



The VOICE

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Greater Shasta County, CA

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Did you know...

- Home sales in Shasta County last month dropped to a 13 year low. The median price was \$253,000.
- November 6, 2007 is election day in Shasta County to decide the makeup of school boards, special districts, three Shasta Lake City Council seats, and Anderson Fire Protection District's Measure A, which will determine whether the fire board should be elected or appointed.
- Shasta County Supervisors are talking to the State of California about building a new "Rehabilitation Facility", aka a State Prison, in Redding. In exchange for the promise of funds from the State to build a new Shasta County jail, the County is considering Redding as a site for a new medium security State "Rehabilitation Facility" on Radio Lane. It would house a minimum of 500 prisoners, and up to as many as 1500.
- The many existing parks in Shasta County include Castle Crags, Lassen National Park, McArthur-Burney Falls, Sacramento River Trails, Shasta Lake, Shasta-Trinity National Forest, Whiskeytown.

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"FIX FIVE" PROPOSED FEES BARELY SQUEAK BY SRTPA BOARD Tentative Schedule of Public Hearings is Set

On Tuesday, October 23, the Shasta Regional Transportation Planning Agency Board voted 4-3 to recommend sending the proposed "Fix Five Impact Fee Program" to the elected officials in the Cities of Shasta Lake, Anderson, Redding, and Shasta County for official public hearings, and for their consideration and vote.

This meeting, also a public hearing, lasted 3 hours. Executive Director Mary Machado spoke on behalf of Shasta VOICES, who prepared a resolution requesting an alternate plan for adding an additional lane on each side of Interstate Highway 5 in future years. The Resolution will also be presented at the official Public Hearings. Mary was followed by several other speakers, both for and against these fees. In the end, this is how the SRTPA voted:

Linda Hartman (County Supervisor)	Against
Dick Dickerson (Redding City Council)	For
Patrick Jones (Redding City Council)	Against
Glen Hawes (County Supervisor)	For
Norma Comnick (Anderson City Council)	Against
Les Baugh (County Supervisor)	For
Dean Goeckler (Shasta Lake Council)	For

Linda Hartman, Patrick Jones, and Norma Comnick did a superb job of sorting through the politics and understanding both sides of the issues raised. Les Baugh asked the RTPA staff pointed questions and repeatedly followed up, even though staff was doing their best to avoid answering them. He expressed concerns about **how much was too much**.

The Shasta VOICES Resolution raises issues of concern that are shared by the SRTPA Board. These concerns include:

- Substantial mainline I-5 traffic impact fees on new development will be added to already existing traffic impact fees required by the Mitigation Fee Act.
- **Interstate** highway improvements are the responsibility of **federal** government, who are collecting tax dollars to fund such improvements.
- There currently exists a mechanism for collection of those tax dollars in the form of Federal Excise Tax and California use taxes.
- Adjustments to Federal Excise and California use taxes to properly fund necessary improvements to **interstate** highways is the responsibility of the Federal and State governments.
- **No other** City or County in the State of California has passed such fees specifically for the purpose of improving mainline I-5.
- Our cities already struggle to fund their own responsibilities for local traffic improvements and maintenance, with current proposed additional traffic impact fees also being considered for immediate implementation.

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“Fix Five Proposed Fees” Squeak By SRTPA Board

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- New development is already charged with the fair share costs of traffic impact fees through the Mitigation Fee Act including highway overpasses, intersections, additional lanes for on/off ramps etc.
- The *cumulative effect* of continually adding fees to new development in our community will further erode the availability of affordable housing, affordable rent, business growth, and job creation.
- All development impact fees are eventually passed along to consumers of needed goods and services.
- The proposed fees, when collected, will go into a trust fund with *no guarantee* the money will be spent to add lanes on mainline I-5, and with the certainty that *Cal-Trans will not obligate funds* to add lanes on mainline I-5, nor protect the funds from being borrowed for another purpose.
- The local citizens and taxpayers of this community do not have a vote on this issue.

Please make note of this tentative schedule of public hearings, and plan to attend and speak up:

December 4, 2007	City of Shasta Lake, 7:00 p.m.	and	City of Anderson, 7:00 pm
December 11, 2007	Redding Rancheria, 12:00 noon		
December 18, 2007	City of Redding, 7:00 p.m.		
January 8, 2008	Shasta County, 1:00 p.m.		

There is strength in numbers, and we are so very close to defeating the implementation of these fees. Your voice matters! Please do not hesitate to contact Mary Machado (222-5251) if you have questions, or would like further information.

