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The current residential fee structure for a single family home in Redding is already putting the dream of home ownership out of reach for most working people in the area:

2100 SF Home

Building Fee: \$ 2,687.00

Development Fees: \$ 9,214.00

Water & Sewer Fees: \$12,806.00

School Fees: \$5,523.00

TOTAL FEES: \$ 30,230.00

Of course, this does not include the permit fees and inspection fees. It does not include any special benefit district fees. It does not include the cost of the land your structure would be built on, nor does it include any of the costs of building the structure. And, there is generally a “cost of living” increase that occurs each year.

There are proposals to add new fees to any new development that could raise the total fees to well over \$40,000.00 per single family dwelling.

Commercial development fees are significantly higher than residential fees, so much so that many businesses wishing to locate in the Redding area choose to go elsewhere. This contributes to a continual lack of quality job creation, which is so badly needed in this area.

The newest proposed fee is called the “**Fix 5 Partnership**”. The State and Federal government have long maintained responsibility for maintaining and improving I-5. Now it appears that the gasoline taxes collected to pay for this “don’t go as far as they used to”. The cost to add a third lane to both sides of I-5 from Corning to Mountain Gate, a total of 61 miles, will be \$755 million. The partnership

is seeking a new development fee to be adopted by May, 2008 to pay the potential shortfall in government funding. If this is enacted, the fee will be added onto all new residential and commercial buildings from Corning to Mountain Gate. The amount of the fees have yet to be determined.

The planning horizon for adding these lanes is 2030. The purpose is to prevent future congestion. ***Studies don’t show that local traffic onto I-5 is a large contributing factor. It is an interstate highway, and the state and federal government should pay for it.***

Shasta VOICES will continue to monitor all of these fee issues, and publicly voice our concerns to the appropriate governing bodies at the City of Redding and Shasta County. We must respond, or there will be no end to this trend of adding fees and taxing the local citizens.

GASB 45 - Accounting For Retiree Benefit Costs

Redding is starting to grapple with the \$94 million in long-term costs of retiree health care, as required under new nationwide accounting rules, known as GASB 45. It requires officials to calculate how much money they would have to pay out each year to pay off the retiree health insurance bill in 30 years.

Current benefits provide retirees who are eligible (age 50 and 5 years of CalPERS service) health insurance for themselves and their qualified dependents if they elect to pay 50% of the composite active/retiree medical/dental/vision rate for full coverage. The full coverage monthly premium rate is currently \$1157.00. That means the cost for the retiree is \$579 per month.

Statistics show that the current average age of active City employees is 48.3, with an average length

of service of 12.1 years. The average retirement age is 58.4, with the exception of police and fire, which are 52.4 and 54.5 respectively.

There are currently 247 retirees. This number will be dramatically increasing in the next 5 years and beyond.

The current trend requires the City to set aside \$7.857 million per year to retire the \$94 million unfunded liability in 30 years.

There are several options that are being discussed as solutions to funding this liability:

1. Putting money in a trust fund for future bills, phasing in payments over several years to ease the transition.

Retirees are eligible if they have attained age 50 and 5 years of CalPERS service, and they retire directly from the City.

2. Change the benefits structure, which appears to be “skewed” in favor of short term employees.
3. Change or reduce the health benefits now offered to plans with a lower cost and usage.
4. End health benefits for new and future retirees who are not already promised benefits.

No decisions have been made about funding thus far. There are no easy answers.

Shasta VOICES believes the taxpayers should not be the ones that again are asked to pay for such benefits, which are superior to any benefits they may have access to themselves.

Shasta VOICES Takes Stand on Private Property Owners Rights

There has been a long-standing battle between the private property owners located on the ACID Canal in Redding and the City of Redding.

The City, through the CSAC committee, wants to add public bike and hiking trails along the Canal. In order to accomplish this, they need to obtain permission from the property owners along the ACID Canal, as well as support from the ACID Board, for easements giving access from their properties to the proposed trails.

The property owners, whose spokesperson is Fran Jenkins, have been documenting, photographing, and otherwise proving that this is an

unfair burden being placed on them for many years. The “crime” issues are well documented in this area, along with trash dumping and trespass issues.

The property owners have spent a good deal of their own time and money to clean up and maintain these areas, including the installation of fencing and “no trespassing” signs to keep transients and others from using this area as a dumping ground.

To put a public trail on private property would leave these owners with all of the liability and responsibility of maintaining their property, which would be totally accessi-

ble to the public. The City would have none. That is not an acceptable situation.

Shasta VOICES wrote letters in support of the private property owners rights to the ACID Board, who voted unanimously *not* to endorse a trail on the private property on the ACID Canal.

Shasta VOICES is currently tracking another property rights issue, the re-writing of the City of Redding’s **Eminent Domain** documents. The first reading of the changes was at the May 15th City Council meeting. We are in the process of studying the new verbiage, and will continue to keep you updated.

Building and Development Rules Applied Inconsistently

Kohl’s Gets “Gift”

Anyone who has tried to build something, add to or remodel an existing structure, or develop land in the Redding area has felt the pain of dealing with inconsistently applied “rules” by government employees.

Nowhere is this better illustrated than with the recent City decision to remove the required street improvements for the Kohl’s department store project at the corner of Dana Drive and Browning Streets. Though all parties involved in this decision agreed that a traffic signal must be installed at Browning and Dana Drive, and Hilltop Drive must have another lane to accommodate the additional shopping traffic, and that is how the project was approved, the decision makers voted to waive these requirements until a later date. Why? Kohl’s wants to open in November. They can’t

make those improvements by then.

Wouldn’t we all enjoy such a gift from the City.

But we all aren’t entitled to that kind of consideration. How many other projects have been delayed, and are currently being delayed, in some cases for years, because of unforeseen government requirements that are not only costly, but seemingly unnecessary? Decisions at the planning and development department of the City are often made arbitrarily, on the spot, and as an afterthought, without regard to the approved project specifications.

And, here we have a situation that is totally contrary to what was approved. Those requirements were

put into place for a reason. That reason was increased traffic congestion in an already congested traffic area. This hasn’t changed, so why have the requirements?

Are there any fair standards in the planning and development

departments at the City of Redding? There ought to be. And there ought to be an independent source monitoring it. **Shasta VOICES** plans to do just that. We may be unofficial, but we certainly plan to amplify our concerns.

Do you have concerns about related issues? We would like to hear from you. Contact Mary B. Machado, Executive Director, (530) 222-5251, or email mary@shastavoices.com.

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