

Recognize Harbor Problems and Fix Them If We Can

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With the upcoming elections and the existing total fiscal failure, the harbor 's future is an active topic. Some of the solutions require major improvements in the city, and ongoing success of the Native American business. However, the Harbor individually faces major problems.

Every fishery is either depleted or failing. Catch improvements must involve the entire West Coast. Isolated local catch restitution will not be enough. Even income from sport fishing is at risk because of increasing species closures and reduced bag limits.

Then, there is the matter that the harbor is NOT a natural flushing bay. Dredging is required inside this man-made breakwater. A massive amount of sand is now inside the harbor. Usable harbor areas are decreasing and becoming tide dependent. Dredging has been delayed so long the problem is now an insurmountable fiscal hurdle for an organization with empty bank accounts.

Obviously, failed sources of income need to be replaced with new entities. Increased income cannot come only from local consumers. We are past car washes and pasta dinners. These monies cannot be one-time grants. Ongoing profitable new ventures are essential. Let me rule out a current suggestion. Yacht clubs are more than expensive visiting boats. They are local social entertainment venues for a local elite. They are (and should be) self-financed and organized.

Unfortunately, there are few residents that would meet the criteria or interest. Additionally, successful yacht clubs involve multiple types of boats beyond small, trailered motorboats and large docked vessels. Currently no fixed keel sailboat can be launched locally. I defy any but the best sailor to sail a trailered sailboat (larger

than a pram) out of the current launching area. Rebuilding the current trailered launch area would be a budget buster. This harbor was built only for only two types of boats: not the diverse boating of a yacht club.

The simple truth is we have great competition and high-performance sailing water. My suggestion is the creation of a profitable sailing center for events and individual use. We could create a new income-generating activity. For budget reasons, existing resources need to be re-allocated. Portions of Citizens' Dock and/or the processing plant docks need to become boat hoisting stations with nearby rigging areas. A heavy lift hoist would need to be on a pier in water deep enough for a keel boat, trailer access and no overhanging wires. Floating docks attached to the hoist pier would suffice for the other criteria. The current empty RV parking could become event camping, and food truck parking for visiting boaters.

Then, with these changes in place, the harbor could reach out to sailing clubs, one-design boat organizations, publications, and racing organizations. With low cost directed contact, we could become the site for multiple events per year. We could become a hot spot for regional regattas and sailing vacations.

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