66
\$195,208,703,003	\$10,838,318,872	\$206,047,021,875	\$16,549,768,620	8.03
\$66,665,548,799	\$5,724,864,148	\$72,390,412,947	\$5,238,414,310	7.24
\$34,342,337,748	\$877,020,352	\$35,219,358,100	\$2,909,734,123	8.26
\$85,335,688,711	\$3,061,337,984	\$88,397,026,695	\$7,012,835,680	7.93
\$17,327,813,703	\$1,438,678,229	\$18,766,491,932	\$2,061,179,028	10.98
\$3,717,824,144	\$8,321,002	\$3,726,145,146	\$178,324,774	4.79

## Interesting Facts

### Secured Roll Distribution by Use Type

<b>Residential</b>	<b># of Parcels</b>	<b>Assessed Value</b>
Single-Family	185,490	\$144,154,353,566
Multi-Family	12,221	\$18,704,911,269
Vacant Land (zoned residential)	6,267	\$1,274,804,413
<b>Commercial/Industrial</b>		
Improved	10,577	\$44,715,863,736
Vacant Land (zoned commercial)	3,271	\$1,155,310,529
<b>Rural/Agricultural</b>		
Improved	183	\$148,425,561
Irrigated	123	\$52,058,747
Non-irrigated	154	\$48,493,187
Restricted	774	\$359,158,016
Vacant	426	\$69,224,889





## The Top Ten: Highest Value Taxpayers

Rank	Name	Industry	Assessment	% of Total Roll
1	UNITED AIRLINES INC	Transportation	\$2,378,079,935	1.07
2	GENENTECH INC	Life Science	\$2,318,860,048	1.04
3	GILEAD SCIENCES INC	Life Science	\$1,749,805,290	0.79
4	HIBISCUS PROPERTIES LLC*	Technology	\$1,107,163,554	0.50
5	GOOGLE INC	Technology	\$1,089,836,582	0.49
6	ARE SAN FRANCISCO	Life Science	\$779,821,140	0.35
7	SLOUGH BTC LLC	Life Science	\$646,570,261	0.29
8	FACEBOOK INC	Technology	\$641,305,116	0.29
9	ORACLE CORPORATION	Technology	\$513,384,916	0.23
10	DALY CITY SERRAMONTE CENTER LLC	Retail	\$494,080,480	0.22

*\*Wholly owned subsidiary of Facebook*

## We Assess America's Longest Building

The Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) in Menlo Park is 1.9 miles long





## A Closer Look at Some of the Mechanics of Assessment

### Factored Base Year Value

When Proposition 13 was implemented, all real properties were reassessed at their 1975 assessed value. This was the “base year value.” As long as there was no change of ownership or new construction on the property, Prop 13 provided for the annual adjustment of the assessed value, based on the year’s rate of inflation (“the annual inflation factor”). This annual adjusted value is called the “factored base year value.” In the event of a re-appraisable change in ownership or completion of new construction, the factored base year value is replaced by a new base value which reflects the current market value (acquisition value).

### Supplemental Assessments: Ownership Change or New Construction

The assessor must make an additional assessment of a real property—called a “supplemental assessment”—whenever mandatory reappraisal is triggered by a qualifying change in ownership or new construction or a change in use. The supplemental assessment captures the change in assessed value between the existing factored base year value and the new value based on the changed circumstances. The supplemental assessment generates a supplemental tax bill that is prorated based on the number of months remaining in the fiscal year ending on June 30. The supplemental tax bill is payable in addition to the annual tax bill or it triggers a tax refund. Usually, only one supplemental assessment is generated by one of these triggering events, but events occurring between January and May can affect the assessment rolls of two fiscal years, causing two supplemental assessments to be issued.

**New Construction.** Assessable new construction is defined as any physical alteration of an improvement which converts the improvement, or any portion, to substantially equivalent to new or changes the way in which the portion of the improvement that was altered is used. The value of the alteration, not necessarily its cost, will be added to the factored base year value of the pre-existing improvement (including fixtures). If an addition or a substantial alteration is made to a structure, only the value of the new improvement is added to the current assessed value. The value of the pre-existing property is unchanged. The base year value of any newly completed construction is its current fair market value as of its date of completion. New construction in progress is appraised at its fair market value on the January 1 lien date. For further detail, see Assessors’ Handbook Section 410, Board of Equalization; [www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/pdf/ah410.pdf](http://www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/pdf/ah410.pdf).

**Change in Ownership.** When a re-appraisable change in ownership occurs, a new base year value is established at the current fair market value on the date of the change in ownership. If a partial change in ownership occurs, only the portion that changes ownership is given a new base year value based upon its current fair market value on the date of the change in ownership, and the portion that did not change ownership retains its existing adjusted base year value.

