



The VOICE

Your independent news source

Greater Shasta County, CA

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Did you know...

- There were **13 new** single family home permits issued in the City of Redding in April 2020, for a total of **71** so far in 2020, and **3** Carr Fire single family rebuild permits issued in April 2020, for a total of **15** so far in 2020. There was **one** permit issued for new commercial buildings in April 2020, for a total of **6** so far in 2020.
- A second distribution of **\$200** in credits to all REU ratepayers appeared on April 2020 monthly billing statements for all customers. This was one of several City of Redding Economic Response Plan items related to the Covid-19 Pandemic.
- **US-Offsite**, a modular construction manufacturer, will build its first plant, a 200,000 square facility, in Anderson off Industry Road near the Wheelabrator Shasta Energy facility just east of Barney Road. US-Offsite will make prefabricated cubes for multi-family and commercial projects such as apartments, hotels and student housing. They will hire about 100 people when the plant opens sometime in 2021.

Inside this issue:

Shasta VOICES Enters 14th Year	1
Supervisors Delay Decision On Outdoor Hemp Ordinance, But Allow Indoor Nurseries With Conditions	2
Some Local Businesses Reopening and Other Covid-19 News	2
City Council Unanimously Approves River Crossing Marketplace/Costco Project	3
City's General Fund Remains Stable; County Delays Budget Hearing	3
Updated News and Notes	4
Join Shasta VOICES	4

Shasta VOICES Enters 14th Year Under Leadership of Executive Director Mary Machado

Having completed **thirteen 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. We are now in our **fourteenth** year!

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.

Our growing list of accomplishments, which won't fit here, can be found on our website (shastavoices.com), by clicking on the "Accomplishments" tab. But here are some of the most recent issues we tackled successfully in 2019 and continue to tackle in 2020:

- Supporting/assisting multiple **local projects** including the Churn Creek Market Place, Lowden Lane Senior Apartments project, River Crossing Marketplace, Dignity Health North State Pavilion Wellness Center and small businesses seeking to occupy and remodel vacant buildings.
- Strongly urged and received website improvements that have now made customer access easier when doing business with the Shasta County Resources Management Department.
- Participated in the process of updating the City of Redding's **temporary sign ordinance**.
- Produced and distributed the **"Double Dip"** independent research project prepared by Shasta VOICES, stating the facts about the proposed Redding Rancheria Casino Project and the reasons for the overwhelming controversy surrounding the project in very simple terms (available on our website under the studies tab). A **follow-up** is currently underway.
- Participated on the **Solar Committee** (Mary Machado was Vice-Chair) addressing the public outcry at the proposal from the City of Redding Electric Utility (REU) to officially end the solar subsidy program, and replace it with an unattractive successor program (through which REU purchases excess customer solar generation). The committee was successful— all new solar customers have a **successor subsidy rate of \$0.068** per kilowatt hour (significantly higher than what had been proposed by the City).
- Successfully obtained a compromise with the City of Redding for an easier-to-understand and user friendly **protest form** on new or increased City of Redding property/utility fees.
- Currently participating on the stakeholder committee during the process of **updating the Shasta County Facilities Impact Fee Program**; requested Supervisors take up an action to **delay a scheduled increase** in those fees until the update is complete, which they agreed to discuss at their June 2, 2020 regular Board of Supervisors meeting.
- Provided **letters of support** for Shasta Regional Transportation Agency's grant applications to the Federal government, for I-5 expansion and improvement efforts for the North Redding Six-Lane Project (between Star Route 299 and 44) and the Fix 5 Gateway Project (for the ten miles north of Star Route 44 and the City of Redding).
- Assisted in the successful **protest process** and obtaining an **impact fee refund of \$74,000** for a local business project in unincorporated Shasta County.
- Assisting in the process of proposing local economic **stimulus programs** in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Thank you to all of those who have been so supportive for the past thirteen years. We are looking forward to continuing our pattern of success throughout 2020 and beyond!

