

Town of Discovery Bay CSD: Special district perfectly fits the needs of a unique community



county government wasn't fulfilling its needs the way the town desired and city government obviously wasn't an option. The town needed water treatment and recreation and park services and there was one particular form of government that would fit this need perfectly: a special district. A community services district to be exact.

In 1997, Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District was formed. The district is governed by a five-member elected Board of Directors and oversees water, sewer, landscaping and recreation. In addition, the CSD Board advises the county on other services and issues impacting the community. Now, Discovery Bay boasts a population of 17,000, complete with four schools,

The Town of Discovery Bay can be found between Stockton, California and San Francisco. When taking a road trip to the small community, one drives among farmlands and over bridges covering small waterways. Those who have never visited the community before most likely have no idea just how uniquely the area is laid out and how beautiful the town among the delta is.

Discovery Bay was established in the early 1970s as a weekend and summer resort community. The way the community is built into the waterways of the Delta, it allows for all kinds of water recreation and a relaxing atmosphere, away from the larger cities that surround it. Over time, the community grew and fire stations, schools and a marina were constructed. As time went on, residents decided they needed a better level of service delivery. Due to its location and size,

a business park and shopping centers. No longer limited to simply Delta waterfront homes, Discovery Bay has developed into a community that offers gated lakefront homes as well as Country Club homes located on a world-class golf course. The CSD is able to cater to the needs of the community; providing the specific services they need at the level required.

Water and Wastewater Services

The district currently owns five water production wells; two water treatment facilities with water storage capacity of two and a half million gallons of treated water; two wastewater treatment facilities that treat an average of 1.8-million gallons of wastewater per day; fifteen wastewater lift stations that transport/move the raw wastewater to the main wastewater treatment facility; sixty miles of water and wastewater mains; and one state-of-the-art Bio-Solids System, which produces compost that is used in common landscape areas.

During the summer, the district pumps out between four and five million gallons of water per day. The water is all well and groundwater – the CSD has no surface water rights, which benefits the district due to the higher cost of treating surface water. The Bio-Solids System takes the bio-solids that comes from wastewater treatment and dries them in solar dryers. These solar dryers act essentially like greenhouses, drying out the waste and turning it into a dirt-like product that can be scattered over land. It is an innovative way to use green energy and operate using resources as efficiently as possible.



Parks and Recreation

The district oversees and maintains four public parks. Not only do district residents have access to water recreation – practically in the backyard for some – but the district works hard to ensure the nearby parks are properly up-kept and is constantly working on improving them.

Features at the various parks include a splash pad, wherein children can run through fountains of water without any risk of drowning and a basketball court, which was specifically requested by the community. At the district's Cornell Park, during renovations, the CSD designed a wall on which tiles would be mounted that were designed by members of the community. For a small fee, residents could purchase a tile and they or their children could decorate it. The fee went to help fund the renovation of the park, which included new ground cover and a new playset that meets present day safety standards.

A key project the CSD has been working on is the construction of a new community center. The district is in the planning phases of this project. Presently, some organizations utilize facilities at local schools for after-school recreational programs, including sports activities and club meetings. With the addition of the community center, the district would be able to offer a multitude of activities for residents of all ages in the area.

Growth and Expansion in the Future

It is estimated that between now and the year 2020 another 2,000 homes will be built within the CSD's service area. The district has intimate knowledge of the growth estimations and is already planning ahead on how to meet the needs of the increasing population.

There is much to be said for special districts and how closely they are able to serve the public. Town of Discovery Bay CSD is an excellent example of how a community unlike any other in the state was able to ensure their residents

received the best, safest and most efficient service possible by forming a government designed to fit their unique needs. As the continuously growing community looks into the future, they have a district that is prepared to grow and manage the infrastructure well into the next decade. ■