



# The VOICE

Your independent news source

Greater Shasta County, CA

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**Did you know...**

- The number of homes sold in California rose 83 percent in February compared with last year, as the median existing home price dropped 41 percent. The statewide median existing home price was \$247,590, compared with \$418,260 in February 2008.
- Shasta County has been selected by the State as one of the areas qualifying for \$211 million to build a new Courthouse. They have asked the County to submit potential sites for the new structure. They submitted two sites downtown, where the existing Courthouse now sits, and across the street from it. The City of Redding sent a joint letter of support for these sites. The City of Anderson chose to submit a site of their own, a vacant parcel located east of I-5 and just north of Riverside Avenue.
- There were a total of 6 single family dwelling permits issued in the City of Redding for the month of March, 2009.

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## Adoption Hearings Scheduled for "Fix 5," Now Called "SCRIP"

Lobbying efforts are continuing locally to try to convince elected officials that the revised version of the now defunct "Fix 5" impact fee program, now called "SCRIP," is a good idea. There is a **Transportation Forum on April 9, 2009 at the Redding City Council Chambers beginning at 3:30 p.m.** Speakers from Cal Trans (and other agencies) will again try to convince all three Councils and Shasta County Supervisors that they need to pay more locally for interstate improvements. This is *not* a "SCRIP" workshop.

And now, notices have been given that the **public hearings** to consider **Adoption** of the "SCRIP" program in Anderson and Shasta Lake are as follows:

- City of Anderson: **Tuesday, April 21, 2009, 6:00 p.m. (Council Meeting), 1887 Howard Street, Anderson.**
- City of Shasta Lake: **Tuesday, April 21, 2009, 7:00 p.m. (Council Meeting), John Beudet Community Center, 1525 Median Avenue, Shasta Lake.**

During workshops held in March, County Supervisors felt that although the need for I-5 improvements in 20 years will be evident, the suggestion that impact fees to help pay for it be disproportionately applied to a select group of people is simply **not a fair and equitable solution**. Redding Council members were skeptical as well, and their many questions went unanswered due to time constraints. Their "adoption" hearings are not yet scheduled.

In a legally supportable "nexus" study, everybody who drives on I-5 would need to pay their fair share of any fees proposed. Each has incrementally contributed to any growing congestion. There already exists a mechanism to accomplish this fair solution to paying for additional lanes on I-5 in the future....gas taxes which are paid for at the pump. When these taxes were implemented in the early 1990's, the government failed to plan for future growth with inflationary adjustments (or anything else). Now, they are trying to absolve themselves of their responsibility to make appropriate adjustments by trying to convince 3 local elected officials (in each jurisdiction) that *they* must do it, in spite of the fact that our community will already contribute over \$100 million in the next 20 years to this cause.

## REDDING TAXPAYER REVOLT COMING APRIL 15TH Bostonian Tea Party to follow!

April 15, 2009 taxpayers around the country are organizing Tea Parties, rallies and other events to show Washington and Sacramento, here in California, that we are fed up with the seemingly endless stream of new taxes, fees and government spending being imposed, together with a shrinking list of freedoms and opportunities left to enjoy.

Taxpayers in Shasta County are encouraged to attend one or more of the following peaceful revolts, where they will be joined by state and local taxfighters:

- Wednesday, April 15, 2009: Noon, Steps of City Hall, 777 Cypress Avenue**  
(sponsored by the American Family Association)
- Wednesday, April 15, 2009: 5:30 p.m., Steps of City Hall, 777 Cypress Avenue**  
(sponsored by Shasta County Taxpayers' Association, www.shastax.org, 243-1639)
- Wednesday, April 15, 2009: 6:00 p.m., Bostonian Tea Party, Sundial Bridge**  
(Go to: taxdayteaparty.com for more information.)

## *Cruel and Unusual Punishment* Longest Redding Council Meeting Ever Makes This Article Packed!

Perhaps it's a sign of the times. Public outrage is extremely high when it comes to issues affecting their quality of life. Never has that been more evident than at the Redding City Council meeting held on March 17, 2009, which began as usual at 7:00 p.m. The Council Chambers was **packed**. The agenda was **packed**. You may find this article **packed**.

Before the Council even got to the agenda items, a highly organized group of 100 homeowners living in the River Bend subdivision presented a **petition against the City's plan to purchase their golf course** and turn it into a public park. Many of them spoke at the podium during the public comment period for non-agendized matters, which occurs *before* the agenda items are heard. We applaud each and every speaker for expressing their concerns, and support their right to be heard! City Staff will need to address many issues raised, including the lack of required "notice" given to these homeowners prior to the last public meeting on the subject matter.