Supervisors Delay Decision on Outdoor Hemp Ordinance, But Allow Indoor Nurseries With Conditions

Shasta County’s two-year moratorium against the cultivation of industrial hemp expired on March 12, 2020. On April 9th, a public hearing for consideration of proposed ordinance options was held during the County Planning Commission meeting. By unanimous vote, the Planning Commissioners **denied** recommending the new ordinance options. They opined that the County’s existing ordinances relating to cannabis adequately applies to hemp. Additionally, they felt that it would be impossible to enforce the regulations contained in the proposed ordinance options.

At the **May 5th** Board of Supervisors meeting, the Supervisors all agreed to **delay their decision** on growing industrial hemp **outdoors** until after the coronavirus restrictions on public gatherings are lifted and people can attend the supervisors meetings in person.

In the meantime, however, the Supervisors all agreed to **permit indoor nursery grows** of micro-greens and seed transplants, both of which by definition do not have the potential to emit noxious odors. That decision was based (in part) by the fact that there are other Federal regulations currently overseen by the Agricultural Commission in place requiring that, (1) seeds need to be certified before planting is allowed and (2) the micro-greens and seed plants must be tested to be below 0.03 THC levels before they are allowed to be harvested. The Supervisors also agreed that they want to **prohibit indoor cultivation and processing of mature plants**.

On **May 19th**, the Supervisors approved zone amendment (20-003) to “regulate the cultivation and processing of industrial hemp and the manufacturing of industrial hemp products.” With this zoning amendment, all **outdoor cultivation and processing of industrial hemp is prohibited**; any cultivation activities allowed by zone amendment 20-003 require the approval of a use permit and all activities require the provision of a financial assurance to protect the County from potential costs incurred for inspection, abatement, and destruction of non-compliant crops. Additionally, the Supervisors agreed to bring the matter of the outdoor grows back for consideration within one month of when the meeting is scheduled when the restrictions on public gatherings has been lifted. The hope is that this will occur by August, 2020.

Some Local Businesses Reopening and Other Covid-19 Updates

Some local businesses in Shasta County have received permission to reopen under statewide rules, effective **May 12, 2020**.

The chart to the right shows the County’s Stage 2 of 4 “Roadmap to Recovery” plan. There are required modifications for **each** of the businesses allowed to open that can be found on the County’s website at ShastaReady.org.

Other sectors, with adaptations, are also allowed to open:
 ▶ Outdoor recreation in public spaces such as parks, trails and golf courses;
 ▶ Child care and summer programs;
 ▶ School-preparations for County schools to resume the week of August 10th;
 ▶ Health care services.

And, there are guidelines for the following services: ▶ Agriculture and livestock; ▶ Auto dealerships; ▶ Construction; ▶ Delivery services; ▶ Energy and utilities; ▶ Life sciences; ▶ Limited services for auto repair, car washing, cleaning/janitorial, pet grooming,, dog walking, landscape and yard maintenance, laundromats and dry cleaning; ▶ Logistics and warehousing facilities; ▶ Mining and logging; ▶ Public transit; ▶ Real Estate.

In other Covid-19 related news, the City of Redding is considered an ‘Entitlement City’ by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and receives direct grant funding allocations from them. Under the newly formed Community Development **Block Grant Coronavirus program**, the City received additional grant funding allocations of \$447,450, which when added to previously unused City HUD funding of \$260,000, gives the City a total of **\$707,450**. On May 5th, City Council approved use of these funds to provide grants that **will assist eligible small businesses and microenterprises** in avoiding job losses held by low and moderate incomes persons caused by the Covid-19 pandemic by providing **working capital assistance targeted at commercial rent and utility costs**. It is estimated that 70 persons would retain their jobs because of this assistance.

