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## Measure A

### Community Questions & Answers

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As you drive through your community, you may notice that the roads that we drive everyday are beginning to crack, dip, heave, ravel, fade and lose their striping. The pavement is beginning to deteriorate due to wear and tear as it ages and it is the responsibility of the Saddle Creek CSD to restore and maintain these roads and related infrastructure to ensure that the roads last as many years as possible in good conditions and are safe.

We have developed this question and answer document to help readers understand the CSD and the services it provides, how services are funded, why additional funding is needed and information on Measure A. Questions and answers are updated regularly so please check the version number at the bottom of the document. You can also sign up on our website to receive notifications when updates are posted.

**Q. What is the role of the Saddle Creek Community Services District?**

- a. The Saddle Creek Community Services District was formed to maintain Saddle Creek roads, storm drains, wildlife and wetlands easements and any landscaping not part of the Facilities maintained by Castle & Cooke. For more information about the district, visit: <https://saddlecreekcsd.org/board-staff/faq/about/>

**Q. Why is a Special Tax being proposed?**

- a. The Road Improvement Special Tax (Measure A) is being proposed as an answer to the deteriorating roads. In 2006, a Pavement Condition Report (PCR) was completed that identified the need to start planning for road improvements which would keep them in shape for the future. At the time, Castle & Cooke was proceeding with plans to develop additional lots which would have included renovation to some of the existing Saddle Creek Roads. Castle & Cooke's development plan was inevitably stalled and the District completed an updated PCR earlier this year which identified the work immediately necessary to improve the road condition and to avoid major increases in future road deterioration and maintenance. In short, the roads are getting worse and if we don't invest resources in them now it will end up costing a lot more as the roads rapidly deteriorate; the effect being, the roads will need to be completely replaced vs. maintained.

**Q. What does the Special Tax do?**

- a. The majority of the reason for the proposed new special tax is to provide funding for investment directly in renovation, repair, and ongoing increased level of maintenance for community roads. Road upgrades are much less expensive if completed before roads fail

completely. The remainder of the special tax funds equipment replacement, common area landscape renovations to improve drought tolerance, reserves and general operating expenses. Please visit <https://saddlecreekcsd.org/road-improvement-and-operations-special-tax-2017/> for more information and sign up for email notification of our updated information as we post new blogs. The Special Tax Resolution contains information on the ways the tax money will be spent.

**Q. How is the Special Tax paid?**

- a. The new special tax, if approved, will **replace the existing tax** (currently on your tax bill) that was approved in the year 2000, and is billed on your property taxes by Calaveras county. The County collects the tax, and pays it to the CSD.

**Q. Who gets to vote and how do I cast mine?**

- a. In order to vote on the special tax, you must be a registered voter within Saddle Creek District boundaries. All registered voters will have an opportunity to cast their vote in an all-mail ballot scheduled for May 2, 2017. Registered voters and Saddle Creek residents will be given ample notice before their ballots are sent out and we will also hold three informational town hall meetings to give everyone an opportunity to attend and get their questions answered. Please see our website for the dates of the town hall meetings or click [here](#).

**Q. Why do I (the homeowner) have to pay for the maintenance of the roads? Shouldn't that be the County's responsibility?**

- a. Roads built decades ago and outside of Saddle Creek are typically under the ownership responsibility of the county. Due to increased standards for road construction and expensive maintenance liabilities, communities in recent decades have taken on the responsibility of maintain the roads to a condition determined at the local level, rather than as part of the county budget process. In Saddle Creek the roads were built by the project developer, (now Castle & Cooke) and dedicated to the Saddle Creek CSD for perpetual maintenance. The Saddle Creek CSD was formed to facilitate the process of determining the local road standards, implementing a maintenance plan and funding it.

**Q. How was the condition of Saddle Creek Roads determined?**

- a. The condition of road surfacing is evaluated and reported by a licensed civil engineer. The [report](#) provides a numerical condition index rating based on standard engineering and transportation criteria. In 2006 the Saddle Creek CSD Board and community members realized that the roads were starting to wear, and therefore directed the completion of a baseline Pavement Condition Report, which was completed at no cost by local resident and Engineer Jon Lynch. This 2006 report indicated an average pavement rating of 78, which is considered good. Mr. Lynch recommended the immediate start of a road maintenance program to keep roads in good condition and costs under control.

Castle & Cooke had committed to keep the roads maintained, but never funded any maintenance activities except some minor crack sealing. By 2015, with significant wear and damage appearing on the roads and no major maintenance performed by Castle & Cooke in 20 years, the CSD paid an engineer less than \$5000 to update the [pavement condition report](#), which was completed in 2016. The 2016 report revealed a drop in pavement

condition from good to fair, and estimated an escalating decline in condition to poor within 5 years. Both reports verified that the cost to maintain roads of poor condition is six to ten times as expensive as maintaining roads that are in good condition.

**Q. Is Castle & Cooke's paying for road maintenance?**

- a. For over a decade, the CSD Board had been promised by Castle & Cooke representatives that road renovations would be completed, but the work never materialized. The buildout of the community would have provided enough paying lots and revenue for the CSD to make the road improvements when needed; but that development of lots never occurred so there has been no money available to the CSD to fund road maintenance. Castle & Cooke properties including the golf course, sports club and their large vacant lots do not pay the current special tax. Castle & Cooke does cover some operating expenses of the CSD, but not road maintenance.

**Q. Where are my current tax dollars being spent? Isn't that enough to fix the roads?**

- a. Current tax dollars are being spent to maintain Saddle Creek roads (green waste removal) clearing of storm drains, street lights, mosquito control, weed control, wildlife and wetlands easements and any landscaping not part of the Facilities maintained by Castle & Cooke. The current special tax was intended to cover the cost of road maintenance once the community was built out; which never occurred. However, with good budgeting and expense control the district has been able to accumulate a small reserve adequate to help replace equipment and vehicles and to expedite the first phases of the road renovations should the new special tax be successful. Without the new tax, no road maintenance will occur and reserves will be spent to cover operating costs until depleted.

**Q. I'm glad that we are finally getting some landscaping done, but why is it moving forward so slowly?**

- a. We are trying to complete the restoration of the landscape necessary from the drought related water restrictions within our existing small budget and by using district staff. If we were to use an outside contractor for any major landscape projects, as a public agency, we would be required to go through an expensive administrative process along with contracting costs that are not in the budget. By utilizing our small, but dedicated staff, we are able to save resources. However, the project has resulted in too much commitment of our limited maintenance resources, and the District now intends to contract for completion of the renovation project.

**Q. Where can I get more information?**

- a. For more detailed information on the Road Improvement Tax and other happenings in the District, please visit our website at: [www.SaddleCreekCSD.org](http://www.SaddleCreekCSD.org)