



The VOICE

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Greater Shasta County, CA

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Did you know...

- The Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency has changed its name to: Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) and moved to new offices located at 1255 East Street, Suite 202, Redding, CA, 96001. The office phone number is (530) 262-6190. A new website at www.srta.ca.gov is under construction. The existing website is www.scrtpa.org for information in the interim.
- There were 96,264 registered voters in Shasta County for the June 5th primary election. Only 30,931, or 32.12% voted.
- The May 2012 unemployment rate for Shasta County dropped to 12.7%. The jobless rate in April was 13.5%, and 14.6% in May of 2011. It was the first year since 2006 that saw an increase in year-over-year jobs.

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Voters Send Interesting Message

The Churn Creek Bottom Measures deciding the future of all development in the area were both soundly defeated in the June 5th Primary election.

Measure A would have upheld the County Supervisors' approval of the Knighton and Churn Creek Commons Retail Center. With 46 percent of registered voters participating in this year's election, 66% said no to the Center. Most of those voters reasoned that there is already vacant retail space in both Redding and Anderson, and many argued that they retired here to get away from the traffic and "sprawl" in the Bay area and Southern California, openly suggesting that if people want jobs they should move. Really?

This attitude explains why the Redding and Shasta County area has had such trouble attracting employers and jobs over the years. Census statistics show that 39.1% of Shasta County residents are over 50 years old (with the majority of these over 60 years old), and another 25% of residents are not old enough to vote. Therefore, the voting public is largely in some phase of retirement or does not need to work to earn a living for some other reason. They cannot relate to those who live here, work here, and have families to support. They also seem to have a problem relating to the business community, regardless of the fact that in order to live here as retirees, they need and expect a certain level of services to be available to them. Without these services and the jobs that accompany them, the taxes supporting their retirement needs go away, and the level of service they have come to expect is greatly reduced. We have an unhealthy economy which will not improve any time soon, and certainly not with such a negative attitude.

Measure B, on the other hand, failed with 71% of voters saying landowners in the Churn Creek Bottom **should** be able to develop their property. The majority of voters believe that private property rights ought **not** be taken away from landowners. They further believe that there is an approval process in place that works, as well as a County general plan, to address concerns about how the properties are developed in the future.

But even though voters overwhelmingly thought the existing approval process is working well and private property rights should be upheld, they still voted to overturn the decisions made by both the Planning Commission and County Supervisors to approve the retail center. So, voters seem to think that only **certain** property rights should be upheld—and the owners of the 92 acre retail center site should be excluded?

There is now concern among potential business owners and developers that their Shasta County area projects could suffer the same fate. Regardless of how much time, money and effort they may put into the process of meeting all the guidelines and specifications required for potential projects, and regardless of whether or not they obtain the proper approvals for proceeding with their projects, it's possible that somebody could reverse it all anyway. So why would they even try? It could be an unwise investment in our community, at best. The job creation that could come with it doesn't seem to matter.

The defeat of Measure A ensures that the economic downturn in Shasta County will continue for a very long time. Unfortunately, the majority of voters don't seem to care. Jobs clearly aren't important to them, unless of course, the jobs are considered elite. Only then would jobs be welcomed here. Ironically, those areas of California that have such jobs are the very communities Shasta County voters say the **don't** want to emulate...

Impact Fee Waiver Program Continued and Expanded

A majority of the Redding City Council voted on June 19th to continue the existing Impact Fee Waiver Program by eliminating the original deadline for permits to be drawn. That deadline would have been June 30, 2012. As of June 19th, **95 of the original 100** available permits have been issued. Only 5 are left to be drawn, and it is likely that they will beat the June 30th deadline anyway....but if they don't, they can be drawn after that date. The fee credit per building under this program is \$12,518, and includes only single-family dwellings and duplexes.

The program proved to be highly successful. According to City staff analysis, over 750 persons have already been put to work with increased construction activity, generating an additional 400,000 hours of labor, translating into \$8 million of salary paid. Estimated increase in expenditures of labor, materials, commissions, overhead and profit will be \$16 million. These numbers will only go up if the program continues.

Because this program proved to be so effective, the City was asked to extend it through the end of 2012. In May, Council members expressed concern about the loss of funds to the traffic and wastewater impact fee accounts and the City's ability to construct infrastructure necessary to support future development. They asked City staff to bring back a partial fee reduction program with revenue impacts, both negative and positive, for consideration.

On June 19th, City staff brought back a creative recommendation to amend and adopt a resolution adding 50 additional impact fee waivers for single-family dwellings and duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes, granting a **50 percent reduction** to the traffic and wastewater impact fees. This means that one credit per building in the amount of **\$6,259** is available for the first 50 permits to be drawn between July 1, 2012 and December 31, 2012.

