



The VOICE

Your independent news source

Greater Shasta County, CA

Volume VIX, Issue VIII

www.shastavoices.com

December 2015

Did you know...

- Redding City Council voted December 1st to eliminate prevailing wage requirements from the Shasta-Trinity Fly Fishers 3,100 square foot clubhouse (with public restrooms) project at the city-owned Clover Creek Preserve. The building, being constructed by the Fly Fishers, will be given back to the City when completed, and leased from them for 25 years
- Through November 2015, there have been **169** single family dwelling unit permits drawn in the City of Redding, **61 more** than the same period last year. There have also been **23** new commercial building permits issued through November 2015, **12 more** than the same period last year.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Inside this issue:

Previewing 2016	1
Redding Now Offering Virtual Building Inspections	2
Community Mental Wellness Center in Shasta County	2
Finalized Blueprint for Public Safety Released	3
Updated News and Notes	4
Join Shasta VOICES	4

Previewing 2016

Shasta VOICES has been tracking and monitoring many issues that affect economic opportunity in our community since we began our work in 2007. We have grown to over 1,070 supporters in the last almost 9 years. We have accomplished much thus far, and will continue to pursue issues of economic importance in the Shasta County area in 2016. Here is a partial update of probable issues:

- **Blueprint for Public Safety**—The final document was unveiled on December 9, 2015, and top officials of both the City of Redding and Shasta County have agreed to create a joint implementation team to further study the recommendations in 2016. The general public will be engaged, and we will be there to participate and report on the progress.
- **November 2016 Local Elections**—There are two seats available on the Redding City Council, three seats available for Shasta County Supervisors, three seats available on the City of Anderson Council, and three seats available on the City of Shasta Lake City Council. As of this writing, there are no local initiatives. But, that is subject to change, and we will monitor and provide information on all local elections as it occurs during 2016.
- **Dignity Health Wellness Center Project**—Dignity Health North State, the parent company of Mercy Medical Center in Redding, plans to build a **\$50 million wellness center** on 12.5 acres near the former Raley's on the corner of Hartnell Avenue and Hemsted Drive, which is north of the Henderson Open Space area. The wellness "campus" project would create **120 to 180 local high-paying jobs** with \$9 million to \$14 million in annual salaries. The City would receive over \$3 million in building and impact fees. Construction and related jobs would also be created. This is exactly the kind of economic growth our community is looking for, and we will monitor and report progress as the project moves through all phases from negotiation to construction.
- **New Costco Facility at Oasis Road**—Work towards agreements between Costco and Levenson Development continues towards purchasing land to build a new 160,000 square foot Costco facility at the northeast corner of I-5 and Oasis Road. The project has been approved by the City of Redding for several years now. We will continue to monitor and report on the progress being made, hopefully seeing construction begin in 2016.
- **Downtown Redding Transportation Plan and Specific Plan**—These plans are continuing to move along, with much public discussion and input needed in 2016.
- **Grant Funding for Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Projects**—Our local transportation agency has grants of up to \$20 million available for multiple local eligible projects. We will continue to provide information and assistance to those interested in pursuing this new funding source.
- **Rising Public Pension Costs**—Local public services continue to be pressured as salary and benefit costs continue to rise. We will continue to monitor, report, and look for real solutions to these issues.
- **Economic and Job Creation Progress**—Many potential businesses consider locating or expanding in our community, only to be turned away by what they view as exorbitant regulations and fees imposed by government agencies. Shasta VOICES will continue to proactively assist such businesses in 2016.

Redding Now Offering “Virtual” Building Inspections

The City of Redding is helping contractors and homeowners save time and money by utilizing “virtual” building inspections for many types of residential building permits.

The new service allows those needing a follow-up inspection to email a photo to the building inspector or conduct an inspection via Skype or FaceTime instead of scheduling an in-person inspection. These virtual inspections will benefit both the contractor and the City.

“Often times a contractor will have minor corrections to make prior to receiving a final sign-off. A virtual inspection will allow them to make the correction immediately and not have to wait for an in-person inspection that can take 24 hours to conduct,” said Jim Wright, Interim Building Official for the City of Redding. “We want to be more responsive to the needs of our clients and help them get their job done in a timely fashion. Technology allows us to provide faster service without sacrificing quality and public safety.”

The launch of virtual inspections follows other technology-related improvements like online permit applications and online tracking of plan reviews. According to Erich Mayne, Permit Center Supervisor, the virtual inspections and online permitting save the City and applicants wear and tear on vehicles, lowers fuel costs, and helps our environment by reducing emissions. As the virtual inspection process for residential permits is fine-tuned, the City will look for other ways in which a virtual inspection may be appropriate and expand the use of them accordingly.

