



The VOICE

Your independent news source

Greater Shasta County, CA

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Did you know...

- There were **11** single family home permits issued in the City of Redding in April 2017, for a total of 49 so far in 2017. That is **23 more** than were issued in the first 4 months of 2016. There was **one** permit issued for a commercial building in April 2017, for a total of 5 so far in 2017. That is **3 more** than were issued for the first four months of 2016.
- The Hoover Institution, Stanford University, is a public policy research center devoted to the advanced study of economics, politics, history, and political economy as well as international affairs. They have conducted a study this year that calls attention to the fact that **almost no state of local government is running a balanced budget, with the reality that runaway pension costs are consuming state and local budgets.** This year's study of 649 U.S. pension systems found that systems in 2015 realized average investment returns of only 2.87%, yet the average discount rate that they chose was 7.36%. The 2017 report found that the total unfunded pension liabilities rose to \$3.85 trillion, which is \$434 billion more than last year. Of this \$3.85 trillion, only \$1.38 trillion is recognized by state and local governments. The rest is "hidden debt."

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Shasta VOICES Celebrates 10 Year Anniversary Under Leadership of Executive Director Mary Machado

For the past **ten years**, Shasta VOICES, a private non-profit organization with over **1,300 supporters** has been successful, under the leadership of Executive Director Mary Machado, in our mission to have an impact on decisions being made locally that affect our economic opportunity.

Our mission includes **advocating** for City, County, and other government-related policies and programs that will assist in the process of developing a healthy local economy and **participating in the process**, not only for the good of the whole but also for specific businesses, investors and individuals:

- Reducing or eliminating excessive fees.
- Streamlining the permitting process.
- Supporting/assisting projects that create jobs and economic benefits to our community.
- Promoting fiscal responsibility in government.
- Providing solutions for issues that affect our economic opportunity.
- Providing time-intensive research on behalf of those needing assistance to achieve their economic goals in the Redding and Shasta County area.

Our growing list of accomplishments can be found on our website (shastavoices.com), by clicking on the "Accomplishments" tab. We would reprint it here, as we have done in the past, but it simply won't fit anymore! However, we do have **some testimonials** to share from some of those that have benefitted from our efforts over the past ten years:

"There isn't a month that goes by without discussing an issue with Mary at Shasta VOICES. Shasta VOICES is a great resource for my developer clients!" ~Russ Wenham, Omni-Means Ltd.

"Shasta Voices is **the** advocacy "voice" for Shasta County. Mary Machado has helped me learn the intricacies and complexities of local government. The Shasta Builders' Exchange can better serve our members, the construction industry, and our community because of our close working relationship with Shasta Voices. Thank you!" ~Joe Chimenti, Shasta Builders Exchange

"Shasta Voices has their "finger on Shasta County's pulse" through a monthly newsletter which includes stats and updates on our local economy, building issues, council meetings to name a few. Shasta voices is not afraid to speak up for the citizens of Shasta County. 10 years in the making and 10 years of success!" ~Mike Davis, MD Imaging

"Shasta Voices has proven itself as a resourceful advocate on our area projects." ~ Marcus Partin, Western Resource Partners

"Congratulations on 10 Years of excellences! REALTORS® are Champions of Homes™, You are a "Champion of Community." Shasta Voices provides our organization with pertinent information on local government issues that support, in a collaborative manner, solutions for sustainable communities." -Tom Whitacre, Executive Officer, Shasta Association of Realtors

Thank you to all of those who have been so supportive for the past ten years. We are looking forward to continuing our pattern of success throughout 2017 and beyond!

K2 Development Applies for Second Grant for Downtown

The Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) is surveying the region for projects and partners to compete for Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Grant Program funds. They issued an official Request for Proposals (RFP), and K2 Development has applied.

A third round (Cycle III) of grant funding is available for public-private partnerships resulting in expanded housing, employment, and mobility options within city centers. The money comes from cap-and-trade funds and is geared toward projects that support greenhouse gas emissions reductions and other sustainable benefits. Individual grant awards up to **\$20 million plus flexible financing packages** for affordable housing is up for grabs.

