



The VOICE

Your independent news source

Greater Shasta County, CA

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Did you know...

- There were **6** single family home permits drawn in the City of Redding in October, 2018, for a total of **93** so far in 2018. That is **6** fewer than for the same period last year (**a 6% decrease**). There were **no** permits issued for commercial buildings in October, 2018, for a total of **7** so far this year. That is **9** less than for the same period last year.



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Giving Thanks...

In the spirit of Thanksgiving season, Shasta VOICES would like to take this opportunity to say “thank you” to our entire community for all their efforts towards recovery and rebuilding after the disastrous Carr Fire, as well as renewed commitments and progress on planned projects that will contribute to a healthier local economic future as 2018 comes to a close:

First and foremost, we are thankful to our first responders who put themselves in harms way to keep our citizens and properties safe during the July and August Carr Fire. And, we are thankful for the many organizations that provided services to our community in our time of need, including the American Red Cross, Bethel Church, CARR Fire Furnishings, Northern Valley Catholic Social Services, Salvation Army, Shasta College, Shasta Regional Community Foundation, and United Way of Northern California.

We are thankful to the outstanding leadership of City of Redding and Shasta County public officials who have done a masterful job of providing continually updated information relating to the Carr Fire, assistance to anyone who needs it, and guiding our damaged community through the worst disaster we have ever experienced. Debris clean-up is almost completed, expedited permit processes for those who choose to rebuild have been implemented, impact fees have been waived and building fees reduced, and rules have been relaxed to assist in the temporary housing needs of those who lost their homes.

We are thankful for **process improvements** at the County Resource Management Department under the new leadership of Paul Hellman, an effort spearheaded by Shasta VOICES, which includes the County’s building and planning functions.

We are thankful that Downtown Redding **revitalization projects** are currently under way, including a mixed-use site at the demolished Dicker’s building and the Green Door Project to replace the demolished former Police Facility. Additionally, the long-awaited new Shasta County Courthouse has finally received state funding, and should begin construction soon.

We are thankful the County is in the process of **adding 64 jail beds** to the existing Shasta County Jail facility, raising the capacity to 483 beds, ultimately improving our public safety.

We are thankful that the **Churn Creek Marketplace** on Churn Creek Road, Northeast of the Interstate 5 and Bonnyview interchange. is well under way, with two buildings already completed (with Panda Express already opened). As the entire center develops, **200-300 jobs** will be created. The developer is utilizing **local businesses** for construction, architectural, and engineering services. We also thank the City (again) for acting on Shasta VOICES’ request and **eliminating** the **\$3.1 million** special district fee for this area to allow this project to become a reality.

We are thankful that the **former Sears** location at the Mt. Shasta Mall is in the process of being renovated into 72,000 square feet of multi-tenant space, including a Home Goods store and Sprouts Farmers Market, and (an unnamed) 10,900 square foot drive-through restaurant.

We are thankful that the mid-term elections are over. We know that both the City of Redding and Shasta County have added new voices to the mix (see page 4), and look forward to them working together to improve our community.

Lastly, thank you to all the supporters of Shasta VOICES. We are making a positive difference to the economic opportunity in our community because of you as we participate in and advocate for these and many other businesses and issues.

City Rescinds Approval of 2018 Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan and Prepares Amendment to Code to Allow Goat Grazing

Redding City Council approved the final update of the City's Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan on August 21, 2018. First issued in 2004, the Plan represents a comprehensive planning effort to guide future recreation development and natural area conservation in the Redding area.

The updated version of the Plan updates and revises inventory and future plans, and recommends the type and location of new facilities throughout the community, including trail system connections and development standards.

The Community Services Advisory Commission (CSAC) was tasked with studying the plan and receiving public input, including input from a 10 member community volunteer group (coordinated by Mary Machado). After several public meetings and comment periods, several **key modifications** were made to the Plan, including the removal of park impact fee calculations and discussions, removal of private parks from inventory, exploring other funding options, addressing public safety in park design, and reducing level of service mileage/acreage figures. No modifications were made to the Open Space portion of the Plan.

During the public testimony at the August 21st Council meeting, local developer Jaxon Baker asked for the City **not to approve** the Plan because it didn't go far enough to address flammable brush, Manzanita, grass and trees in the City's 8,000 acres of open space areas, as evidenced by the Carr Fire disaster. On September 13th, he filed a lawsuit (as Alize LLC) asking the City to rescind their approval of the updated Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan and accompanying addendum to the Mitigated Negative Declaration, saying a more comprehensive environmental document is required under the California Environmental Quality Act.