## Temporary Declines in Value (Proposition 8)

When an economic downturn occurs, it may affect the local real estate market causing housing and commercial values to drop. The Decline in Value Program provides temporary property tax relief to properties for which their current market values have fallen below their assessed values.

Generally, property is assessed at the lesser of two values: (1) the factored base year value (typically the purchase price adjusted annually for inflation, not to exceed 2 percent per year) or (2) the current market value on January 1. When the market value is the lesser value, the Decline in Value Assessment Program (Proposition 8) allows for a temporary reduction in assessed value until market value rises to meet its pre-fall value.

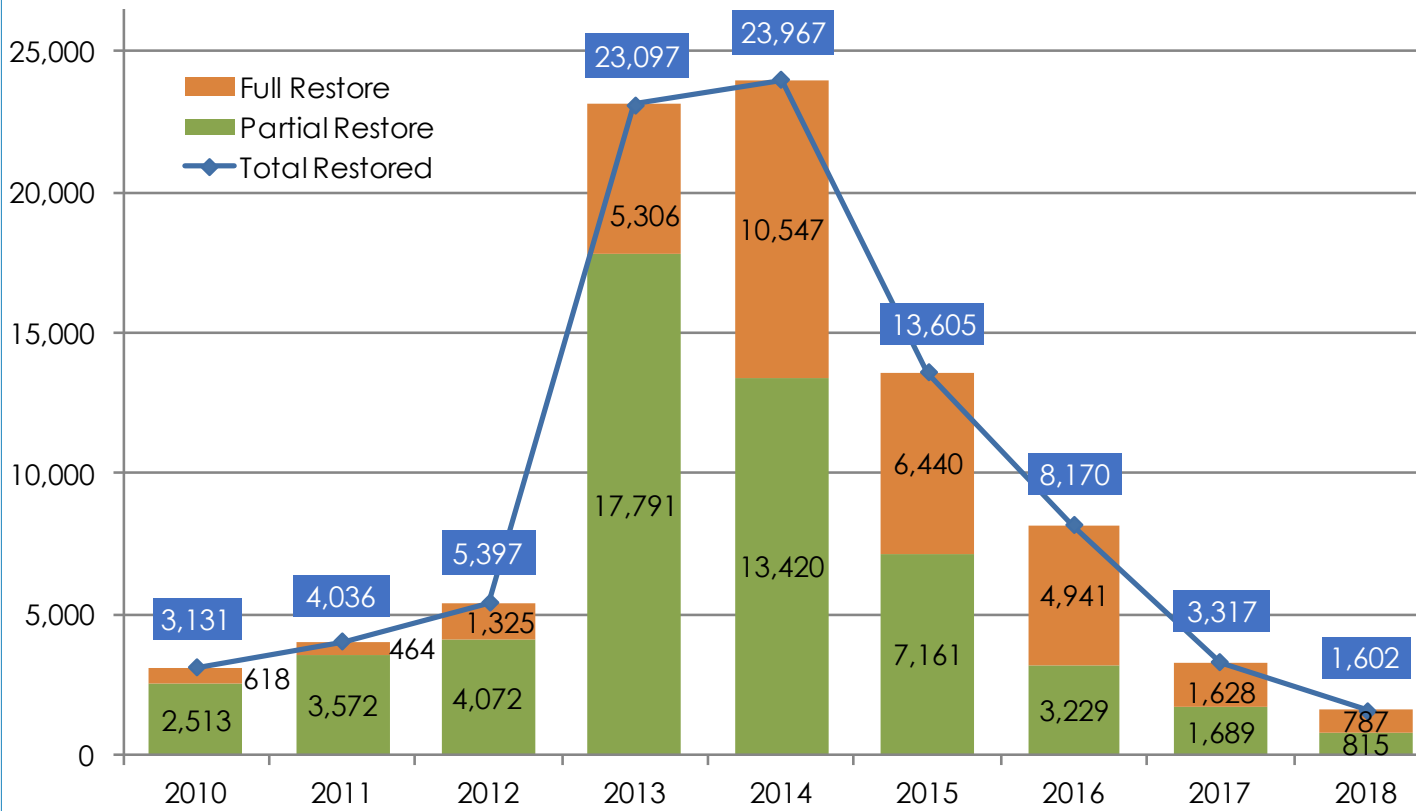
If a property is enrolled in the Decline in Value Assessment Program, its assessed value is subject to annual review in subsequent years in light of current economic and market factors. For example, the assessed value may be:

- Increased to no more than the “factored base year value”, or
- Held at the prior year's assessed value, or
- Reduced further.

