

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Mayor's Corner



Elizabeth Robbins, MD
Mayor

Should the Town of Ross replace its existing streetlights with LED lights? PG&E has recently approached Town staff offering to upgrade our conventional streetlights to new LED (light-emitting-diode) technology under a voluntary,

CPUC approved program to save energy and reduce greenhouse gasses. PG&E has identified 206 streetlights throughout the Town, including those on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, as eligible for the LED upgrade. There is no cost to the Town for the standard upgrade. It is estimated that the upgrade would reduce the Town's lighting expenses by around \$7,000 annually and reduce maintenance and outage time with the longer life LEDs. Town staff has requested a small pilot installation to evaluate the effect of

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A Very Busy Year for Utility Work in Ross

After a long year of traffic delays and construction activity on our roads in 2017, it is looking like there will be much more still to come in the 2018 construction season. Ross Valley Sanitary District (RVSD) has another new and extensive construction and pipeline repair plan for this year and Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD), which was unable to start any of their projects forecasted for 2017, has a backlog that they will try to make up for this year and next. PG&E also plans to replace another long segment of gas main.



RVSD will rehabilitate several existing large diameter sewer pipelines using similar techniques as last year, including both open trench and trenchless techniques. Similar to last year, the improvements are needed to rehabilitate and repair the sanitary sewer collection system to reduce the potential for spills and to reduce the

amount of groundwater entering the collection system. Work is planned on the following streets: Lagunitas Road, Bolinas Avenue at Shady Lane, Shady Lane at Ross Creek Bridge, Ross Common Park, Ross Common roadway, Kent & Poplar Avenue. In addition, RVSD will be upsizing the existing sewer trunk line running within Shady Lane and Poplar.

Clearly, the Poplar and Ross Common work will have major impacts on the downtown commercial and residential district. The scope of work involves an extensive open trench project spanning 6-8 weeks of restrictive traffic control from Kent Avenue all the way to the Post Office, followed by 2-3 weeks of trenchless work. A public workshop will be scheduled in the coming weeks to address public concerns and questions for this very large RVSD project.

MMWD will be continuing their Fire Flow Improvement project that will replace existing water main pipelines. Open trench work is planned on the following streets: Southwood Avenue, Canyon Road, Monte Alegre Road, Pomeroy Road, and Newell Road.

PG&E has an open trench gas main replacement schedule this spring within Baywood Avenue. Impacts will be similar to what we are experiencing currently on Lagunitas, except traffic circulation will be far more restrictive on Baywood.

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LED lighting prior to proceeding with a town-wide upgrade. Residents in San Rafael have complained that the LED lights installed there were too bright and too white. The Town will be considering a number of options to achieve a softer, less intense light; these include filters and low voltage lights. PG&E has offered to make a detailed presentation to the Council at a public hearing.

Springtime draws residents outdoors on the weekends to enjoy the nice weather. Most residents prefer relative quiet during the weekends, and the Town has ordinances regulating the use of noisy outdoor gardening equipment to help maintain a peaceful and quiet environment. Only electric leaf blowers are allowed in Ross; a gas powered leaf blower can only be used if a special permit has been obtained from the Public Works Department. Leaf blowers can only be used during weekdays from 8-5pm. On Saturdays property owners only, and not gardeners, are allowed to use leaf blowers, and only between 9:30-4pm. Gardeners may use power mowers on Saturday between 9:30-4pm, but may not use leaf blowers of any kind on the weekend. No leaf blowers are allowed on Sundays and holidays. A copy of the town's fact sheet for leaf blower use in English and Spanish is available at <http://www.townofross.org/publicworks/page/leaf-blower-use>.

Finally, the Town Council holds a strategic workshop each winter to discuss town finances, town goals, and town policies. This year's workshop will be held next week on Thursday, February 15 from 9-4pm in the Livermore Room at the Marin Art and Garden Center. The public is welcome to attend this workshop; feel free to come for all or part of the session. The agenda will be posted on the Town's website. ■

Council Candidates Filing Period February 12 - March 9



If you are interested in running for one of the three Town Council seats to be filled in the June 5, 2018 election (two 4-year terms and one 2-year term), the candidate filing period is February 12th

through March 9, 2018. If the incumbents do not file for re-election by March 9th, the filing date is extended to Wednesday, March 14th for non-incumbents only. Anyone running for Council must designate which term (4-year or 2-year) they are filing for, and cannot file for both terms.