The next agenda item was supposed to be a **workshop** to explain the **revised "Fix 5"** program, now called Shasta County Regional Improvement Program, or "**SCRIP**." The Regional Transportation Planning Agency and their consultant did a 50 minute presentation explaining revisions that included incorporating \$100 million in government funds from our local gas taxes into the program to pay for additional lanes on I-5 in 20 years (which should've been the answer all along). They still want to add a new impact fee program to now pay for local interchange improvements rather than I-5 (now that they have identified other funds), using the same study that was done for I-5 improvements, and using the same fee amounts. Though they acknowledged that such fees already exist, and duplicate fees are not allowed, they still wanted to gain support for this additional fee. Shasta VOICES was there to ask questions, along with attorney Walt McNeill, and the Council also had many questions. Unfortunately, **none of the questions were answered**, largely due to the packed agenda and lack of time to address all the other items. So, this was not a workshop at all. We can only hope there will be another one scheduled, not at a Council meeting, for all of the questions to be answered, but it doesn't appear that this will occur.

Another **presentation** took place at this point, as we learned about the **Shasta Bally Summit telecommunications issue**. Jim Milestone from the Whiskeytown Recreation Area explained the NEPA process along with plans to keep the existing towers in place.

The **consent calendar** was next, and two homeowners pulled one item for discussion. By the time the consent calendar was approved, it was already 9:30 p.m.

Then the "real" meeting began. There was a **public hearing** to approve The Reserve at Gold Hills Subdivision Map, Planned Development Application, and Rezoning application. It had been in process for over 3 years, had 63 conditions placed upon it for approval, and deserved good discussion that led to its approval.

Next up was the potential **sites for the construction of a new Courthouse**, which certainly deserved every bit of discussion before approving a joint letter with Shasta County to support the downtown sites (current location).

City staff provided an **update on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act** (Economic Stimulus Funding) and roadway funding. Redding will receive about \$5 million. It was important for us all to learn about this program.

Two agenda items were continued from the March 3rd meeting. First was discussion about using any monies gained from the **sale of surplus City property** once dedicated to a **future gun club** to be put into an existing account for that same purpose. This passed 3-2. The other item was how to amend the consultant services agreement with Nichols, Melburg & Rossetto (NMR) to include **potential police facility retrofit proposals**, and the process to analyze and select the potential alternatives. After healthy debate, the Council voted 4-1 in favor of amending the agreement with NMR, 5-0 in favor of the process to analyze retrofit proposals, and 4-1 to include Missy McArthur and Rick Bosetti on the evaluation team, with a workshop to follow with all Council members to look at the proposals.

**Parking citations** were next on the agenda. The public wanted to express their concerns, have some questions answered, and gain some assurances from City staff before the Council voted. They spoke at the podium, and received those assurances from City staff. Therefore, one ordinance was passed to prohibit motor vehicles from parking on posted unpaved areas, followed by a resolution amending the Schedule of Fees and Service Charges for parking citations.

Now, it's 11:50 p.m. There are 3 agenda items still remaining! An hour-long discussion took place regarding the **Oasis Road Interchange Project**, eventually agreeing that LDC should continue to lead that process. A **presentation** by the Municipal Utilities Department was **postponed**, though a **public hearing was requested to be set for 5-19-09**. The Council voted to have the public hearing to consider **monthly rate increases for water, wastewater, and solid waste utilities**. At 1:30 a.m., a resolution was voted down 3-2 to extend the amortization period for the City's Public Agency Retirement System (PARS). Finally, the meeting was adjourned at about 1:45 a.m.! Having 14 controversial agenda items on one calendar is truly cruel and unusual punishment for the general public, the Council members, and the City staff. Those of us who stuck it out hope to never see this happen again.

## ***Redding Wants Rate Increases for Utility Services***

The City of Redding recently increased monthly electric utility rates for each of the next 3 years.

Now, they are asking approval to increase monthly rates for water, wastewater and solid waste utilities. This time, however, all 33,000 users of the Redding utilities will have a real say in the matter. Here's how:

- The Redding City Council will consider the proposed increases, which total about \$5 per month in each of the next three years for a typical single family home, at a public hearing at **7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 19, 2009, at the Redding City Council Chambers at 777 Cypress Avenue.**
- Under state law, if you are the owner of record of a parcel subject to the proposed rate changes, you may submit a protest against any or all of the proposed rate changes by filing a written protest with the City Clerk at or before the time set for the public hearing. (Note: A City owned Electric Utility is exempted from this requirement).
- ***If a written protest is filed by a majority of the affected parcel owners, the proposed rate change will not be imposed.***

Each parcel owner in the City of Redding should have received their written "Notice of Public Hearing About 2009 Rate Adjustments" in the mail around the first of April. **A protest form is included** in this mailer. If you did not receive one, contact the City Clerk's office, **225-4055**, and request one.

The City explains the reasons for the requested rate increase, lists the existing and proposed rates for comparison, explains the protest procedures, and provides public hearing information in the mailer. ***Read the information and make your own decision as to whether or not you support the proposed increases.*** Just do it now, before the May 19th deadline!

The public hearing will occur whether or not a majority prevents the rates from increasing. Alternative decisions will need to be made, from reducing overhead costs to altering the level of service now provided if the rates are not increased.

