

STATE OF THE DISTRICT 2014

Presented By:

**Michael Maynard, Board President
Rossmoor Community Services District**

Calendar year 2014 proved to be another year of progress for our district. With an improved economy, Rossmoor experienced increased home renovations as well as home sales and increased property values. Overall, revenues for the district increased by 3.6% keeping pace with the CPI as our overall statewide economy has shown improved growth and a reduction in unemployment by 1.1%. Orange County has once again shown its resiliency as new construction continues to improve, retail sales are up and most public agencies are starting to incrementally restore public services.

The Rossmoor Community Services District once again received an unqualified audit for the 2013-2014 year, the highest possible rating. Our district continues to maintain excellent reserves while implementing a modest yet responsive capital facilities program.

Our board members were actively involved in opposing toll lanes on the I-405 freeway with Director Casey representing our opposition on the Corridor Cities Committee chaired by Mayor Gary Miller from Seal Beach. Rossmoor also actively pursued opposition to the Gas Company's proposed installation of smart meter data collection poles in our community. The County of Orange is in the process of seeking public input on a proposed new ordinance which would regulate wireless communications installations in Orange County. Several of the issues that were raised by our board under the leadership of former Director Coletta regarding the installation of a data collection tower in Rossmoor have been included in the proposed ordinance. We were successful in negotiating with The Gas Company to relocate one of the proposed data collection poles to Los Alamitos.

Our board was also successful in prevailing in a lawsuit against a local resident for unlawfully removing a tree from the property in direct violation of our tree ordinance. This landmark case reconfirms the district's authority over Rossmoor's parkway trees. These trees are for the benefit of the entire community. As property owners, we are caretakers of the community's trees, they are not individual property. Please call the RCSD if there are any issues with the parkway tree that resides in front of your home. Rossmoor takes great pride in its urban forest and in being chosen for the fourth consecutive year as a Tree City U.S.A. by the Arbor Day Foundation. In order for a community to receive such a designation, strict standards must be adhered to in the management and preservation of trees located in its parks and parkways. The community's Urban Forest continues to be a major priority for the Board and the residents of Rossmoor. Work continues in the planting and maintenance of over 5,000 trees.

In an effort to achieve greater enforcement capability for the use of our parks and facilities, the board of directors approved the conversion of eight policies to ordinances which became effective in December 2014. Staff also updated our fee schedule and conducted a fee study for the use of our facilities to determine where we were in our comparative market to help recover a portion of our operation costs. Both the fee schedule and the study will be reviewed as needed/ to make sure we are tracking with the cost of living increases and the market.

On the administrative side the board approved an upgrading of our IT system to replace all of our obsolete office computers and software systems and continue to look into strategic planning opportunities to meet our service needs. Staff has also upgraded our multifunction Xerox office copier/printer/scanner to a model with cloud scanning and air print capabilities, moving us closer to our goal of a paperless environment. Staff is also in the process of implementing a credit card payment plan for rental of our parks and facilities and potential class registration, making it more convenient for our residents.

Our capital improvement program has achieved excellent success with the installation of a new children's playground at Rush Park dedicated in January, this was needed to comply with both new safety and ADA (accessibility) requirements. This project brings all of the District's playgrounds into full compliance with the new regulations. The other major capital improvement was the upgrading of the kitchen at Montecito Center and the installation of new LED lighting at our Rush Park Auditorium. The district is in the final stages of procuring cost estimates and design criteria for a permanent picnic shelter at Rush Park.

A comprehensive study of the Rossmoor Signature Wall revealed that the wall was structurally sound; however, there was significant erosion to the northern most panel of the wall which should be replaced. Public bid was determined to be excessive for this project and staff is currently evaluating less expensive options.

Our Board has also revisited the district's mission statement, goals and objectives to make sure our priorities are in sync with the community's needs and interests. A preliminary draft of the plan was presented to the Board of Directors at our December 9, 2014 board meeting for discussion and the board directed staff to seek community input before finalizing our plan.

Community events and recreation activities continue to experience tremendous community participation. The Rossmoor Community Festival held in May of each year had some of the best attendance to date. For 2015, we hope to add more programming for the community, including "Rossmoor Night" at Long Beach State Men's Basketball Game this January 31st. We have discount tickets and a special section for residents.

Lastly, over the years we have displaced the the myth of Rossmoor as a financial drain on Orange County. Last year the District was set to commence its goal of obtaining additional latent powers to provide more direct services to the community, at no additional cost to our residents. This major initiative was put on hold due to the transitions and preoccupations of an election year. Now that we have newly elected Supervisor Michelle Steel representing our district, **and** there are now two new Supervisors, with a third vacancy to be filled after the January 27, 2015 Special Election, we will recommence with our Latent Power Push this coming year.

A major component of this endeavor was the hiring of a new General Manager, Mr. Jim Ruth. He possesses a broad depth and breadth of experience at all levels of local government. As the County's former CEO, Mr. Ruth has an intimate knowledge of the workings of county government which should prove to be a valuable asset toward the goal of securing latent powers for Sheriffs services, animal care services and refuse collection services.

Efficient and cost effective service delivery to Rossmoor' residents continues as the mainstay of the District and our Board. Each service component is continually examined during the development and approval of the Annual Budget. Our District has been able to maintain a balanced budget each year with a modest carryover for the following year. Moreover, with the prudent use of funds not needed for on-going services, the District has been able to create funding capacity for improving its facilities for the use of its residents.

Unlike most local agencies, our District has no unfunded liabilities or debt; we operate on a pay-as-you-go basis with a limited staff. Our service delivery system continues to meet or exceed the needs of the community for District services. We have proven that the special district model is a most efficient form of government. The provision of additional services by the District would only enhance this efficiency.

In spite of all the turmoil throughout all levels of government that has been experienced in the last six years, Rossmoor continues to be a model community—one of the most desired places to live in Orange County, California and our Country. We are truly blessed to live in such a wonderful community.