To qualify to run for Council, you must be a Ross resident and a registered voter. During the candidate filing period nomination forms may be obtained by appointment only with the Town Clerk at the Town Administration Office, Ross Town Hall, 31 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Contact Town Clerk Linda Lopez at llopez@townofross.org or (415) 453-1453, ext. 105, if you would like to schedule an appointment, or if you have any questions.

Marin Sanitary 2018 Rates

The Council approved the Marin Sanitary Service (MSS) rate increase of 5.57% for 2018. The Town is part of a franchisor's group comprised of San Rafael, Larkspur, portions of Marin County and the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District. This group retains an independent consulting firm to review the rate package submitted annually by MSS. This year, R3 Consulting Group, Inc., has determined a 5.57% rate increase is appropriate for all rate payers.

The cost of a 32 gallon residential landfill cart would be increased approximately \$1.91 per month, from \$34.22 to \$36.13. The average for all of Marin is \$37.83 and the Bay Area average is \$34.83.

Summary of Rate Increase Components	
Rate Adjustment Component Percentages	
Wages	0.87%
Benefits (including workers comp)	0.44%
Fuel and oil	0.98%
Disposal	0.24%
Depreciation and interest	0.93%
Maintenance	0.13%
Other operating costs ⁽¹⁾	0.74%
Subtotal Operations	4.33%
Revenue shortfall net of changes in total expenses	1.24%
Rate Adjustment Factor	5.57%

⁽¹⁾ Includes profit and general & administrative costs (e.g., public education, customer service, etc.)

PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the February Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for the meeting can be found on the Town's website [February 8th](#) meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be posted after adoption by the Council at the March 8, 2018 Council meeting.

Address: 205 Lagunitas Road
Applicant: Lagunitas Country Club
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Kuhl recused)

Address: 2 Crest Road
Applicant:
Council Action: *Continued to March Meeting*

Ross School Wine Fest

The Ross School PTO would like to extend an invitation to the entire community to their biennial Wine Fest event on Friday, March 2nd from 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm at The Branson School. This social event is one of three major fundraisers for Ross School (along with Garden Tour and the Dinner Auction) and all proceeds support the school's Fine Arts programs. More than a dozen wineries will be represented at Wine Fest, including some local favorites and some exciting new Ross winemakers. Premier wines will be poured for tasting and available to order. In addition, there will be hors d'oeuvres and a raffle for exciting prizes. Tickets are \$75/person. Please click on this link to purchase tickets to this fun community event: <http://events.readysetauction.com/rossschoolpto/winefest2018>.

Ross School Wine Fest

March 2, 2018

Design Guidelines Contract Approved



Whether you are a third generation Ross family or moved to Town recently, many of the reasons for choosing Ross, apart from its excellent and amazing school, is due to the small-town charm, historic character, tree-lined streets, wooded hillsides, meandering creeks, and its built environment. One of the tenets of the General Plan, the Town's vision of the future, is to encourage excellence in design and architectural variety of buildings. Although the Town Council has been conducting Design Review for certain projects based on its regulations established in 1993, there are always opportunities for improvement, hence the creation of the 2007 General Plan implementation program 3.D, which requires the preparation of detailed Design Guidelines.

At the February 8th Council meeting, the Town Council approved a contract with Winter & Company for the preparation of Design Guidelines in accordance with General Plan implementation program 3.D. A question you may have is



what are Design Guidelines? The Design Guidelines are intended to provide clear instructions to a wide range of users to provide design guidance towards Ross specific good design relative to street character, views, privacy, landscaping, architectural and design compatibility, mass and scale, considerations for design alternatives, materials and colors, design for resilience with respect to wildfire threats and flooding, and design for sustainability. The Design Guidelines would also help establish a common understanding of design principals and standards that would help maintain the unique character of the Town. Unlike development standards, such as setbacks, height limits, and floor area ratio maximums, the Design Guidelines would define and provide a range of appropriate responses to a variety of specific design issues.

An integral part of the Design Guideline preparation process will be a variety of public engagement opportunities, both at public workshops and via on-line surveys, to elicit input from residents and design professionals. The first public workshop will occur in April 2018.

Please contact Heidi Scoble, Planning Manager, for more information at hscoble@townofross.org.