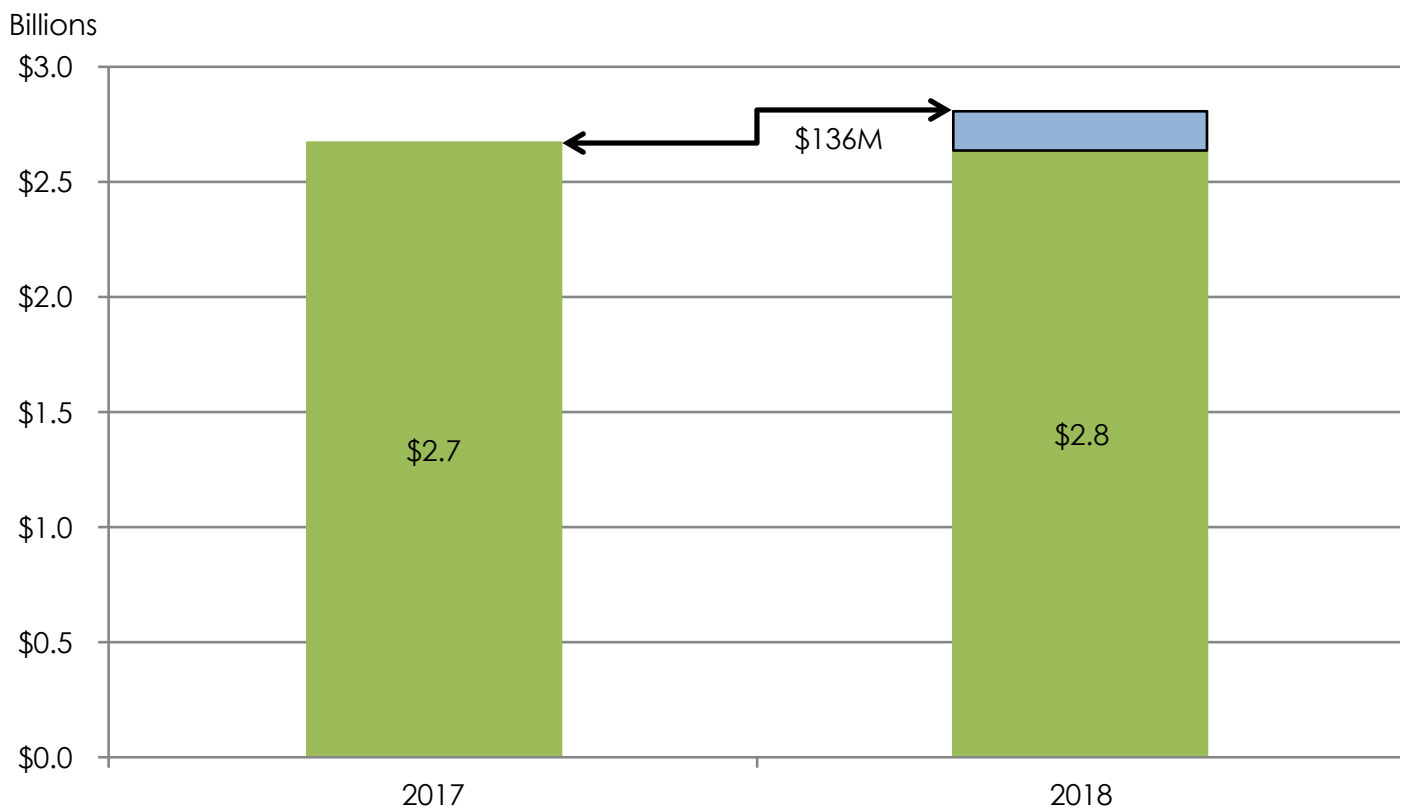
**The Two Percent Limit Does Not Apply to Restoration of Declined Value.** Some properties enrolled in the Decline in Value Assessment Program may see an annual increase in assessed value—called “restoration” to factored base year value—of more than two percent. This is permissible under Proposition 13, because Prop 13's limit on annual increases applies only to annual adjustments of the factored base year value, not to restorations. However, the restored value cannot exceed the factored base year value.



