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Contact Us

Your name:	Daniel Hollingsworth
Your email:	danielholl@gmail.com
Subject:	Torero Project
Would you like to receive our agendas?:	Board of Directors
	Dear TAMC Board Members, I have sent several submissions to TAMC through its website, and have spoken to Doug Blise on several occasions regarding the "Toro Park Cut Through Traffic Pilot Project". First, I would like to note that in its news release dated July 8, 2024, TAMC stated, "Based upon travel time studies

conducted by TAMC, Toro Park residents might experience an increase for the off-peak trip to the peninsula that should take an extra 3-4 minutes, while a peak hour trip might add 7-8 minutes." This prediction was flat wrong. During non-peak hours it takes between 6-8 minutes for my family to reach the Torero Exit off of Highway 68. During peak hours it takes between 20-35 minutes. The cooperation that TAMC received from Toro Park HOAs likely would not have occurred if half of the Toro Estates residents were informed that their commute to Monterey would change to the same driving time to San Jose. The recent closure of Portola has minimally changed these times, but I am still experiencing 20-30 minute travel times during peak hours to return to the street where my home is located. Second, the reliance on Toro Park HOAs to obtain any feedback was inherently flawed. The Toro Estates HOA is funded for minimal issues such as landscape upkeep, community events, construction approval and enforcement of the CCNR's. The HOA payment itself is roughly \$75 per year, and non-payment is not enforced so many residents simply do not pay. For the most part, Toro Park residents ignore the HOA and do not participate in its management unless they need approval for construction. This has led to an HOA Board that is comprised of a select portion of Toro Park residents who wish to allocate these times to those issues, the result of which means that a lot of them are retired. I also believe that many residents who were impacted by the cut-through traffic are on the HOA Board, or are retired and do not have to face the commute to Monterey on a daily basis. This is a very important factor because it means that the HOA Board itself is biased towards whether Torero stays closed or is reopened. I was informed by Doug that TAMC relied on the Toro Park HOAs to provide information to Toro residents and act as surrogates to provide feedback to TAMC regarding the Torero closure. I can tell you personally that the Toro Estates HOA did not implement any competent mechanisms to accomplish this task. Many of my neighbors were not aware we had a "block captain" assigned. We were not given any flyers (other than the flyer for the most recent meeting) or asked to give feedback to anyone. My wife and I had to reach out to several people just to find out the structure of how communication was supposed to flow. When I posted about this issue on facebook, I had many responses which echoed my concerns that the HOA Board had not

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communicated their role and were not giving residents any method of providing their feedback. By the time we had all of this figured out, the October 7th date was fast approaching. I believe that during the initial phase of the pilot project, that TAMC did not receive competent or complete feedback of community impact. Unless TAMC is disregarding this issue in determining whether to label the project a success or failure, it has to be labeled as a failure because TAMC is not fully informed on the community impact issue. This brings us to the most recent meeting. I was disappointed that TAMC did not want to hear from residents, but rather group them into sections to answer the questions they wanted to ask. As a lawyer, I know how to write questions in a way that I get the answer I want, and I can tell you that the questions from last night were in no way neutral. Of course the by-pass traffic has stopped. Of course residents in "East Toro" are happy about that. Of course people who walk on a daily basis are happier to some degree for not having to deal with that traffic. You did not need to run a poll to make those conclusions. The whole process was a farce. It reduced the opinions and feelings of residents of "West Toro" to two stickers that could have been predicted. People were mad, and they remain mad because they were not heard, and there still is not an easily accessible way for people to provide comprehensive feedback. Every step in this process leads me and my neighbors to believe that TAMC is doing everything they can to label the process a success and keep Torero closed. Doug also referenced a possible moving of the merging lane towards Salinas. He mentioned this same proposal to me on the phone months ago. However, this also requires CalTrans' approval and implementation, and there is no telling if or when this would happen. While the Board might compare our complaints of travel time to those who reside in Salinas or those Toro Park residents who had to deal with the cut-through traffic. I get that logic, but I can also tell you that my family paid a premium to move where we moved. We specifically decided on our home's location due to the easy access to Highway 68. We could have purchased a larger brand-new home in Sea Haven, East Garrison or the Dunes for the same price. Our neighbors recently listed their home off of Torero in an attempt to move to Carmel Valley. While the home was listed for two weeks, they received no offers and decided to take the home off the market. Doug joked yesterday that we shouldn't worry about

home values falling due to this project, inferring that home prices here were very high. Yes, we are very concerned about our home's values dropping. No one who works in Monterey is going to pay 1.4 million for a home that requires a 45 minute plus commute to work every day. Demand will drop and value will drop. As a lawyer, I will be watching this issue very closely and will look at possible remedies if necessary. I am asking the Board to consider these issues and give them serious thought. In implementing projects of this nature, it is important to acknowledge that unforeseen impacts are important enough to look at other potential remedies. It is also important to acknowledge certain failures, whether those are in the implementation process or data gathering process. I hope that TAMC does not give short shrift to these issues and concerns.

Attachment:

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