

## **CB South Metro District**

### **CB South Road Public Service Announcement #2**

#### **: Road Survey Discussion**

I want to open this narrative by giving a big thank you to all that participated in the road survey! Regardless of the stances taken, it provided insight into one of our largest challenges, offered the opportunity to have your voice heard, and pointed out several areas that needed clarification. Please continue to read through this PSA as there is valuable information that hopefully provides answers to the many questions that were brought up in the comments of the survey.

#### **Areas for Clarification:**

- 1) The Metro District and the Property Owners Association are TWO different entities. Several comments, ideas of funding, and angst was found throughout the comments submitted. This was a clear indication that there's a certain population of residents that aren't aware that the Metro District is a separate entity. The Metro District produces, treats, and distributes your drinking water to your homes along with treating the wastewater you produce while also maintaining the public roads throughout the subdivision. Your dues that went up this year were POA dues and are used as the POA sees fit to maintain parks and other amenities in CB South. The Metro District hasn't increased water and sewer rates for nearly four years and has never increased the road maintenance fee. Please take note of this and spread the word to your neighbors. It is of the utmost importance to understand this for many reasons.
- 2) Here's additional insight on the \$800 annual price tag for funding a road project. I knew at the time that this was a very vague offering as a survey question and anticipated follow-up so here it goes! \$800 annually is approximately what would be needed to fund the road improvements/construction, paving, and maintenance with an anticipated completion within 2-3 years. There are multiple ways to view a project like this such as doing it in phases, only doing the most heavily traveled roads, and so on. My approach to going big was multifaceted. To maximize support for something like this, the entire community would have to benefit from it. So, to gain support from residents who already live on paved roads, a maintenance/improvement component was added. To gain support from residents who live in our farthest reaches, timing would be important. How else would I gain support from those who already have pavement or wouldn't gain the benefit from pavement for 20 years? The most logical way to address this and try to gain support would be to fund a project that was all encompassing thus needing a large revenue stream to address the needs of everyone. I'm not saying that this is the solution but was the thought process behind the questions asked.
- 3) The overall vision of funding these road concepts is possibly the most popular topic to clear up. I want to give a brief overview of how property taxes work because it's an important concept to understand when trying to figure out a couple things. One, would you prefer a mill levy increase over a rate increase? Two, why are you paying so much in property taxes and don't have anything to show for it? Mill levies are set to generate funding for governmental entities including Special Districts. Those mill levies can be increased, only through voter approval, and is the bulk of why local property taxes increased last year with the voter approved School District bond, Fire District, and Met Rec District increases. The mill levy is nothing more than a multiplier that is used in conjunction with your assessed value to determine your property tax bill. Because it is a multiplier, it is more equitable because higher assessed properties pay a higher proportion of tax. It is a worthwhile exercise to go to the property record search on the Gunnison County website to look at your taxing district and see what mills are collected by the different tax authorities. By understanding this, it becomes clear that there's more to it than simply paying more in taxes and assuming that those funds will be put back into your community. Property tax payments go to Gunnison County suggesting that they are funding their budgets with additional revenue. Makes sense, right? Gunnison County is essentially a distribution hub of those

funds. They distribute the tax revenue to the tax authorities in the amounts appropriate to the mill levies that were certified. Gunnison County does have assessment privileges, which does impact property taxes, but it would be best to talk with them for details on those processes. Assessments are important to point out for our topic at hand because pavement likely increases your property's value and becomes very situational when supporting that concept or not. If your property is an investment, you most likely want those property values to go up for resale purposes. If you are in your forever home, you probably don't care about the value going up and are more interested in keeping property taxes lower.

Now back to funding. Through multiple conversations over a couple years' time, Gunnison County has determined that the roads in CB South are public roads and not under their umbrella of approved roads to maintain so it would be inappropriate to expect funding from the County for maintenance or future improvements to CB South roads. They are currently underfunded for the tremendous number of miles of county roads they claim under their umbrella and are responsible for. Simply put, road maintenance or improvements is no one's responsibility. This concept is what prompted the question to increase a mill levy which, again, would go to the ballot and let the voters determine the outcome or a fee increase which would be voted on by the Metro Board of Directors. It's not realistic, nor the goal of the District, to let the roads go to the wayside. We have maintained and improved the roads since the formation of the District. Unfortunately, there was no funding mechanism for roads established during the formation of the District like water and sewer. Tap fees are not legally allowed to be used on road improvements and cannot be considered to fund the roads. A mill levy ballot question would most likely include a time-out clause that would expire, or reduce to a maintenance amount, when the debt of the project was paid off. A fee would act similarly but fees can be increased or decreased at any time with board approval and appropriate notice to the public.

As a side topic, the timing was impeccable for discussion on the StarView development so I would like to discuss a couple of things. First, no, the new wastewater treatment plant expansion was not constructed to accommodate StarView. The expansion was made due to logistical needs that included constructability and financial strategy as regulations were going to make it harder to obtain financing and the costs of construction more expensive. Second, you need to know that this office and Board of Directors will ALWAYS put the needs of this community at the forefront of the decision-making process. It doesn't matter if its rate setting or considering including a subdivision into our services. If there's benefit that this community could receive, then it's an avenue that we feel responsible to go down. Individual ideas matter but decisions must be made to support the community at a broad level. Determining the pros and cons or benefits is the hard part, and you will be called upon to help understand what the benefits are. We feel it's still early but as the development continues to present to the planning commission, I ask you to get educated on the matter and not let emotion completely take over.

I know that every question wasn't answered here but hopefully there's new perspective, understanding, and motivation to educate yourselves further on the matters at hand. We have compiled the results of the survey and are pleased to share that with you! The link to the survey is: [https://005970f1-1ece-4840-bb6d-e41a39e5f9e4.filesusr.com/ugd/98b7ee\\_4072261d5ec54cc7b242dd7e48316439.pdf](https://005970f1-1ece-4840-bb6d-e41a39e5f9e4.filesusr.com/ugd/98b7ee_4072261d5ec54cc7b242dd7e48316439.pdf)

Thanks again!

Ronnie Benson  
District Manager