Additionally, another 50 impact fee waivers for single-family dwellings and duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes granting a **25 percent reduction** to the traffic and wastewater impact fees would be available. This means that one credit per building in the amount of **\$3,130** would be available for permits drawn between January 1, 2013 and June 30, 2013.

The expanded fee waiver program totals an additional 100 waivers, and adds triplexes and fourplexes to the mix of eligibility. If all waivers for all of the programs are used, the total of granted waivers from November 11, 2012 through June 30, 2013 will be 200.

The extension and expansion of this highly successful program will maximize the economic incentive available to boost construction activity and create jobs in the Redding area. Many *infill* development areas are now able to continue building, which lessens the need for major new infrastructure to be constructed. That at least softens the blow to the impact fee fund accounts for both traffic and wastewater fees for the future.

And, with the long-awaited update of the existing impact fee program now in progress, the proper amount of impact fees to be charged in the future will be calculated based on more accurate growth projections. The existing fees are based on grossly over-estimated growth assumptions, and the infrastructure needed for such over-projections, none of which occurred. In the end, the City may find that they really didn't "lose" needed impact funds at all with this program.

Builders are selling these homes, with one builder saying he has drawn 17 permits and sold all 17 homes through this program. Most permits being drawn are for pre-sold homes. New construction can now better compete with the existing home market and put people back to work!

Redding Chamber Launches "ChmbrApp"

Over the last 9 months, the Greater Redding Chamber of Commerce has been developing a new Redding Chamber App for smart phones. Ebbex, a local company, has devised the state of the art app, which is free to Chamber members.

The custom Chamber App, or ChmbrApp, will be an exclusive app for all Greater Redding Chamber of Commerce members and their employees. The app will display valuable member to member deals.

ChmbrApp will allow each member of the Chamber to create and offer custom-made deals to all fellow members and their employees. Members will also be able to purchase

preferred placement for their deals in the "Daily Deals" section.

Because of its innovative design, ChmbrApp will be fun and extremely easy to use.

Users can search for deals on specific items, "Favorite" noteworthy deals or sort by "Nearest" or "Newest" deals. ChmbrApp is coming in July and will be available for both iPhone and Android.

You can contact valerie@reddingchamber.com for questions or more information on how to participate.

Water Utility Master Plan 2012 Adopted

Redding City Council accepted the Water Utility Master Plan 2012 on June 19th, which provides a planning-level overview and recommendation for the preservation and expansion of the City's Water Utility treatment and distribution system. This included a financial analysis of the projected infrastructure needs and their potential impacts on future rates.

The City is suffering from aging pipes, and other aging infrastructure. Regardless of future growth (or lack of it), improvements and replacements need to be made. Pipe replacement schedules will not keep up with expiring pipe, resulting in water main failure. Treatment plant improvements may not keep up with the regulatory requirements resulting in loss of service to customers. Storage for emergencies may become deficient as existing reservoirs expire.

The financial analysis revealed that if ***rates alone*** are used to keep the water utility balance from dropping below zero, annual increases will need to be implemented between 3% and 7% starting in 2012-2013.

Under the current fee schedule, the water utility will run out of funding to support ***impact fee projects*** supporting projected growth at annual rates ranging from .072 to 1.32% per year in fiscal year 2012-2013. It was noted that there is a lack of current impact fee related projects forecasted, but that does not necessarily indicate that none will be necessary.

The analysis also noted that the City has hired a consulting firm, NBS of Temecula, to examine the rate and impact fee structure for the water, wastewater, and solid waste utilities in addition to other impact fees. This much more detailed analysis will include a cost-of-service study and will better identify and account for operational and capital costs associated with meeting the utility needs in Redding. This effort will include substantial public involvement and enable the Council and the public to have a complete picture of the implications that changes to impact fees and utility rates may have on the community. The study will not be completed until April 2013.

5% Local Business Preference Program Report

On June 19th, Redding City Council accepted a staff report regarding local business contracting preference and directed staff to return to Council with the following: (1) an ordinance to re-establish a local purchasing preference program to allow the lowest local bidder submitting a bid within 5% the ability to match the lowest bid; (2) a revision to Council Policy 1501, providing consideration of consultant familiarity/experience working in the local environment; (3) an ordinance defining "best value" to include the value of local vendors; and (4) an ordinance to provide that maintenance construction follow Redding Municipal Code requirements for award of public projects. This should come back to Council on July 17, 2012.

Sales Tax Sharing Agreement for Oasis Road?