This newly implemented program is quite a welcome departure from past practices. It demonstrates the new customer service focus that Larry Vaupel, the Development Services Director who replaced Bill Nagel, has brought to the department since he came to Redding in October.

For more information on the virtual inspection program, contact Larry Vaupel, Development Services Director, at 530-225-4028.

Community Mental Wellness Center for Shasta County? Innovation Plan Submitted to State for Final Approval

On December 8th, the Shasta County Supervisors adopted a “Mental Health Services Act Innovation Plan” to be submitted to the state Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission for final approval before it can be implemented.

The “Plan” will allow Shasta County to provide a **Community Mental Wellness Center**, whose primary purpose is to increase access to services by providing “**after-hours**” mental health services in the community.

The Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency will contract for an after-hours mental wellness center in the community which will include the following: peer support (or buddy system) services to those individual navigating services; education groups for individuals, family members, and caregivers; pre-crisis and emergent crisis access to a clinician; case management services; transportation services; respite care for adults and youth; youth center services; access to transitional housing; and peer-run resource center to provide services such as assistance with Medi-Cal applications, parent/family supports, and referrals to other community-based organizations.

The main focus for this project is to improve outcomes as a result of an increase in accessing after-hours services.

Shasta County plans to conduct a competitive procurement process to locate the most advantageous organization with which to contract for an after-hours mental wellness center in the community.

Funding for this program is requested at **\$739,222** for fiscal year 2015/2016.

All projects that are approved for implementation must be new to the community, must contribute to learning, and must be time-limited, **up to a maximum of five years**. There is no data to explain what happens after the five years expires. That is a concern, but isn’t standing in the way of pursuing the project.

In November 2004, California voters approved Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), which became effective January 1, 2005. The purpose of this initiative was to dedicate additional funds for the provision of enhanced mental health services. The planning process was initiated in mid-2005 and continues today.

Although it is unclear why it has taken this long for Shasta County to apply for this much-needed service and funding to support it locally, it is a welcome step in the process of finally addressing local mental health issues.

Finalized Blueprint for Public Safety Released

The first draft of the joint Redding-Shasta County Strategic Plan (Blueprint) for Public Safety, before Council members had even received a copy for review, was somehow **leaked** to the Record Searchlight, who exposed its contents on Monday, September 14th. The finalized version, apparently after 4 revisions, was released to everyone on December 9th. Workshop-style meetings to discuss the Blueprint in public were held on Tuesday, December 15th, first at the Shasta County Supervisors meeting in the morning, then at a special meeting of the Redding City Council at 1:30 pm. It is a very long 344-page document (available in its entirety on both the City and County websites) so here is a condensed look at the recommendations, both immediate and long-term if additional revenues become available:

Recommendations for Redding Police Department— fill (as many as 10) existing vacancies (requires **no new money**); maintain current patrol unit staffing levels and pay; change to either 12-hour shifts or 10 hour shifts (**no new money**); make permanent 4 existing temporary officers (\$640,496 per year); hire more community service officers to take care of low level calls related to homeless issues, trespassing, illegal camps and loitering (\$503,436 per year); hire a Sergeant for inter-agency coordination (\$201,095 per year); create a special enforcement team (\$310,248 per year); augment **proactive** investigative abilities for vice, narcotics, human trafficking etc. (\$656,467 per year); create a youth and family services unit (\$443,719 per year); create a digital reporting system for officers to speed up investigations (\$25,000).

Recommendations for Redding—open a homeless day center (part of mental health stabilization center); build public toilets (\$500,000); create an inter-agency plan among public service agencies to find ways to reduce homelessness (\$150,000), focusing on housing first options and services for the mentally ill; create a sobering center (\$375,000).

Recommendations for Shasta County—establish a vision with measurable goals for improving public safety; utilize alternative custody arrangements (\$200,000 per year); double the number of beds in a jail rehab facility from 64 to either 96 (\$2.8 million plus \$345,000 operating costs per year) or 128 (\$2.2 million plus \$345,000 operating costs per year); Sheriff's office should work with other law enforcement and judicial agencies to create a criminal justice system master plan (\$300,000) for issues pertaining to AB109, Prop 47 and mental illness; provide more training for deputies working in the jail; create a mental health stabilization center (\$2 million plus annual operating costs); increase PSSO and night shift housing CD staff (\$485,000 per year).

Recommendations for Redding Fire— develop cooperative agreements with Cal-Fire beyond the mutual aid agreement for better coverage; three person engine companies (\$606,938 per year); four person truck companies (\$278,094 per year); four person engine companies (\$2,224,752 per year); staff 2 wildland engines in fire season (\$427,161); add 2 EMS quick response (\$1,112,376 per year); add a fire inspector (\$82,890 per year).