On November 6th, based on the pending threat of litigation, City Council **unanimously voted to rescind the Plan** as it could result in costly litigation. Minor expenses will be incurred to remove the Plan from the City's website. There will be future costs required to prepare and publish an updated Plan for adoption. The lawsuit isn't asking for monetary damages from the City outside of attorney's fees and litigation expenses.

Also on November 6th, and on a related note, City Council unanimously voted to direct staff to prepare an amendment to the Redding Municipal Code that would **allow the grazing of goats to be used for fire fuel management purposes**, and to process the amendment through the Planning Commission. Allowing goats to graze in open space areas may be an effective way to reduce ground cover and brush that can become fuel in the event of wildfires.

Redding City Identity Project (RCIP) Asks For Residents' Participation in Community Survey

Shasta VOICES, together with other organizations in Redding, is asking the community for their input as part of the Redding City Identity Project via an online survey.

The Community Survey can be found at www.ReddingSurvey.com. The Greater Redding Chamber of Commerce has partnered with Development Counselors International to assist with research prior to the creation and implementation of a plan to strengthen Redding's identity. This questionnaire has been carefully created to gather the community's thoughts about Redding's strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities.

"One of the priorities of the Redding City Identity Project is to create the opportunity for everyone within the community to be heard and contribute to the process. The Redding Chamber of Commerce is leading this initiative but the voices of the people who call Redding home are vital to its success." Jake Mangas, CEO of the Redding Chamber said.

Everyone in the community is invited to participate. Electronic surveys must be completed and submitted by Tuesday, November 20th at 5:00 PM. As of November 19th, **2,389 people have taken the survey**.

Upon conclusion of the survey, the results will be utilized in the development of an identity improvement strategy for the City of Redding. That strategy will be shared with the overall community on January 10th at 6:00 PM at the Cascade Theatre. The event will be open to the public.

The ultimate goal is to uncover our unique identity as a community and to further activate our strengths by initiating 20 ideas that will strengthen our image and reputation by 2020.

For more information about the RCIP: Visit www.ReddingCityIdentityProject.org, or

Contact: Jake Mangas, CEO of the Greater Redding Chamber of Commerce at 530-225-4433.

Short-term Rentals Come Under Fire

On February 16, 2016, Redding City Council adopted Ordinance 18.43.180 to regulate short-term rentals. The City had learned about hundreds of short-term rentals in Redding that were operating without any rules, and determined that regulations were in order, as well as the implementation of fees and Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT), spending the better part of 18 months conducting public hearings towards that goal before adopting the Ordinance. However, the hearings were attended almost entirely by those who were already operating short-term rentals, and they had a good deal of input into the final version of the draft document. The Ordinance covers two types of short-term rentals—**hosted home-stays** and **vacation rentals** (VRBO's).

Although there are penalties for violating the regulations, the City's enforcement of the rules for short-term rentals is complaint driven, and this is the only way they know about violations. Now that the Ordinance has been in place for over 2 years, many complaints are being reported, and it appears that changes to the Ordinance are imminent.

As an example, at a recent Planning Commission meeting on August 28, 2018, Gail Thacker, who owns and illegally operates a vacation rental at 4377 Brittany Drive in Redding, was denied a license and permit to operate at this location based on documented evidence of violations, including the fact that she refused to comply with a cease and desist order issued by the City's Code Enforcement Officer. The room was full of neighborhood homeowners at this meeting who testified about the negative experiences they had endured as a result of this unlicensed and unpermitted vacation rental, including multiple reports to the City's police department and Code Enforcement division.

Ms. Thacker appealed that denial to the City Council on November 6, 2018. Once again, the neighborhood property owners were there—there was a sea of red shirts seated together in support of their chosen speakers. After hearing from the speakers, who very eloquently stated the facts and reasons to uphold the denial, **City Council unanimously supported the Planning Commission's denial**. Councilors expressed concerns about lack of funding to perform the necessary code enforcement for short-term rentals, and agreed with the speakers that changes to the Ordinance were needed.

City staff has already been directed by the Planning Commission to revisit and improve the current Ordinance. One of the suggestions from this particular group of single family homeowners included that, in single-family residential zones that have subdivision Covenants, Codes and Restrictions (CC&R's) in place that do not allow short-term rentals, the City could take that into consideration when determining whether or not to approve permits. Other suggestions and issues that will be up for review as staff revisits the current Ordinance include limiting the number of VRBO's allowed in each neighborhood to avoid saturation, higher fees and penalties, annual reviews for each permit, and a limit to how many VRBO's are allowed for a single owner.

Staff will be bringing suggestions for an improved short-term rental Ordinance back to the Planning Commission in the near future, which will give the general public a chance to weigh in before anything is finalized. Perhaps this time, now that Redding single-family homeowners are familiar with the Ordinance, the attendance and testimony at the hearings will be well-balanced between those who want to be in the business of owning short-term rentals and those who live in the affected neighborhoods who would like their concerns addressed. We will keep our community informed of that timetable as soon as it becomes available.