Town Emergency Response Plans

At the February Council meeting, Town staff provided a presentation on the Town's emergency response plans, notifications and emergency information available to the public on the Town's and other websites. With the recent fire and flood disasters in northern and southern California and the potential risk of a strong earthquake, it is very important for all residents to be prepared. We live in a lovely area, but one that is subject to these natural disasters.

First and foremost, everyone should be registered on a County-wide emergency alert system such as [Alert Marin](#) and [Nixle](#), to be notified via phone, text, and email of any emergencies occurring in your area. Second, subscribe to the Town's email list at llopez@townofross.org, so you can keep informed and alerted to any emergencies in Town. We do not share your email with anyone. Third, familiarize yourself with the Town's website emergency preparedness pages, and the Ross Valley Department website. They contain helpful information and guidance on how to prepare and what to do in an emergency. Pages to view are: [Community Preparedness](#); [Flood Information](#); [Emergency Preparedness Guide](#); [Ross Valley Fire Department](#); [FireSafe Marin](#).

Draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Town's Draft 2017 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) is now available for a 30-day review and comment period. The LHMP is a "living document" that should be reviewed, monitored, and updated to reflect changing conditions and new information. Our LHMP must be updated every five (5) years to remain in compliance with regulations and Federal mitigation grant conditions. FEMA requires local jurisdictions to develop a LHMP in order to mitigate future disasters and reduce repetitive Federal and State claims for similar disasters in the same location. The document is available for review on the Town's website or by clicking [here](#), or at the public permit counter between 8:30 and 12:00 Monday-Thursday.

Questions and/or comments are due before **March 12, 2018**, to Public Works Director Richard Simonitch rsimonitch@townofross.org.

RECREATION NEWS

Hoop season is here! The Ross Recreation basketball league games began in February. Games are held on Saturdays, at Bacich and Ross School gyms. The schedule will continue through the second week of March. The league has thirty teams participating in boys and girls divisions from kindergarten through fourth grade. Staff provides instruction on fundamentals in both practices and games, with an emphasis on fun.



On Saturday, February 3rd, a contingent of Ross Recreation youth basketball players and parents traveled to Haas Pavilion on the Cal Campus in Berkeley, to participate in youth basketball night. Ross Rec players joined Cal men's basketball players in the national anthem ceremony and participated in contests during time outs.

Congratulations to Max Webster and Deven Nessel, who each won stuffed Cal Bears for their efforts in the Bear Growl contest. Way to represent Ross Recreation! As an added bonus, the Cal Bears defeated Oregon State for a rare Pac-12 league win.



Spring program registration opens on Monday, February 12th. Register for programs at rossrecreation.org.

Utility Work in Ross - *continued from Page 1*

Work at each street location will typically be two to four weeks. Construction work will be limited to between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm on weekdays and not on any holidays. Construction work in immediate school areas either will occur when school is not in session, or will be limited to working hours between 9 am and 3 pm. The Town Staff is coordinating with RVSD to keep Poplar and Ross Common open and cleaned up for 4th of July festivities and Shady Lane open and cleaned up for Halloween. ■

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2018

Feb 5	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Feb 8	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Feb 10	5:00-10	pm	Ross Auxiliary Winter Dinner, Marin Art & Garden Center
Feb 12-Mar 9	--	--	Filing Period for June 2018 Election Town Council Candidates
Feb 13	9:00	am	Ross School Kindergarten Round Up Parent Event, Ross School
Feb 15	9:00	am	Special Council Meeting Annual Workshop, Livermore Room, MAGC
Feb 19	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Presidents Day
Feb 27	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

MARCH 2018

Mar 2	6:30	pm	Ross School Wine Fest, Branson School Common <i>(see Page 3 for details)</i>
Mar 5	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Mar 8	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Mar 27	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

APRIL 2018

Apr 2	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 5*	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall <i>(*note special date)</i>
Apr 24	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 25	9:00	am	Special Council Meeting Annual Budget Workshop

CONTACT US

Administration	415.453.1453 x105	Public Works Director	415.453.1453 x115
Building & Public Works	415.453.1453 x106	Recreation	415.453.6020
Planning	415.453.1453 x121	Ross Valley Fire	415.258.4686
Police	415.453.1453, Option 2	Town Manager	415.453.1453 x107

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 320, Ross, CA 94957
 Street Address: 31 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, Ross, CA 94957

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We welcome suggestions for future issues. Email llopez@townofross.org

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