D. E. A. D.

“Shasta Forward” Proponents Forgot to Ask First

The traditional community growth planning process is for government staff to **Decide, Educate, Announce, and Defend**. “DEAD” describes it perfectly. So says Robert Grow, Founding Chair Emeritus of Envision Utah. He was one of the guest speakers at the “inaugural meeting” of Shasta Forward’s Regional Blueprint project held on October 22nd.

He suggested a new strategy—**Ask First**. That is what he did with the Envision Utah project, which led the way toward development of a regional Quality Growth Strategy for the Greater Salt Lake area. It has been recognized nationwide as a model for regional growth visioning and successful public involvement. Mr. Grow, a highly successful entrepreneur, used his diverse and distinguished career experience and long history of leadership to bring this idea into reality.

“Asking first” is the way to find out what the people who live and work in the community value. Their *values* are at the center of the process, rather than the needs and wants of government staff and officials. Trying to “just get people to agree with you” will not work. And, nobody should be left out of the process. These are the pitfalls that Mr. Grow suggested need to be avoided.

The problem as we see it now is that the Shasta Forward organizers have already set themselves up for failure. Not only didn’t they ask first, their “invitation” list consists of government staff and officials, and people who contract with them. There might be a couple of people who we would be considered “the public” on the list. And they already have their plan in mind, and are trying to get people to agree with them! Their printed and website materials give the appearance that they intended to leave most of the public out of the process from the get go.

Mr. Grow and the two other speakers, who were all excellent, agreed that in order for Shasta Forward to succeed, they must include a greater number of people and expand the group to include the business community, builders and developers, working parents and their children, and area youth. Let them decide how they would like the community to grow. “More inclusive is better”. The business community will give a better sense of how to define a region. Builders and developers want to build what people want to buy. Our children will define the fu-

ture residential neighborhoods. In order to have a successful collaborative effort, there needs to be a consistent, fair process that offers easy opportunities to help developers build, beginning with the design stage of any project.

Once the public values have been established, the vision of how the Region will provide these values can be established, and a strategy put in place defining how to implement it. Then you plan, fund and build.

Perhaps the most important statement made at this meeting was by Philip Laurien, the Executive Director of the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council. He said, “If you’re unwilling to accept the outcome, since it cannot be predicted, this project will fail.”

We do hope the organizers of Shasta Forward were listening to their own speakers. They have already been granted \$756,000 of taxpayer dollars for this undertaking. If they truly want this program to become successful, they will switch gears in a hurry, and stop trying to “just get people to agree” with them.

“Trying to just get people to agree with you will not work.”

SHOP REDDING—EXPLORE THE CHOICES

Redding Chamber of Commerce Expands “Shop Redding” Campaign

The Greater Redding Chamber of Commerce has expanded efforts to raise awareness of the many benefits of shopping locally in Redding. Among the many positive effects of “Shopping Redding” are:

- An increase in local merchant sales could create future job opportunities.
- Additional sales tax revenues are raised to positively impact police, fire, road improvements, and other necessary city services.
- Local consumers will save money on gas and other travel expenses if they can find it locally and buy it locally.
- The convenience of buying locally saves time and effort that can be spent on other activities.

A committee consisting of local business leaders and city personnel has been formed to develop and expand this campaign. Wally St. Clair, Marketing Representative and Special Projects Coordinator for the Greater Redding Chamber of Commerce, is spearheading this effort. As a member of the Board of Directors of the Chamber, Wally headed the

committee that launched the original Shop Redding campaign in 1995. He left Redding for a while, but returned in 2001n after 38 years with JC Penney Company. He can be contacted at the Redding Chamber, 225-4433 ext. 106.

The committee has developed the new logo that you see here. Stickers of this logo (about 1 1/2 inches in diameter) have been produced to appear on Chamber and City correspondence. These are available at the Chamber office in rolls of 500, for \$80.50, to local businesses to affix to their correspondence. An advertising campaign is also under way, which will include a new jingle.



“Explore the Choices.” If you can find it in Redding, buy it in Redding. It’s good for business, and it’s good for local consumers.

Oasis Road Area Public Hearing Overshadowed

by Last Minute “Agenda Adjustment” for New County Courthouse Discussion

On October 16th, the scheduled “continuance” of the public hearing regarding the adoption of Development Impact Fees for the North Redding Traffic Benefit District (NRTBD) finally occurred, but not until 10:10 p.m. Why so late, you may ask?