**Number of Parcels Restored: 2010 to 2018**

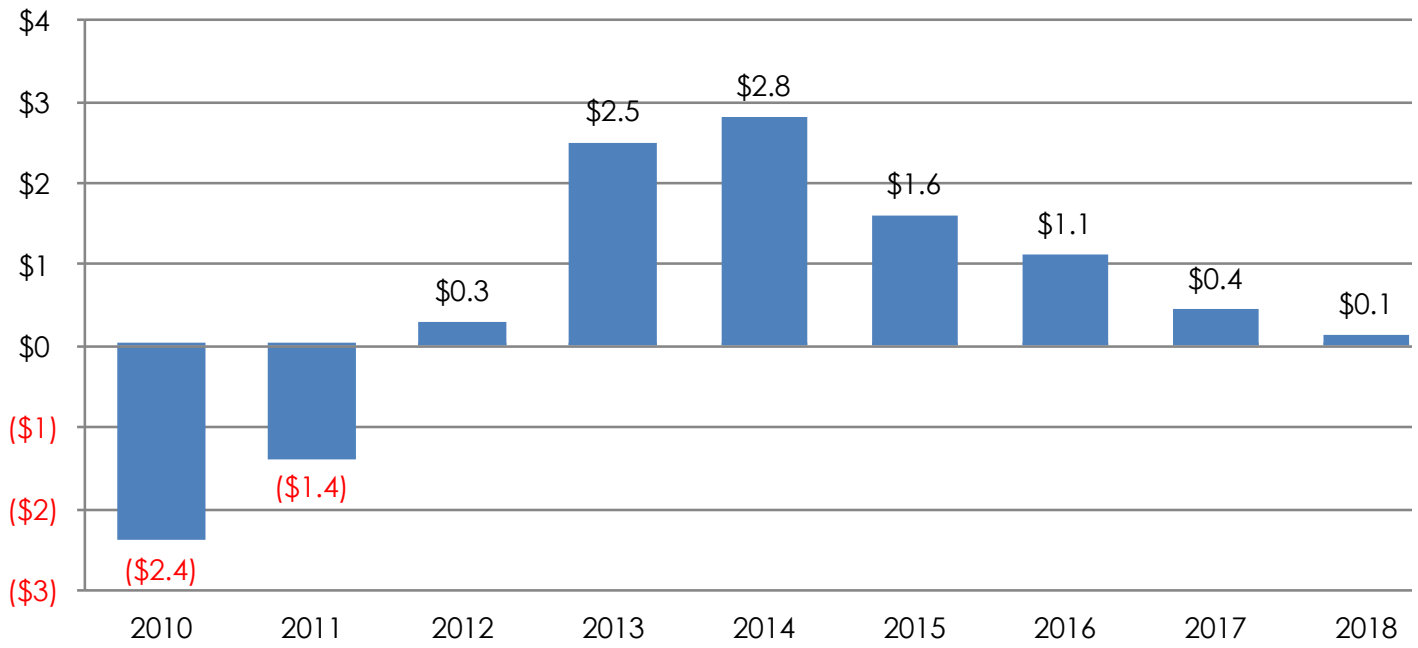


**Assessment Increase due to Restoration of Property Values  
2017 vs. 2018**



## Net Increase or Decrease under Proposition 8 2010 to 2018

Billions





## Unsecured Properties

The assessor determines the taxable value of the tangible assets possessed by 12,000 businesses operating in San Mateo County. The assessor also sets the value of approximately 3,000 boats and 350 general aircraft owned here.

**Business Personal Property.** Unlike real property, business personal property is reappraised annually. If a business owner has taxable personal property with an aggregate cost of \$100,000 or more on January 1, or if the assessor has requested that a business property statement (Form 571-L) be filed, the business property owner is required by law to file the statement by April 1 of each year, detailing the costs of all supplies, equipment, fixtures, leasehold improvements, land improvements, and land, as well as other requested information for each business location. The completed property statement should be received by our office no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 7. This year, we mailed out over 700 property statements and 9,700 notices to file the statement electronically. Business owners have the option to file their statements electronically, thereby reducing our printing and postage costs. Last year, about 5,200 businesses filed electronically.

**Marine Vessels.** We assess the value of 3,047 water vessels. They range from personal watercraft to commercial fishing vessels. Most vessels are either registered with the California Department of Motor Vehicles or have certificates issued by the US Coast Guard.

**General Aircraft.** The 358 general aircraft that we assess are located among three airports: San Francisco International, Half Moon Bay, and San Carlos. Aircraft range from small two-seat single engine propeller airplanes to corporate jets. General aircraft are registered with the Federal Aviation Administration.



## Tax Relief Opportunities: Exemptions, Exclusions, Appeals

### Exemptions and Exclusions

California's framework of property tax law (California Revenue and Taxation Code and rules from the State Board of Equalization) includes multiple provisions to ease the tax burden on eligible taxpayers. Generally, these consist of exclusions, which have the effect of making some changes in ownerships and specified types of property not taxable, and exemptions, which have the effect of reducing the taxable assessed value. Eligibility for these benefits depends on the characteristics of the owners (such as being disabled or elderly or a charitable organization), or the characteristics of the property (such having suffered a disaster loss or been taken by eminent domain). Accordingly, for example, for fiscal year 2017-2018, we granted exemptions totaling \$6.6 billion, of which 87 percent went to institutions (non-profits, religious and church organizations, hospitals, and school). In addition, programs to assist or postpone payments are available.

