



Verdemonth Heights

COMMUNITY PATROL

Q&A'S

1. What is an improvement district?

An improvement district is a geographically defined area in which services, activities and programs are paid for through a special assessment which is charged to all members within the district in order to equitably distribute the benefits received and the costs incurred to provide the agreed-upon services, activities and programs. There are many different types of improvement districts such as PBIDs (Property and Business Improvement District), CIDs (Community Improvement District), and UCDs (University City District) to name a few, however they all serve a common purpose. Ours would be a RID (Residential Improvement District) being comprised solely of residential, no commercial. Improvement Districts are very common in the US. Los Angeles, Lancaster, Pasadena, Oceanside, and Sacramento are just a few California cities that have one.

2. Why create an improvement district?

There needs to be a sensible method for collecting the funds to pay for the private community patrol. This is also an excellent opportunity to enhance the quality of life here in Verdemont. Improvement Districts can opt to cover a variety of value added services to the community over and beyond what the city offers such as park maintenance, graffiti removal, community gardens, pest control services (rat elimination), street sweeping, sidewalk clean up, or community social affairs. These are just examples and not set services that our RID will include. A vote for what services in addition to community patrol will be voted on at the next meeting. It is possible there will be no additional services, just patrol.

3. What is the cost of the community patrol?

So far I have received a few proposals from security patrol companies ranging from \$25-\$30/hr.

4. How exactly are monies collected and where are they held?

The monies will be collected by the city tax collector and placed into a separate trust account. That trust account will be in the name of the legal entity (501c non-profit) that oversees our RID. That non-profit will be created by the residents, for the residents. These monies **WILL NOT** be commingled with the city's general funds.

5. Will the city be able to use the monies we pay for something else?

Absolutely not. They legally cannot pull funds from the trust account to pay for what they deem necessary. Only vendors of the specified services agreed upon in the RID agreement may be paid from the trust account. LEGALLY!

6. Why does the city need to be involved?

In order to implement our improvement district city ordinances will need to be re-written and our city council will need to approve that. As well, it is customary for cities to back the cost of implementing improvement districts. I would like for our city to fund ours.

7. What can a private patrol officer do?

The patrol should first act as a deterrent. That is their main function. We hope that their presence alone discourages individuals from choosing our area as their target. However, what the patrol companies advised was that if they witness a felony in progress (someone breaking into cars or homes) they will do a citizens arrest, apprehending the suspect, and contact SBPD. They will be responsible for seeing the matter through by appearing in court to prosecute the perpetrator. They will not take the place of our city police however will work very closely with them. All security patrol companies are insured and would take full liability and responsibility. There will be a representative from one of the interviewed companies at the next meeting to answer more questions.

8. Are the private patrol officers armed?

We can opt to have armed or unarmed patrol officers. Luckily our community does not have much violent crime. Whether officers are armed or not is something the community will need to decide. This vote will take place at the next meeting.

9. Do you have any examples of the effectiveness of an improvement district?

A Maryland district touts property crime went down 20% within the first year, auto theft down by 24%. Assisted in 27 arrest, 5 drug bust, and they worked with their city to improve lighting and trim trees as well sponsored town meetings on redevelopment. Implementation of a BID in Los Angeles was found to reduce per-year robberies by 12% and violence by 8%. Its important to note that these are just examples and not standards being set for actual percentages that we should expect. Researchers show improvement districts are effective, however how effective depends

on many variables and may be different from community to community. Unlike other districts, we do not have a high amount of violent crime and may have very different demographics from other communities.

10. How are we going to measure the effectiveness of the private patrol?

I suggest utilizing data provided by SBPD. That's why it's very imperative that if you see something, you say something. Its all logged and can be utilized for data. We will use comparative data from before the improvement district was implemented to bi-annual reports thereafter.

11. What if the community patrol isn't effective? I don't want to continue to pay for something that isn't working?

There will be specific language written within our improvement district to opt out of services or the RID entirely.