Roadmap to Recovery Stage 2 of 4

Businesses allowed to open <small>(effective 5/12/2020 with modifications)</small>	Businesses not allowed to open yet
Retail businesses Shopping malls Dine-in restaurants Car washes Pet grooming Tanning facilities Office-based businesses Outdoor museums and galleries Childcare facilities	Nail/Hair salons Tattoo parlors Gyms and fitness studios Bars, lounges and night clubs Movie theaters, state gaming facilities Indoor museums, libraries Community centers, pools, playgrounds Religious services Concert venues, festivals



City Council Unanimously Approves River Crossing Marketplace/Costco Project

On April 28, 2020, and after three recirculated Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) to address responses to public and agency comments, the Redding Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the River Crossing Marketplace Specific Plan, General Plan amendment, and rezoning by Costco Wholesale, in association with Rich Development, to develop 25 acres of undeveloped land, at the northeast corner of South Bonnyview Road and Bechelli Lane, with a 152,000 square foot discount warehouse, including a fuel station with up to 30 fueling stations, and about 62,000 square feet of complimentary retail, service and restaurant uses.

On **May 19, 2020**, a Public Hearing was held during the Redding City Council meeting to consider the project. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, public comments can be sent to Council via mail, email, voicemail or online during the live streaming video of the Council meeting, prior to the closing of the public hearing. A total of 24 comments were received through these sources before or during this hearing. Additionally, Costco Wholesale in Redding collected and submitted **8,686 signed "comment" cards** in favor of the project and 96 opposed, from regular store customers (considered by the City Clerk to be the equivalent of submitting a signed petition).

Costco has been trying to move its existing Dana Drive store to the I-5 South Bonnyview freeway interchange location since 2016, but it's come up against numerous challenges related mostly to increased traffic concerns and tree issues.

After several years, much discussion and careful consideration, **City Council unanimously approved** the General Plan Amendment, Rezoning Application, and Specific Plan Application for the project, and expressed their thanks to the applicants for their patience during the long process.

City's General Fund Remains Stable; County Delays Budget Hearing

The City of Redding's budget is a plan for two specified fiscal years. The fiscal years for this budget began on July 1, 2019 and end on June 30, 2021. **Quarterly reviews** are presented to City Council. On May 19th, a review was presented at the Council meeting for the quarter ending March 31, 2020, which covers January, February and March 2020, during part of the Covid-19 stay-at-home order, and provides a glimpse of how this is affecting revenues. Here are the highlights for the General Fund:

Total revenue to-date is \$62.6 million, or \$7,517,214 (12.8 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection. **Through March, sales tax, property tax, transient occupancy tax, in-lieu property tax and revenue from other sources have all performed as expected or better.**

Property tax revenue: totaled \$11,341,938, or \$581,361 (5.4 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection. Property tax revenue year-to-date totals \$12,154,490 or \$549,989 (4.7 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection of \$11,604,501.

Sales tax revenue: totaled \$6,886,105 which is \$381,985 (5.9 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection. Sales tax revenue year-to-date totals \$20,705,419 or \$1,135,269 (5.8 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection of \$18,710,447.

Transient occupancy tax revenue: totaled \$1,122,340 or \$114,340 (11.3 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection. Transient occupancy tax revenue year-to-date totals \$4,605,691 or \$426,801 (10.2 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection of \$4,178,890.

All other tax revenues: totaled \$782,748 which is \$218,971 (38.8 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection. All other tax revenues year-to-date totals are \$2,236,011 or \$549,590 (32.5 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection of \$1,686,421. The other tax revenues include franchise fees, business licenses, real property transfer tax, and cannabis tax.

Licenses and Permit revenue: totaled \$624,222 which is \$149,007 (31.4 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection of \$475,215. Licenses and permit revenues year-to-date totals \$1,986,686 or \$561,041 (39.3 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection of \$1,425,645.

Fines and Penalties revenue: totaled \$1,912,659 which is \$1,515,108 (381.1 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection of \$341,629. Fines and Penalties revenues year-to-date totals 3,621,730 which is \$2,625,703 (263.6 percent) **above** staff's cash flow projection of \$996,027. This is primarily due to the accrual of fines and penalties associated with illegal cannabis activities.