The details of exemptions and exclusions are explained more fully on our website, under the "Tax Saving Programs" menu. The following chart highlights their terms, and we will provide more information about the most common ones.



Name	Eligibility	Terms
Builder's Exclusion	Builders of one or multiple single-family homes built for sale.	Exclusion from supplemental assessment but new construction is reappraised.
Exclusion of some intra-family transfers (Proposition 58)	Ownership transfer within the immediate family: parent-child and/or grandparent-grandchild.	Transfer does not trigger reappraisal to current market value.
Low Value Exemption	All personal property that does not exceed \$7,500 in full cash value.	The aggregate value of all personal property of a single taxpayer, or a group of taxpayers, on any one lien date not exceeding \$7,500 in full cash value.
Homeowners' Exemption	Taxpayer occupies home as principal residence on January 1.	Up to \$7,000 reduction in assessed value.
Replacement Dwelling Exclusions (Propositions 60, 90 and 110)	Taxpayer is severely permanently disabled or over age 55, and occupies home as principal residence.	Allows transfer of assessed value of original home to replacement home of equal or lesser value.
Institutional Exemptions	Qualified organizations including churches, museums, public schools and welfare organization.	Exempt from ad valorem taxation.
Welfare Exemption	Owned and used exclusively by a non-profit religious, charitable, scientific, or hospital corporation, or used exclusively for religious or educational purposes.	Assessed value is reduced.
Disabled Veterans' Exemption	Military veteran disabled by service-related injury or disease while in active service, or the surviving unmarried spouse, and California resident on January 1, and household income below \$56,101.	Assessed value reduced as much as \$202,060, depending on disability.
Decline in Market Value (Proposition 8)	Market value falls below current assessed value.	Assessed value reduced to market value until factored base year value is achieved.
Calamity Relief	Property destroyed by fire, earthquake or flood, with loss over \$10,000.	Factored base year value is reduced by the percentage of damage. If rebuilt in like or similar manner, preexisting assessed value is retained.

Name	Eligibility	Terms
Property Tax Postponement Program (PTP) * * * Administered by the State Controller's Office. Call 800.952.5661 or email <a href="mailto:postponement@sco.ca.gov">postponement@sco.ca.gov</a>	Homeowner is at least 62 years of age, or blind, or disabled, own and occupy the property, with household income of \$35,500 or less, have at least 40 percent equity in the property, and not have reverse mortgage on the property.	Defer payment of all or part of current year property taxes but must eventually be repaid. Repayment is secured by a lien against the property.
Eminent Domain (Proposition 3)	A government agency has acquired the property.	Assessed value is transferred to a comparable replacement property.

**Homeowners' Exemption.** If a home's owner occupies it as the principal place of residence on January 1, the owner qualifies for an exemption of \$7,000 from the home's annually assessed value, which reduces the annual property tax bill. The exemption may also apply to a supplemental assessment if the home was not previously receiving the exemption on the annual assessment roll. California law allows only one homeowners' exemption per owner, applicable to the principal place of residence; therefore, a second home does not qualify for the exemption. There is no filing fee. We automatically mail an application form to new property owners.

**Institutional Exemptions.** Property used exclusively for a church, college, cemetery, museum, school, or library may qualify for this exemption that will reduce the owner's property tax liability. Properties owned and used exclusively by a non-profit religious, charitable, scientific, or hospital corporation may also be eligible.





## Assessment Appeals

When a property owner disagrees with our determination of the value on which an assessment is based, the owner should, within 15 days of receiving the assessment notice, contact our office. After discussion and review of the available data, if reduction in value is proper, we will adjust the value. Alternatively, we may conclude that a reduction is not warranted.

If unsatisfied with this decision, the property owner is entitled to appeal that decision to the county's Assessment Appeals Board (AAB), by filing an *Assessment Appeal Application*. Our staff will assist the owner with the AAB's application process.

The AAB is an independent board composed of three private citizens appointed by the county's board of supervisors. The board of supervisors provides administrative support to the AAB, but has no authority over its practices or decisions when performing its assessment equalization duties. Each member possessed the relevant education and/or experience required by the state and completes a training program provided by the State Board of Equalization. Upon due notice, and with the assistance of legal counsel on both sides, the owner and the assessor's staff will present evidence at the hearing conducted by the AAB. The AAB then determines the value of the property in question and issues its decision. If the property owner remains unsatisfied, and the hearing has written findings of fact, then the owner has a right to appeal it to the county's Superior Court.