Additional ideas were added to the first version, according to the Record Searchlight (who has access to the original version) including a **tent city**, a **homeless court program** at the Good New Rescue Mission, and sliding scale **stipends** to eligible inmates.

Long-Term Social Support Issues for all areas— A good deal of time was spent on developing a balanced approach for programs, facilities, and enforcement as it relates to the **homeless** and **displaced people** in the area. The Blueprint document suggests that existing sit-lie ordinances and the breakdown of encampments are counterproductive and ought to be reconsidered. **“Criminalization”** is the most costly way of dealing with this population. A supportive approach to encampments with residents, faith-based organizations, and non-profits has been proven to be more effective in other areas. It is easier to provide needed services when they are all in one place, according to the document.

The grand totals in dollars (below) is broken down by tiers if additional funds are available, adding up to **\$20,205,724.00**:

TOTAL—ALL AGENCIES	Tier 0 Current	Tier 1 +Up to \$5 million	Tier 2 +Up to \$10 million	Tier 3 +Up to \$15 million	Tier 4 +Up to \$20 million	Tier 5 +Up to \$25 million
Total One Time Costs		\$3,295,000	\$2,750,000		\$600,000	
Total Annual Costs	\$640,496	\$2,702,804	\$1,003,484	\$1,328,969	\$2,706,252	\$5,178,719
Total All Costs	\$640,496	\$5,997.804	\$3,753,484	\$1,328,969	\$3,306,252	\$5,178,719

Noticeably **absent** from both of the first two public meetings for feedback on all of this were members of the general public—surprisingly disappointing, given the amount of public outcry and criticism of these government agencies for seemingly doing little about the perceived quality of life problems in the area. Perhaps they will show up for the soon to be scheduled follow-up meetings specifically designed for general public feedback.

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 Redding Mayor for 2016—At its December 1, 2015 Council Meeting, Redding City Council members voted to have Vice-Mayor Missy McArthur to serve as Mayor for 2016. Council member Brent Weaver will serve as Vice-Mayor, and Kristin Schreder will serve as the Mayor Pro-Tem.

City of Redding Permit Center Client Appreciation Week—The City of Redding Permit Center will be hosting an open house from January 4-7, 2016. Development Services Director Larry Vaupel has sent the following information out to the City's permit center customers:

We appreciate the work our clients do to make our community a better place to live, work and play. We want to dedicate a week to express our gratitude for all that you do. We value our relationships with our clients and the way we work together to facilitate investment in our city. We share the common goals of securing investment in Redding and making it a thriving place to do business.

We want to hear your suggestions on how we can help you be more successful. Please join us during the week of January 4-7 at one of our Open Houses. You will be able to meet with staff and discuss ways in which we can make the City of Redding the best place to do business in California.

I look forward to seeing you the first week of 2016 and working with you to make the New Year our best year ever.

The open house schedule looks like this: **Roofers**, Monday January 4, 3:30—5:00 pm; **Builders**, Tuesday January 5, 1:30—3:00 pm; **Plumbers**, Tuesday January 5, 3:30—5:00 pm; **Solar**, Wednesday, January 6, 9:00—10:30 a.m.; **HVAC**, Wednesday January 6, 3:30—5:00 pm; **Architects and Engineers**, Thursday January 7, 9:00—10:30 am; **Electricians**, Thursday January 7, 3:30—5:00 pm.

Shasta County Sheriff's Offices to Relocate—Due to the upcoming construction of a new Shasta County Courthouse, the existing location of the Sheriff's administrative offices on Court Street will be demolished. The County has purchased a building and land at 300 Park Marina Circle from the McConnell Foundation for \$2.8 million, and budgeted another \$3.3 million (includes building improvements specific to needs) to relocate the Sheriff's office from Court Street to the new location. Officials at the County indicated they purchased the building rather than using a lease because it created a future asset for the County. The asset could be sold at a later date if necessary, if and when additional space becomes available when the new courthouse is built and the old courthouse is vacated. They expect to move into the new facility sometime in March, 2016.

Knighton Road Veterans Clinic Complex— At a City of Redding Planning Commission meeting held on November 10, 2015, K. Maurice Johannessen, the Commissioners recommended approval to develop a new Veteran's Clinic on about 16 acres located along the south side of Knighton Road. Before City Council was able to consider his applications, however, the County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) needed to consider them. That ALUC meeting was held on December 16th, and his request was unanimously approved. Now the project will go before Redding City Council at the January 19th Council meeting for their consideration.

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