K2's local redevelopment project that has already received funding from this program are the demolition and redevelopment of the former Dicker's Department Store building in the Market Street Promenade, 1551 Market Street in downtown Redding. This project is a mixed-use four-story building of about 122,000 square feet, and will include demolition of the existing building and reconstruction of an underground parking garage. The building will consist of 27,000 square feet of ground floor retail space and a total of **79 units** with a combination of affordable and market rate 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units on floors 2 through 4. The project will also include construction of Market St., Butte St., and Yuba St. adjacent to the project and connecting to Tehama St. and California St., and construction of a two-way separated bike lane. K2 and the City of Redding were project co-applicants for the \$20 million grant funding that was approved for this project in October of 2016.

K2 Development is extending its long-term vision for downtown Redding. Now they are partnering with the McConnell Foundation to apply for another grant through the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency. This one is for technical assistance totaling \$120,000 to help them apply for up to \$20 million in additional AHSC Grant Program funds. If approved, this grant would provide the funds needed to **demolish the existing California Street parking garage** and replace it with a mixed-use development project with affordable and market rate apartments, office, retail and a public park.

The parking garage is owned by the City of Redding, which would make this a public-private partnership if K2 successfully obtains the funding, as it is with the Dicker's Department Store redevelopment project. That highly successful experience has provided a good "blueprint" for this second potential grant-funded downtown Redding project.

Red Light Photo Enforcement Will Continue in Redding

The Redding City Council originally approved a contract with Redflex to provide red light photo enforcement at several intersections in the City of Redding in February, 2006. There are currently eight photo enforcement cameras at five intersections. In April of 2012, Council reviewed the red light program and authorized a new contract with Redflex, which was set to expire on June 1, 2017.

A renegotiated contract that allows the City more flexibility in administering the program and saves the City money was approved by Council on May 16, 2017. The City will pay Redflex a fixed fee of \$4,375 per month (it was \$4,500 per month previously) for each of these intersections: Eastbound Cypress Avenue at Bechelli Lane, Westbound Cypress Avenue at Bechelli Lane, Westbound Shasta Street at Market Street, Southbound Market Street at Shasta Street, Northbound Lake Boulevard at Market Street, Northbound Pine Street at Tehama Street, Southbound Hilltop Drive at Cypress Avenue and Eastbound Cypress Avenue at Hilltop Drive.

The contract is "**cost-neutral**," which means that the cost of the program is fully **offset by revenues received** from citations after deducting the cost of reviewing the infractions if revenue is insufficient to cover it.

The cameras at the Hilltop/Cypress intersection produced such a high level of activity that it actually generated "one time funds" in 2016. Of the excess funds, \$173,515 was used for new police SUV's, and \$98,000 was used towards the new police computer system. The funds are considered "one time" because the accident level was reduced from 22 in 2015 to only 4 in 2016. If compliance is gained, camera programs are designed to remove the cameras at that intersection. If this level of compliance continues at the Hilltop/Cypress intersection, the cameras will be removed (eventually). Compliance was gained at the Hilltop/Churn Creek Road intersection, and those cameras were removed in 2014.

The cost of a red light ticket in California is **\$490** per offense. The actual fine is only \$100, but the state charges a 20% surcharge on all traffic tickets, and other **additional fees are added on to each red light ticket**: State Penalty Assessment, County Penalty Assessment, Court Facility Construction Penalty Assessment, DNA Identification Fund Penalty Assessment, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Penalty Assessment. They all add up to \$490 per ticket (or more depending on County charges) in California.

The amount charged for fines and penalties are not set or assessed by the City, but they do have to enforce and collect the fines. The state receives all the assessments, keeps their portion and disburses the rest as appropriate.