**Appeal Deadlines.** An appeal must be filed with the Clerk of the AAB, not with the assessor. A \$30 non-refundable application fee applies. The filing deadline depends on what you are appealing. If your appeal relates to a notice of annual assessment, you must file between July 2 and September 15 (or the following business day if that falls on a weekend), unless we have not mailed your notice of annual assessment by August 1. In that event, the deadline is extended to November 30. If your appeal relates to a supplemental assessment, the filing deadline is within 60 days of the mailing date on the supplemental assessment notice. For more information, call 650.363.4573. Additional information and application forms are available on the AAB's website at <https://cmo.smcgov.org/assessment-appeals-board>. The office of the Clerk of the AAB is located at 400 County Center in Redwood City, on the first floor.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### The Assessment Process and Related Data

- 1. Why is my assessment so much higher than my neighbor's, for the same model of house?**  
Assessed value is based on the fair market value of the house as of its purchase date. Different dates may produce different assessed values.
- 2. How can I obtain the assessment data on my property?**  
You may review our data at our office, located at 555 County Center, First Floor, in Redwood City.
- 3. How many county agencies work to produce my tax bill, and how?**  
The assessor determines the taxable value and prepares the assessment roll, the controller determines the applicable tax rates and amounts and maintains the tax roll, the tax collector issues the bills and collects the tax payments, and the controller distributes the revenues among the local taxing jurisdictions.
- 4. What are my property boundaries?**  
Your property's boundaries are delineated within your grant deed or your deed makes reference to a legally recorded map of a subdivision or a parcel which specifies the legal boundaries.
- 5. I think the fence that is between me and my neighbor is in the wrong location. How can I know?**  
The only way to know is to have a licensed surveyor survey the property's boundaries.
- 6. What do I need to do if I want to subdivide my property?**  
This answer depends on your circumstances, but usually these land use questions must be directed to the planning and building department for the jurisdiction where the property lies.

### Change in Ownership

- 1. My parents died and their children inherited the property. Why are we receiving a notice of possible reassessment?**  
Death is a transfer of the decedent's interest upon the date of death to the heirs. If the heirs or beneficiaries are the decedent's children, they must timely submit a claim form to our office (Claim For Reassessment Exclusion For Transfer Between Parents & Children). If not timely filed, the property will be reassessed.
- 2. OK, but we have sold the property. Do we still need to submit the claim form?**  
Yes. The possible reassessment covers the time period between the date of death and the date of sale. Without the claim form, we will reassess for that time period and we will issue a supplemental tax bill. Upon selling the property to a third party, the children must file the claim form within six months from the date of notice of a supplemental or escape assessment. Please make certain that we have the correct address for the estate's executor/successor trustee or other representative.

## New Construction

1. **What if I build an addition to my home? How are additions assessed?**

An addition will be reassessed, but not the rest of the pre-existing building. We add the fair market value of the addition to the existing value of the "improvements" portion of the assessed value.

2. **What if I remodel my kitchen or bathroom?**

If the kitchen or bathroom is determined to be the equivalent of a new kitchen or bathroom with upgraded materials and finishes, it can be considered newly constructed; therefore, it is assessable. If, however, the remodeling is of "like-for-like" replacement or maintenance work of old cabinets, fixtures, or other components with newer items of similar function and quality, it would not qualify as new construction; thus, it is not assessable.

3. **What if I add a bathroom, room or loft within existing space?**

This is re-assessable because it is considered a change in use.

4. **What if I tear down most of the house, leaving a corner or wall standing?**

Rebuilding the house after such a tear-down is re-assessable as equivalent of new construction.





## Business Property

1. **What is business personal property?**

Basically, any equipment used in the business should be reported, such as: computers, printers, servers; office furniture; telephones; copiers; fax machines; restaurant equipment; forklifts; video equipment; and cameras.

2. **What is a Business Property Statement (Form 571-L)?**

The Business Property Statement (BPS) is a reporting form, or a series of forms, for declaring the acquisition costs of all of the business's taxable real and personal properties, as they exist on the January 1 lien date.

3. **Why did I receive a BPS?**

We might have learned about the existence of your business, either from the city that issued your business license, or from a fictitious business name report filed with the county recorder, or from a field canvass by our staff. Every person who owns taxable personal property other than a mobilehome, with an aggregate initial cost or current market value of \$100,000 or more, must report the type of business, its location and the itemized acquisition cost of such property.

4. **What is the purpose of the BPS?**

The BPS collects information the owner provides about the business's supplies, business equipment and leasehold improvements. We use that information to assess taxable value. The owner reports the acquisition costs of taxable items owned on January 1 at the identified address. All 58 of California's county assessors mail out similar BPS forms.

