

Mark Bramfitt

As an engineer, I am keenly aware of the need to properly maintain and invest in the infrastructure that is critical to our health and prosperity. It pains me when we neglect infrastructure, knowing that the eventual replacement cost of public works will far outweigh investments in maintenance.

At the Valley of the Moon Water District, our board inherited a system that had suffered neglect for fifteen years. We have successfully completed a ten-year effort to fund capital improvements and maintenance, restoring the integrity of our system, and ensuring that we can provide safe and reliable service for years to come.

As your Supervisor, I will be an advocate for increasing the statewide gasoline tax to properly fund roadway system maintenance, and indexing it to reflect future increases in costs. I will also advocate changing the formula for allocating those funds to better reflect the needs of Sonoma County. We must begin taking on this challenge now.

In the interim, I will seek opportunities to address the financial condition of the County, primarily through reforming the county employee pension system, just as I did at the Valley of the Moon Water District, that may allow us to at least modestly increase funding for needs such as maintaining our roads and parks.

Lastly, Sonoma County residents should have the opportunity to decide whether additional local funding should be sought for roadway maintenance. Options on the table should include property or parcel tax assessments, and local roadway improvement districts. It will be up to the voters to decide if road maintenance is something they want to support with additional taxes.

It will take the problem-solving skills of an engineer to chart a balanced, sustainable solution to our infrastructure needs. There are no engineers on the Board of Supervisors now – and I feel my skills are desperately needed.