Shasta County Drafts 2014-2019 Housing Element Update

On May 11th, the Shasta County Planning Commission held a public hearing and workshop to provide an opportunity for the Commissioners and the general public to review the draft update of the State required Housing Element of the County's General Plan. The existing Plan, which is mandated to be updated every 5 years, only covers the period from 2009-2014. Apparently, work has been underway since 2013 on this **2014-2019 update**, which is clearly behind schedule as it is already 2017.

Nonetheless, the 2014-2019 update is moving forward for the purpose of evaluating the results from programs implemented in the 2009-2014 Housing Element plan, assessing the County's existing and projected housing needs, providing an inventory of "suitable sites" and the capacity to meet regional housing needs for all income groups, analyzing the constraints of building housing, and **setting policies and programs for development and improvement of housing units**.

For 2014-2019, the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation for all income groups is **755 units**:

- 189 units—very low income (less than 50 percent median household income)
- 117 units—low income (50 to 80 percent median household income)
- 128 units—moderate income (80 to 120 percent median household income)
- 321 units—above moderate income (above 120 percent median household income)

Shasta VOICES, the Shasta Builders Exchange, and members of the general public, participated in the first public hearing on the subject, providing testimony on the issues relating to "housing constraints." In particular, we addressed those issues that are **unduly constraining the construction of affordable housing** (and all housing) including:

- The amount of time it takes and complexity of processing permits;
- Costs of project delays;
- Excessive development and impact fees and how they are applied;
- Infrastructure constraints, especially the limitation of public sewer and water services in unincorporated Shasta County.

We addressed several charts included in the document that attempted to demonstrate that the County has established a one-stop permitting center as well as a computerized permit process tracking system designed to "add convenience and reduce processing time for all types of permits and applications." However, the sheer number of divisions listed that require permits, and the charts showing the estimated processing time for such permits indicate that the County has **failed miserably**—in fact the charts are **highly discouraging** to anyone who wants to build or expand residential housing.

Additionally, County staff claims in the document that development processing fees together with development impact fees **"have not been found to be excessive"** when compared to surrounding jurisdictions of a similar population. We disagree, believe this needs to change, and would like to be involved in providing solutions that could work not only for affordable housing developers, but also for the County. Members of the public that testified at this hearing provided and submitted written **definitive research** as proof that many of the fees are very excessive compared to surrounding jurisdictions.

Pages 100-188 of the draft plan document are dedicated to an update of progress made on the 2009-2014 plan. Nearly 90 percent of the "programs" included in this plan state that they "weren't implemented due to lack of resources and should not be continued." In fact, the new draft has reduced the number of programs towards reaching the goal of 755 units from 74 programs down to 37, having to include those that are required in order to be in compliance with State mandates.

During a presentation outlining the updated draft, Shasta County Planning Division Manager Kim Hunter explained that the County's General Plan update, which has not been done since 1982, was on hold waiting for this Housing Element update because it is part of the General Plan update process, as the Housing Element includes programs that could lead to subsequent applications for changes in the Land Use Element of the General Plan or the Zoning Plan. The General Plan update was initiated over 4 years ago.

Unfortunately, County staff is asking for an **"expedited** Housing and Community Development (HCD) review"—there is a mandated review by this department of the State for certification. Apparently the County needs to complete this Plan in order to meet this year's Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) **funding cycle**, which provides funding for a variety of housing types. That does not leave the general public much time to provide input and comments. We have only until June 2, 2017 to review the update and respond. Shasta VOICES will continue to participate in the process and provide written comments to follow-up our voiced concerns at the May 11th meeting.

The public is encouraged to submit comments by phone, fax, email or in writing to the County's Resource Management Department by **June 2, 2017**. The next Planning Commission public hearing on the subject is tentatively scheduled for August 10, 2017, with hopes of making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on August 15, 2017.

Shasta VOICES, together with the Shasta Builders Exchange and Shasta Association of Realtors, would like to participate in the process of creating policies that would actually work—so we are doing our best to provide solutions for consideration before the Housing Element Plan is finalized. 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.