Expenditures through March 2020 (excluding encumbrances) total \$61,110,989 or \$5,546,339 (8.3 percent) **under** staff's projection. As of March 31, 2020, the General Fund Cash Balance was \$14,693,480.

Shasta County has pushed back the date when their budget is published to May 29, 2020, so their figures are not yet available to the general public. A budget hearing has been scheduled for June 9, 2020.

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.

Planning Commission Recommends Approval of Dignity Health Redding North State Pavilion Project—Dignity Health Redding has been seeking approval for several years now for their planned 129,600 square-foot, \$50 million Dignity Health North State Pavilion Wellness Center project, to be located on 10.55 acres at the southwest corner of Cypress and Hartnell Avenues.

The project was scheduled for a public hearing and approval of the use permit before the Planning Commission on August 22, 2017, however, comments were received at the very last minute of the review period of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration in the form of a 14-page letter from a law firm representing “Redding Residents for Responsible Development,” including IBEW Local 340, Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 228, and Sheet Metal Workers Local 104. Based on those comments, the project was continued indefinitely to allow staff and the applicant time to review the comments. To address the comments received, Dignity Health decided to begin the EIR process. The City of Redding selected SHN Consulting in March of 2018 for the preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR).

The Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) was completed and brought before the Redding Planning Commission on May 12, 2020. The Commissioners unanimously approved the following recommendation to Redding City Council for the Dignity Health Redding North State Pavilion Project: (1) certify the FEIR; (2) approve and adopt the Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations; (3) approve and adopt the Mitigation Monitoring Program; and (4) approve General Plan Amendment GPA-2017-00003, Rezoning Application RZ-2017-00004, Use Permit Application UP-2017-00001, and Parcel Map Application PM-2017-00002, subject to the draft conditions of approval.

No date as been set yet for the project to come before Redding City Council for a public hearing and consideration of approval. Stay tuned!

Redding Rancheria Casino Application Suspended—On May 14, 2020, the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, issued an official notice of “Suspension of Preparation of Environmental Impact Statement” for the proposed Redding Rancheria’s Fee-to-Trust and Casino Project. The proposed Casino Project would **transfer** 232 acres of agricultural lands and lands within the 100-year floodplain of the Sacramento River **from fee to federal trust status** to facilitate the construction of a proposed 69,541 square foot casino, a nine-story 250-room hotel, conference center and 1,800 seat outdoor amphitheater, restaurants, a 130,000 square foot retail store, and parking for over 2,500 vehicles.

The notice included supplementary information stating that “by letter dated February 21, 2020, the Tribe notified the Department of the Interior that it would **await a decision from the California Supreme Court** in a case arising under State law and involving the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, 25 U.S.C. 2719 *et. Seq.*, before the Tribe decided how to proceed on its application. Therefore, the Department is suspending its review...however, the Department will provide notice when it resumes the environmental review process.” There is no definite time frame given.

It should be noted that on May 5, 2020, **a different statement was issued by the Tribe** as follows: “The Redding Rancheria has asked the Bureau of Indian Affairs to put a review of a proposed casino along I-5 on hold **after concerns were raised by county and local officials.**” Mike Hollowell, Tribal Attorney, for Redding Rancheria, confirmed the request Wednesday, May 6, 2020. There was also a follow-up statement by Redding Rancheria officials who said “Redding Rancheria has requested that the Bureau of Indian Affairs **pause** the environmental review process for the I-5 casino relocation project. We believe that the City and County’s opposition to the project has caused concern among federal decision-makers within the Trump administration and **may prove insurmountable.**”

Based on this news, the high interest in the community, and the conflicting/confusing statements that came with it, Shasta VOICES is again digging in to the facts and will provide a follow-up to “The Double Dip” independent research paper written in July 2019 (available on our website) regarding the same subject matter. Stay tuned!

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