

Presidents Report

2024-2025

The end of this month marks the end of our 2024-2025 operating calendar and fiscal year. It is also the conclusion of 2 years and 9 months as Association President. It has been a journey of community building. During that time over 70 community members have donated their time and served on the Board of Directors, Committees, clean-up crews or individually done tasks to make our community safer or improve our roads. Many good deeds are done without the expectation of recognition and achieving the goals of our Association is a truly collaborative effort. Additionally, we must all recognize that our Association efforts have only been possible with the voluntary financial contributions of our Associates and community members. Thank you everyone.

This past year we had to confront some problems presented by our aging infrastructure. First, as you are aware, repairs are currently under way on our little bridge. This is a cooperative effort between the Association and several outstanding community-minded Associates that have volunteered additional funds and engineering expertise to make this repair a reality. Although it is my understanding that the donors of these funds wish to remain anonymous, I want to personally thank Dennis Bay and Czes Cudowski for their project leadership and engineering expertise. Bill McSpadden has led the Associations role in this endeavor with his usual efficiency and dedication. Thank you all.

Secondly, as soon as the bridge rehabilitation is completed, Bill will be leading the RWC to resolve our ongoing issue with the slide area on upper CV road. The problematic culvert drain has been sealed and will be permanently vacated with 2 additional cross-road culverts being installed. One above and one below the current location along with sufficient rock to prevent any further erosion. The road edge will be replaced again so that the safety posts may be reinstalled.

Aside from those infrastructure issues there are some other points that should be of interest to all Associates moving forward. Our problems would not all be solved but the effort would certainly be better by more people participating. Although fundraising and roadwork have continued to advance in a positive manner, the following should be considered by the Associates so that we may all cooperatively find a way to continue building our community and shared financial participation in a positive manner.

I would like to report on the following points regarding fundraising and community participation:

- I. There have been some questions regarding the motivations as to why people don't contribute. Although we have a large number of lots where we don't even know who the owner is or have any contact info, the largest group of non-contributors don't reply at all to fundraising requests. Using verified good contact info over a 9 month fundraising period we have sent informative requests and follow up messages attempting to at least begin a dialogue, but we receive no reply. It should come as no surprise that some of these individuals who never respond live here full time, are very aware of the Association and benefit from the contributions of Associates and frequently interact in our chat groups or post pictures of their lovely sunset views to their status. Over the past 2 years, we have attempted to engage but not shame these individuals with varying success. A survey has been suggested, which I think would be a useful tool for not only gathering information but to serve as an open door to begin a dialogue for discussing objections to promote participation.
- II. By far the next largest group of non-contributors which we do have responses from are community members who cite a financial hardship or income setback. Usually, these revelations come after several requests. As most people don't easily share this type of difficulty, when they do, the Board has been respectful by being discreet with this information.
- III. The next largest group of non-contributors are those who have made the decision to sell their property. Some of these we do not have contact info for but for those that we do, the response is "the next person will pay" which works out about as well as you think it will. This past year I wrote to the principles of Century21, Osa Tropical Properties, Bluezone and Remax Realty informing them that they all had numerous listings for lots and houses which had not contributed to the Association and asked for their help. Only Tim Fenton from Bluezone responded and cooperated in asking those owners to pay. At the moment we have at least one house for sale for which we have not received a contribution in the past year, and nearly every lot for sale in our community has not contributed.
- IV. Additionally, we have received the following singular reasons for non-participation.
 - a. I didn't agree to that rate, it's not fair
 - b. I don't use the road
 - c. You didn't repair in front of my house
 - d. You didn't work on my side-road
 - e. I did my own road repair
 - f. I don't need the votes
- V. This month, we once again had to give notice and remove non-paying Associates from our voting role prior to the Assembly. We lost 7 Associates who had not paid over the past year. The reasons given were similar:

- a. 3 indicated they would not be paying for financial reasons
 - b. 2 indicated financial reasons and promised to pay but didn't
 - c. 1. conducted drainage work on his own property and asked for a credit
 - d. 1 donated their money to repair the road in front of a friend's house
- VI. Although we did have an instance this past year of an Associate publicly urging community members not to contribute, sometimes we hear the reason given for not participating in a non-direct manner, and I will inform the Associates that there are other members in our community, some of whom are themselves paid Associates, who have encouraged people not to pay because they do not like someone on a committee or the board.
- VII. Regarding the Impact Development Fee: This past year once again the Board surveyed the area condominiums, phases and owners' groups to determine what was the area standard as far as fees when an owner began developing a lot. All charge a one-time non-refundable fee once development begins in addition to an annual fee. We are unique in the area in calculating our fees by distance from the costanera, which is how the 2X Impact Fee amount is derived so our fee is on a sliding scale depending on the distance. All other groups use a set rate. In all cases the additional amount we ask for is approximately the same or much less than is being requested by other road repair groups. Participation in payment of the requested Impact Fee is around 50%. Although we have had some success with new owners who have bought a property that owed Impact Fees, that is certainly the exception to the rule as most new owners believe the seller should have had the property current. We currently have several residents and Associates that have not paid their Development Impact Fee.
- VIII. Regarding the recent Community Forum: There were discussions about a lack of needed roadwork in zones 14, 15, and 19 with non-Associates. The Board position is one of fiduciary responsibility to the Associates that contribute funds first. It would be inappropriate to take funding from where people have contributed their requested amount and where they would expect their money to be spent, to use on another less traveled zones where the property owners are not contributing their fair share. There was an agreement at the Forum that if the non-payers in zones 14 and 15 at the meeting paid their fees the work would be done. In the final analysis only 1 property owner who did not attend the meeting paid their fee. In zone 19 a generous donor, in addition to fully paying for multiple properties, will be funding a road repair. It should be pointed out that prior to the Forum, if all those who attended the Forum had paid 100% of their fees, repairs would have been done.

With that point in mind, that it is not a chicken-or-the-egg riddle as to whether road repair or funding must come first, I will close my report with some final observations. There are very few

problems that will not be improved by more people sharing in the financial costs of maintaining and improving our infrastructure. How to advance on some of these issues will be discussed at today's Assembly. They say if you ask 10 people their opinion you will get 15 answers, but I am pleased that our Board will have full representation once again and I know all the candidates want the best for our community. I am really heartened by the breadth and depth of experience and backgrounds that these individuals will be bring to our Board of Directors and I applaud their volunteerism. Lastly, I will share once again my favorite quote from a long-time area resident, Marcia Oro:

"We all moved here seeking a different way of life, one that involves actively participating in the formation of a society around us and contributing to its growth in a positive light. This entails embracing the social contract of giving of ourselves first."

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Harsh

March 16, 2025