12. How will the private patrol be selected?

I recommend seeking a reputable company that hires staff consisting majorly of retired police officers and veterans rather than young unexperienced individuals. I contacted six companies and focused on getting info from two that fit that description. I will continue to search and get proposals. If you have law enforcement background and would like to assist with the selection process please contact me. Your input and assistance would be greatly appreciated.

13. Why pay a company, why not just have our own residents patrol?

It would be difficult to have 24/7 patrol from residents. Most of our community have full time jobs. Also, we have to keep in mind we don't want to encourage vigilante behavior. We all have an emotional connection to this community. This is where we live and raise are children. And though seemingly that's more reason to patrol ourselves, it unfortunately can lead to emotionally charged behavior. The hiring of professional and trained patrol officers is recommended.

14. Why should I pay an additional fee on top of my property tax for a service that my city should already be providing?

I get it, we deserve to have more police presence. We are all tax paying residents, and Verdemont has some of the city's most expensive residential real estate. But the reality is are city just exited BK and our police department doesn't have enough officers. It's an unfortunate fact. And though our city is continually working to improve that, we have to

compete for patrol with the other problem areas of the city such as downtown, which has a lot more crime than we do. This is a viable solution to a pressing problem in our community. We have a choice to do something about it, that does not require waiting on the city.

15. Why can't we just have SBPD patrol our area more?

As mentioned before, our police department does not have enough officers. You can definitely call as often as you can to request patrol for our area. However, it cannot be guaranteed. If they get a call for another area, then there goes our patrol.

16. I don't want an additional financial burden, how do I know that if I agree to this I will not be surprised with an astronomical bill?

I am a resident and have to pay also. And though I really wish I was a multi-millionaire, sadly I'm not. And just like many of you, I have a family to think about and a mortgage to pay. I am striving to keep the amount per resident extremely affordable. My goal is that this will cost you less monthly than what you spend eating out or on lattes. Yet, have it provide a great benefit to us all.

17. What is the cost of this?

The exact number of residential zoned parcels is 2823. With that number, here are the figures:

- Two 24/7 patrol cars at \$30/hr = \$15.47 per month, per residential dwelling. This is using the highest figure rather than the lowest or an average.
- Cost of utilizing a consulting firm to oversee and implement the entire RID process = \$80,000. This is just from one proposal and I will be getting two more. This includes legal fees and engineering reports and is the highest proposed estimate. I am trying to get the city to cover this cost. However, a plan B is to have them front the cost and we repay it over a 36 month period with no interest charges. If we have to pay the city back over 36 months the cost per month per residential dwelling would be \$0.79. As in 79 pennies!, per month, per residential dwelling.
- Most districts have administrative cost averaging \$15,000-\$30,000 annually. Those cost include the financial record keeping and accounts payable. Our district would be small compared to most. I will need to get further advisement on this. I have already reached out to Pasadena's PBID and Lancaster's PBID to get examples, but will seek consul from the

consultation firm on this. For now I will go with \$20,000. That amounts to \$0.59 per month per resident. As in 59 pennies!

The cost with other services that can be included in our RID is still being researched. Once obtained it will be listed here.

If my math is wrong please feel free to correct me :-)

18. Is this an HOA?

Absolutely not. An HOA is assessed by the developer of a housing tract and pays for services THEY choose, not the homeowner. The homeowner does not have a say or a vote on the HOA. As well, unlike an HOA an improvement district does not place any regulations on what you can do to your property, such as the landscaping you choose or the color you paint your home.

19. Is this a Mello-Roos?

Absolutely not. Though Mello-Roos similarly are a form of financing for special districts, they would go into the city's general fund and not include basic and simple clauses to have it cancelled if residents deem necessary. Another form of Mello-Roos tax is a Community Facilities District (CFD). This would also be placed into the city's general fund. The option of a RID protects our monies, eliminating the possibility of the monies going into the general fund and being used towards other parts of the city, unlike a Mello-Roos tax of CFD.