General tax sharing discussions between Shasta County and the cities of Redding, Anderson and Shasta Lake began earlier this year. Representatives from each of the agencies have met only once so far, but plan to continue meeting during the remainder of 2012.

Research indicates that there are literally no *citywide* tax sharing agreements in existence. But, there are some successful arrangements out there for specific projects, specific areas, and even specific structures.

So, Redding City Councilman Patrick Jones has suggested that the City Council discuss at a future meeting the possibility of proposing some sort of ***sales tax*** sharing agreement with Shasta County and the City of Shasta Lake that would be limited to the Oasis Road Specific Plan area.

The Oasis Road Specific Plan provides a framework for development of approximately 762 gross acres (655 developable) surrounding the Oasis Road and I-5 interchange. Improvements will ultimately be needed to serve 3.1 million square feet of potential commercial development, as well as 2,183 potential housing units within the Plan area boundary. The Plan area is comprised of 159 parcels; 84 parcels are located within the City and cover approximately 593 acres, while 75 parcels are located outside the city limits within the

jurisdiction of Shasta County and cover approximately 79 acres.

Some of the major improvements that will be needed include the construction of major water supply/storage improvements, sewer infrastructure, and circulation improvements.

The implementation of the Specific Plan will provide additional roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian linkages between the project area and the surrounding community, including the City of Shasta Lake.

For the past decade, and perhaps much longer, a financing plan for such improvements has proved elusive. But, with the power of three government agencies working together, maybe an agreement can finally be reached that will enable the construction of necessary infrastructure. And, all three agencies would benefit not only from the construction of improvements, but from the eventual sales tax created from the commercial development that would be enabled.

With the North Redding Traffic Benefit District already in place to provide some financial assistance, an agreement between these agencies could provide the rest of the pieces to the puzzle, creating the economic stimulus so badly needed in Shasta County. Stay tuned!

Updated News and Notes

Shasta VOICES is continuing to monitor and follow many issues of interest to our supporters and the community. As part of our efforts to keep you updated and informed, here is a brief update of some of these issues.

- ***City of Redding Development Impact Fee Study***— At the June 5, 2012 City Council meeting, a contract award for the Development Impact Fees and Utility Rate Program Update Project was made to a firm by the name of NBS of Temecula. They will be simultaneously examining both development impact fees and the rate structures of the water, wastewater, and solid waste utilities. The firm will be paid \$136,620 over the next twelve months to complete the project.
- ***I-5 South Redding Six Lane Project***—It will be the end of August, 2012 before the completion of the third lane additions on Northbound and Southbound I-5, which covers about 6 miles of freeway from Smith Road (just South of the Bonnyview interchange) to just North of the Hwy. 44 interchange, including widening the Cypress Bridge. Paving should begin by the end of June. This project is being paid for with State and Federal funds.
- ***I-5/Deschutes Road Roundabout Project***—The City of Anderson's I-5/Deschutes Road roundabout project, which is funded by State and Federal funds, is currently out to bid. The construction bid will be awarded in July, and the anticipated start date is September 1, 2012.
- ***Hacienda Heights Unit 2 Park Site***—After months of appealing to the City Council to defer the decision to sell the Hacienda Heights unit 2 park site (2139 Hemingway Street) as surplus without making it into a neighborhood park, the homeowners in that subdivision were successful. At the June 19th Council meeting, they received a ***one year deferral*** to allow for a community-led park building effort, along with a plan to secure a method to fund future maintenance expenses of the park. The homeowners presented a concept drawing of their vision for the completed park during the meeting, which was designed locally. They are working with City staff to make sure they “get it right” moving forward.
- ***Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)***- The Shasta Regional Transportation Agency has received yet another grant in the amount of \$528,570. This grant is from the Strategic Growth Council's Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program (part of the California Health & Human Services Agency). This organization received 137 eligible applications requesting over \$73 million. This was the second cycle of the Proposition 84 grants. The money is to be used for the purpose of implementing the SCS work plan. The California law referred to as SB 375 requires the Shasta County region to prepare a coordinated transportation and land use plan, known as the SCS aimed at reducing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions. Our regional approach is aimed at finding opportunities to leverage state funding and coordinate with the cities of Redding, Anderson, and Shasta Lake and Shasta County on land uses found in existing general plans. The SCS cannot regulate land use, nor is there any authority outside of the local jurisdictions to do so. GIS tools are now being created and used to evaluate existing urban patterns, and a non-binding trial version of the SCS is being prepared. If uniformly accepted, local agencies may use it during the development review process and when considering investments in transportation, infrastructure and public services. By fall 2014, and applying lessons learned up to this point, a formal SCS will be prepared for regional consideration.

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