Mayor Dickerson determined that an item scheduled to be heard under “Reports and Communications of Departments, Boards, Commissions & Committees” (not a public hearing) should come first, even though it was scheduled behind the public hearings. He expressed concern that the room full of judges, attorneys, sheriffs, district attorneys, and other County staff members be inconvenienced by having to wait until a later hour in the evening to be heard on the subject.

So, everyone heard what they had to say about that “item”, the possible donation of City-owned property on Parkview Avenue to the Shasta County Superior Court for construction of a new Courthouse. And the City Council voted 3-2 to adopt a resolution supporting this, in concept, even though nobody agreed that this was

the best location for it. If the goal was to get the Shasta County Supervisors talking about a better site than Parkview, it seems to be working. They have since identified three other more preferable sites around the existing courthouse for consideration.

But, back to the Oasis Road Area public hearing. Some think this was a much more important decision that should have come in the order it was scheduled. After all, it will affect the future affordability of those who live and work here forever. And, it has been over 8 years in the making.

By the time the hearing began, it was already 10:10 p.m. The City Council had expended so much energy on the Courthouse discussion that they clearly were more interested in going home. But, they were polite through their yawns. There were very few people left in the audience, but three speakers did stay, including Mary Machado, Execu-

tive Director of Shasta VOICES. She was the last speaker, and presented a “*Matrix*” showing the cumulative effect of the continual addition of not only traffic impact fees, but all other impact fees. The bottom line shows that these impact fees will increase the monthly cost of a single family home by **\$237** per month, the rent of a 1000 square foot 4-plex unit by **\$160** per month, the cost of a 100,000 square foot “big box” retail store by over **\$20.00** per square foot, and the cost of a 28,000 square foot office building by **\$5.18** per square foot.

What was the reaction to these numbers by our City Council? Nothing. Not one question, comment, or statement. They voted 4-1 to adopt the “light alternative” or reduced improvement fee program. The new fees will take effect in January, 2008.

If we had been able to pack the room, the result may have been different.

The City Council had expended so much energy on the Courthouse discussion that they clearly were more interested in going home.

Licensed to Steal

A study group consisting of representatives from Shasta VOICES, the Shasta Builders Exchange, the Shasta Association of Realtors, Shastax, Greater Redding Chamber of Commerce, local developers, local engineers, and local consulting firms was formed in early October to study the proposed Shasta County and City of Redding Public Facilities Impact Fees.

In the course of these study group meetings, we learned from an attorney specializing in government fees that neither the “Fix Five” proposed fees, nor the Shasta County/City of Redding Public Facilities Impact Fees are legally supportable. There is a legitimate reason why no other City or County in the State of California is proposing to impose such fees, and that is because it is potentially **against the law**.

At a recent study group meeting, invited officials from Shasta County and their fee consultant began their presentation to us by stating that **our group can provide feedback** about the proposed Shasta County/City of Redding fees, **but they have no intention of making any changes**.

City and County government staff and officials apparently **have nothing to lose** by trying to impose fees on anything and everything when they want more money. The worst thing that can happen to them is that the courts will tell them to stop doing it. But, if nobody complains, they will go ahead and impose the fees. They effectively have a **license to steal**. They can get away with this behavior because they believe that most people will not want to fight with them, and do not have the financial resources to do so.

Well, it's time to fight back, and we need help. Our group is in the process of hiring one of the most knowledgeable and experienced attorneys with regard to government fees who is located right here in Redding. Walt McNeill has agreed to represent us. He has done work all over California, and even won a case against a City at the California Supreme Court level. He believes this is a precedent-setting case. And, because it is a potentially precedent-setting case, we are also talking with the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Foundation and the Pacific Legal Foundation

Shasta VOICES has agreed to act as the named “Plaintiff”, along with Shastax, and possibly the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Foundation and the Pacific Legal Foundation. **Somebody has to try** to stop potentially illegal fees from being imposed in this community.

Please contribute to this effort. Without a unified effort to stop them, these fees will be implemented and continue to be implemented in the future. Your contribution to this cause can positively affect not only the future of this community economically, but your own personal future. It can be the difference between surviving this downturn in the economy or not. Get involved! Without this challenge, local government agencies have nothing to lose, and much to gain, by going forward. They are betting that this community will not fight back. **Let's prove them wrong.**

To help us in our effort, please contact:

Mary Machado, Executive Director of Shasta VOICES
(530) 222-5251 or mary@shastavoices.com

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