New Mixed-Use Project On Hartnell Avenue Recommended for Approval—On May 23rd, the City of Redding Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt and approve a request from Lowden Redding Partners LLC to develop an 80,500 square foot mixed use commercial complex on about 6.4 acres located along the north side of Hartnell Avenue, west of Bechelli Lane, at 2953 and 30111 Lowden Lane, 2956 Bechelli Lane and 415 Hartnell Avenue. Building “A” will be a 28,500 square-foot building with a 5,000 square-foot restaurant and the remaining floor area will be medical office space. Building “B” will be 52,000 square-feet with 30,500 square-feet as medical office space and a 22,000 square-foot fitness center. The two buildings will be connected by a pedestrian bridge. One building would sit next to the VA Clinic on Hartnell Avenue, and the other building would be behind it on a bluff toward Bechelli Lane. This site had been previously approved for a residential subdivision, but it never went forward. This project is considered in-fill development, and because it required a zoning change and General Plan Amendment, the Redding City Council will need to consider the project for approval, perhaps at the June 20, 2017 Council meeting.



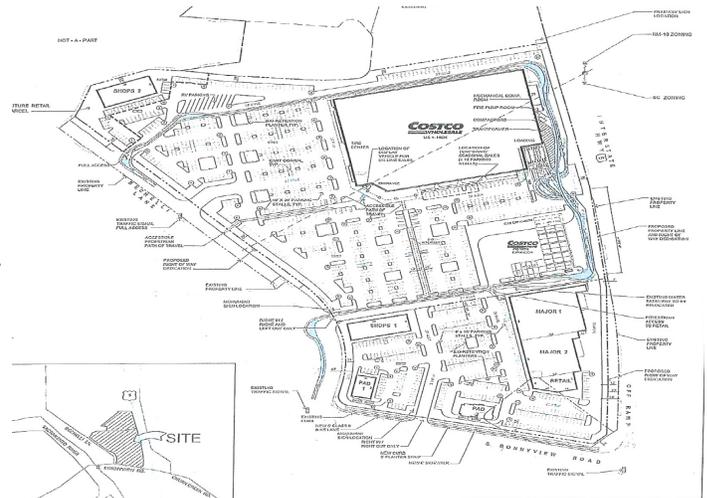
River Crossing Marketplace Center- Costco Public Scoping Meeting Scheduled for June 13, 2017

An environmental impact report (EIR) will be necessary to evaluate impacts of the River Crossing Marketplace Specific Plan by Costco Wholesale Corporation. The project site is bounded by South Bonnyview Road to the south, Bechelli Lane to the west, vacant land to the north and I-5 to the east. The River Crossing Marketplace will result in the construction of 220,000 square feet of retail uses, including a 152,000 square foot Costco store with up to 15 fuel pumps, and five retail and/or restaurant pads totaling 70,000 square feet.

Access to the proposed stores will be from project driveways connecting to Bechelli Lane and South Bonnyview Road. Costco will face Bechelli Lane, and provide access from Bechelli Lane. A public review period, inviting written comments regarding the preparation of the EIR, is underway from May 10, 2017 to June 30, 2017.

A **public scoping meeting** will be conducted by the City of Redding Planning Commission on **June 13, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. at City Hall, 777 Cypress Avenue**, in the Redding Council Chambers to provide an overview of the process and the project, and collect oral comments on the scope of the EIR.

The City, together with Costco, believes it is important to be sure the public understands the numerous points in the process where they can give input. They hope to have the draft EIR ready for public review by fall. There will be a 45 day review period before it goes to the Planning Commission, perhaps in November.



Join Shasta VOICES today.

We depend on membership and other contributions.

If you are viewing this issue of “**THE VOICE**” on our website, click on the **membership tab** for information and to download a membership application or contributor form. Or, you can obtain more information by going to our website, **www.shastavoices.com**, or calling **(530) 222-5251**.

Mary B. Machado, Executive Director