## ***Shasta County Supervisors Approve New Real Estate Fraud Unit With New Recording Fees To Fund It***

A Public Hearing was held on April 7th by the Shasta County Supervisors to consider adopting a new fee for recording certain real estate instruments, papers, and notices to provide funds for the establishment of a real estate fraud unit within the District Attorney's office.

During the present economic difficulties, it has come to the attention of the District Attorney's office that there is an increase in real estate fraud in Shasta County. Currently, no law enforcement agency in the County has an investigator dedicated solely to investigating real estate fraud. The Board of Supervisors is allowed to add a fee of up to **three dollars** at the time of recording these real estate documents: Deed of Trust, Assignment of Deed of Trust, Reconveyance, a Request for Notice, a Notice of Default, a Substitution of Trustee, a Notice of Trustee Sale, and a Notice of Rescission of Declaration of Default. Any document upon which a documentary transfer tax is already imposed is exempt from this fee.

In 2008, 24,766 documents would have been assessed this fee, which would have generated \$74,298. Based on these numbers, and after deducting administrative costs, the County feels it will generate about \$84,000 from April 2009 through June 2010 to help fund a real estate fraud unit in fiscal year 2009/10.

The District Attorney has been looking at ways that the Consumer Protection, Illegal Dumping, and Real Estate Fraud programs could benefit and support each other, while also addressing the need to reduce the use of the County general funds in the coming fiscal year. With some restructuring and the implementation of this fee program, the need for County funds will decrease by 11%.

The Shasta County Board of Realtors had a chance to review this program, and was in support of creating the Real Estate Fraud Unit and the assessment of the \$3 recording fees on real estate documents to fund it.

The Supervisors voted 5-0 to adopt a resolution to begin assessing this fee, and putting revenues into a Real Estate Fraud Protection Trust Fund effective with the 2009/10 fiscal year to be appropriated beginning July 1, 2009.

## ***Trouble Funding a Project in Redding?***

If you've tried to build a structure in Redding and experienced sticker shock at City Hall, we are asking for your help. As outlined in the March 2009 issue of **"The VOICE,"** Shasta VOICES is in the process of collecting as much data as possible to address the growing problem of seemingly high and unreasonable building and development fees and conditions, and their effect on building activity in the Redding area. We want to propose changes that will be beneficial not only to those investing in projects, but also to the City of Redding. But, ***we need your data to do so!***

You can provide us with whatever information you feel comfortable releasing. Contact Mary Machado for forms created for this purpose: (530) 222-5251, or mary@shastavoices.com.

## ***2009 Special Statewide Election May 19, 2009***

A Special Statewide Election will be held on May 19, 2009. This will be for the purpose of voting on 6 propositions brought forward as a result of California's recent budget process. Here is a summary of the propositions:

### **Proposition 1A:**

State Budget. Changes California Budget Process. Limits State Spending. Increases "Rainy Day" Budget Stabilization Fund.

### **Proposition 1B:**

Education Funding. Payment Plan.

### **Proposition 1C:**

Lottery Modernization Act.

### **Proposition 1D:**

Protects Children's Services Funding. Helps Balance State Budget.

### **Proposition 1E:**

Mental Health Services Funding. Temporary Reallocation. Helps Balance State Budget.

### **Proposition 1F:**

Elected Officials' Salaries. Prevents Pay Increases During Budget Deficit Years.

The voter registration deadline for this election is May 4th. The last day to request a vote by mail ballot is May 12th.

For complete information and pro and con arguments on each of the propositions, go to:

[www.elections.co.shasta.ca.us](http://www.elections.co.shasta.ca.us).

## **Redding Police Facility RFP Issued for Existing Building Options**

A Request For Proposal (RFP) to explore existing building and property options for the proposed Redding Police Headquarters Facility was issued on March 27, 2009.

The City of Redding invites sealed proposals to be submitted to the Purchasing Division, 2nd floor, located at City Hall, 777 Cypress Avenue, Redding, CA, 96001 prior to **3:00 p.m. Friday, May 8, 2009**.

The original, unbound proposal submittal and nine (9) copies are to be provided. Facsimile or electronic copies will not be accepted. The mailing envelope must be clearly marked on the outside with following notation: **"Schedule No. 4231; opening at 3:00 p.m., on Friday, May 08, 2009.**

This is an initial study to explore interest and viability of using existing buildings or property for development as a new headquarters for the Redding Police Department. It is not anticipated that a formal contract will be issued as a result of this document, but rather identification of those buildings or properties that warrant further investigation.

The RFP is 15 pages in total. Proposals will not be considered unless it contains a cover letter signed by a member of the organization having the authority to enter into formal contracts on behalf of the organization.

To obtain the detailed criteria and RFP for submitting an existing building or property, you can go to the following link:

<http://ci.redding.ca.us/supserv/purch/pdf/4231x0508.pdf>

For additional information or questions, you can contact:

**Elizabeth B. Peer**, Purchasing Officer, City of Redding  
(530) 225-4137, or [bpeer@ci.redding.ca.us](mailto:bpeer@ci.redding.ca.us).

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**We depend on membership and other contributions.**

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Mary B. Machado, Executive Director