Costco Project Final EIR Hearing On November 27th

The River Crossing Marketplace/Costco project, planned for 25 acres located at the northeast corner of South Bonnyview and Bechelli Lane in Redding, will come before the Planning Commission on November 27th at 4:00 p.m. for a public hearing to consider recommending approval of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), along with approving a general plan amendment, rezoning the property and a specific plan. If recommended for approval, the project may come before Redding City Council as early as December 18th for final consideration of approval.

Traffic and tree concerns, which were the overall theme of comments received from the draft EIR document released on April 16th, have been addressed in the FEIR. The site plan has been revised to reduce the size of the shopping center by 8,000 square feet and to save more trees along the northern property line. Proposed traffic improvements include a two-lane roundabout at Bechelli Lane and South Bonnyview, widening Bechelli Lane and South Bonnyview along the shopping center's frontage, additional lanes to the southbound and northbound I-5 off ramps, additional through and turn lanes on Bechelli and South Bonnyview, and a one-lane roundabout east of I-5 at the Churn Creek Road/Victor Avenue/Rancho Road intersection.

The River Crossing Marketplace project proposes a new 152,000 Costco facility (40% larger than their current Dana Drive store) with a 30-dispenser fuel center, and up to 70,000 square feet of additional retail and restaurant uses.



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:

Carr Fire News and Update— Progress continues to be made in the debris removal process for all 1,148 Carr Fire damaged and destroyed structures in Redding and Shasta County: The number of completed Phase II Debris Removals now stands at **800**; the number of final approvals (cleared lots) now stands at **281**. Through the end of October, there was just one single-family home “rebuild” permit issued. The Carr Fire provided large increases in local hotel room taxes collected beginning in July, with a 10% increase over July 2017, August with a 25% increase over August 2017, and September with a 20% increase over September 2017. Much of those increases came from work crews and relief personnel. And lastly, local realtors are not seeing a predicted uptick of local homes being sold to those who were burned out in the fire (choosing not to rebuild). The Shasta Association of Realtors reported 274 sales in September 2018, down from 289 sales in September 2017, and down from the 314 closed escrows in August 2018. There are 1,103 homes for sale now, compared with 952 for sale at the same time last year.

Local Mid-Term Election Results—The City of Redding will have two new City Council members as of December 4, 2018: **Erin Resner**, who received 25.83% of the vote, and **Michael Dacquisto**, who received 23.43% of the vote. Incumbent **Kristen Schreder**, who received 18.36% of the vote, retained her seat for another term. Incumbent Francie Sullivan did not retain her seat, coming in 5th out of the five candidates on the ballot with 15.22% of the vote.

Shasta County will have a new voice on the Board of Supervisors as of January 8, 2019: **Joe Chimenti** defeated incumbent David Kehoe with 55.98% of the vote. Kehoe, who has served on the Board for 20 years, received 44.02% of the vote. Mr. Kehoe will be recognized on January 8th for his many years of service to the community.

Local Ballot Measure C, the **City of Redding General Business Tax on Cannabis Businesses**, passed overwhelmingly with **74.24% of the vote**. This will implement “a business tax on cannabis cultivation businesses up to \$25 per square foot of cultivation area and on cannabis manufacturing, processing, laboratory testing, delivery, storage, distribution, and retail sale up to 10% of gross receipts, to enhance and maintain vital public safety services, reduce crime, and protect other general services with all funds to be spent for unrestricted general revenue purposes, generating approximately \$750,000 annually.” The City will be taxing **retail sales at a rate of 5%** of gross receipts effective immediately.

Local Ballot Measure D, the **Shasta Lake Fire Prevention District Special Tax Measure** failed, with 57.4% of voters saying yes, and 42.6% saying no. The measure required a 2/3 yes vote to pass. It would’ve provided over \$284,000 annually to fund firefighting staffing, charging \$50 per year for the first residential unit, \$40 for each additional residential unit, \$20 per vacant parcel, and \$0.05 per building square foot for commercial units.

Local Ballot Measure E, the **Enterprise Elementary School District Bond Measure** passed with **62.04%** of the vote. It is estimated to raise \$26 million of bonds, levying 3 cents per \$100 of assessed property value in the District. The money will be used to construct classrooms, restrooms and facilities, and make repairs to the district schools.

US District Representative, District 1—**Doug LaMalfa** won that race with 55.6% of the vote over challenger Audrey Denny with 44.4% of the vote.

State Assembly, 1st District—**Brian Dahle** won that race with 64.9% of the vote over challenger Calleen Sisk with 35.1% of the vote.

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