5. **Who must file a BPS?**

- (1) Any business that receives a BPS form from the assessor must complete, sign and return it to the assessor within the time specified.
- (2) Even absent such formal request, any business that owns taxable personal property and/or leasehold improvements having a total combined cost or current market value of \$100,000 or more must file a BPS.
- (3) Any other business, when requested by assessor to file, must file, regardless of the value of their assets.

6. **Can I file my BPS online?**

Yes, most small businesses in San Mateo County have received our notification letter containing a unique business account number and a BIN (Business Identification Number), to enable online filing.



## Mobilehomes

1. **Are mobilehomes subject to the property tax?**

Yes, if they are newly purchased or on permanent foundations. As with real property, the assessed value cannot increase by more than two percent annually unless there is a change in ownership or new construction. Older mobilehomes (bought before June 30, 1980) generally are not taxable; rather, they are licensed by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

2. **My mobilehome is sitting on a permanent foundation on my property. How will it be taxed?**

For tax purposes, a mobilehome that is affixed to the land on a permanent foundation is not considered a mobilehome; instead, it is deemed to be modular housing, and has always been taxed like a conventional home.

3. **If I buy a used mobilehome that is subject to local property taxes, how do I get the title transferred to my name?**

Mobilehome titles are issued by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. That agency cannot transfer the title of a taxable used mobilehome without first receiving a tax clearance certificate from the county tax collector of the county where the mobilehome is situated. Any taxes owed must be paid before a certificate can be issued. Note: This type of title transfer applies only to mobilehomes not on permanent foundations. If the mobilehome is attached to a permanent foundation, the title transfer is handled by the county recorder in the same manner as for conventional homes.

4. **How do you transfer the title of a mobilehome into the name of a trust?**

Contact the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Visit their website at [www.hcd.ca.gov](http://www.hcd.ca.gov).





## Tax Bills and Refunds

1. **How much are my taxes for the current year?**

Current year information is available on the Treasurer-Tax Collector's website, or call 866.220.0308. Visit the web at [www.sanmateocountytaxcollector.org](http://www.sanmateocountytaxcollector.org).

**I didn't pay my taxes last year. Where can I find out what I owe?**

Delinquent tax bills are also available on the tax collector's website, or call 866.220.0308.

2. **Why do I have two supplemental tax bills?**

State law requires the assessor to reappraise property and issue a notice of supplemental assessment upon a change in ownership or the completion of new construction. The supplemental assessment reflects the difference between the new value and old values. If the triggering event occurs between January 1 and May 31, there will be two supplemental tax bills.

3. **Can I pay my taxes with a credit card?**

Yes. The tax collector accepts credit card payments by telephone and online. Visit their website at: [www.sanmateocountytaxcollector.org](http://www.sanmateocountytaxcollector.org).

4. **To what address do I mail my tax payment?**

Tax bills are payable to "Sandie Arnott", the county tax collector. Mail your payment to: San Mateo County Tax Collector, PO Box 45878, San Francisco, CA 94145-0878. Web site at [www.sanmateocountytaxcollector.org](http://www.sanmateocountytaxcollector.org).

5. **Where can I make my tax payment in person?**

The tax collector's office address is 555 County Center, First Floor, Redwood City, CA 94063.

6. **I do not have a secured property tax bill. What should I do?**

The county tax collector can provide you with a replacement tax bill.

7. **I received a refund, but don't know why. Can you help?**

To inquire about your refund, please contact the Controller's Office. Please be prepared to tell them specific information such as your name, property address and if possible the Assessor's Parcel Number.

## Tax Relief and Assistance Programs

1. **Can I negotiate or file an appeal to obtain a lower assessed value?**

Yes. If you disagree with the assessor's value determination, you should first discuss your concern with the assessor's appraisal staff. If you remain unsatisfied, for a specified period of time, you have the right to file an appeal with the county's Assessment Appeals Board. For more information and forms, see the Board's website at: <https://cmo.smcgov.org/assessment-appeals-board>.

2. **How do I get more details on Institutional and Veteran's Organization Exemptions and how do I apply for an exemption?**

Certain properties may be eligible for an exemption if they have a qualifying use. Please visit our forms page for information or contact our Exemptions Unit at 650.363.4500.

3. **What kinds of ownership transfers avoid reappraisal to market value?**  
State law protects some transfers from suffering a sudden assessment increase when they would otherwise be reappraised to current market value, replacing the existing factored base year value accrued during long-term ownership under Prop 13. These include intra-family transfers between decedent-surviving spouse, parent-child, grandparent-grandchild transfers, or the purchase of another home of equal or lesser value by an aging owner as the principal residence. Please visit our Homeowner Resources webpage.
4. **Replacement Dwelling Exclusions:**
- a. **Can two otherwise qualified taxpayers who recently sold their separately owned dwelling properties combine their claims for the Proposition 60/90 benefit when they jointly buy one replacement dwelling?**  
No. They can only receive benefit if one or the other, not both, qualifies by comparing his/her original property to the jointly purchased replacement dwelling. The implementing legislation specifically disallows combining a claim in this manner regardless of whether the replacement dwelling co-owners are married or not.
- b. **When making the “equal or lesser value” comparison, is it sufficient to simply compare the sale price of the original property and the purchase price/construction cost of the replacement dwelling?**  
No. You must compare the full market value of the original property with the full market value of the replacement dwelling, as of its date of purchase or completion of new construction. This is important because the sales or purchase price is not always the same as the market value. The assessor must determine the market value of each property.
- c. **If the full cash value of my replacement dwelling slightly exceeds the full market value of my original property, can I still benefit?**  
Yes. If an original property was sold the same day or before the purchase of the replacement dwelling, the maximum allowable value difference is: (a) within one year of the sale date, 105 percent of the market value of original property; or (b) within two years, 110 percent.
5. **What is the Homeowner and Renter Assistance Program?**  
This tax relief program for elderly, blind or disabled taxpayers was, until recently, administered by the California Franchise Tax Board. However, program funds have been exhausted and applications are no longer being accepted. Call 800.852.5711 and see [www.ftb.ca.gov/individuals/hra/index.shtml](http://www.ftb.ca.gov/individuals/hra/index.shtml).

**What is the Property Tax Postponement Program?**

The Property Tax Postponement Program is administered by the California Controller's Office. It allows eligible homeowners to postpone tax payments on their principal place of residence. Obtain information and application forms online at [www.sco.ca.gov](http://www.sco.ca.gov) or call 800.952.5661. Claim forms may also be picked up at the county's Treasurer-Tax Collector's downtown Redwood City location (555 County Center, First Floor, Redwood City) or call 866.220.0308.

## Glossary of Terms

<b>Appraised Value</b>	The value determined from the sale amounts of comparable properties. Current appraised value is usually the current market value.
<b>Assessed Value</b>	Taxable value, determined by the assessor, based on the appraised value. Assessed value generally increases annually by 1-2 percent. It is not necessarily the current market value.
<b>Assessor's Parcel Number</b>	Nine digits number which identifies a specific unit of real property.
<b>Base Year Value</b>	Assessed value as of 1975, or at the time of change in ownership or completion of new construction.
<b>Cost Per Square Foot</b>	Normally determined by dividing the sale price by the structure's square footage. However, it does not take account of lot size. Therefore, when comparing market prices, it should be used only when the properties have similar lot size, characteristics and sale dates.
<b>Document Number</b>	The county recorder's identification number for each document submitted for recordation.
<b>Easement</b>	The right to use a piece of land owned by another. For instance, if Barney owns a parcel of land that is completely surrounded by Fred's property, Barney can pay Fred for an easement to build a driveway across Fred's land.
<b>Factored Base Year Value</b>	The base year value, adjusted annually for inflation, with any annual increase limited to not more than two percent.
<b>Homeowner's Exemption</b>	Provides a homeowner with a reduction of up to \$7,000 in the annual assessed value of an owner-occupied residence. One percent of the exemption amount is the tax savings.
<b>Improvements</b>	Any structures built on a piece of land, such as a house built on a vacant lot.
<b>Land Value</b>	Actual value of the land on which an improvement sits. This does not include the value of the structure.
<b>Legal Description</b>	The official description of the property as documented by the county recorder. It usually identifies the physical location in terms of tract and lot.
<b>Tax Amount</b>	Annual property tax (the assessed value times the tax rate).

**Tax Rate Area**

A geographic area within a county with which the controller links a combination of the local tax rates that apply to properties situated there, as levied by the area's government entities, such as fire and police protection districts. The tax rate area is used to calculate the tax bill.

**Title**

All of the elements that constitute the legal right to own, possess, use, control, enjoy and dispose of real estate.

**Title Company**

The entity that insures an owner's title, after verifying its validity by searching the county recorder's official records.

**Title Insurance**

An insurance policy that protects the owner or other insured, such as a lender, against loss or impairment of title.

**Transfer Date**

The date the deed of sale of the property is recorded. Also referred to as Close of Escrow date.





## Contact Us

Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder  
Appraisal Services Division  
555 County Center, First Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063

Phone: 650.363.4500

Fax: 650.363.1903

E-mail: [assessor@smcacre.org](mailto:assessor@smcacre.org)

Web: [www.smcacre.org](http://www.smcacre.org)

Hours of operation:

Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., excluding holidays.

Parking:

Metered parking is available on the ground floor of county parking structure behind our building, or on adjacent streets.

Department Head (Elected):

**Mark Church**, Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder & Chief Elections Officer



