

## New "Library" — Wrong Location, Overbuilt, Too Costly

Are you interested in increasing property taxes for a new City Council chamber? What if it included meeting rooms?

City Hall knows that's a nonstarter, so it calls its latest bond a "library," located near city offices so staff can reserve the meeting rooms and new council chamber.

What about the Sanchez neighborhood library? The plan is to starve it of media, just as they've starved it of maintenance. Eventually, it'd close for "lack of use." That was the plan with the prior failed library bond, and there's no reason to think the cynical long-term plan has changed. What would Pacifica do with the Sanchez site? Sell it for a convenience store? And what would it do with the proceeds?

Bonds are expensive. Taxpayers pay double the cost, due to interest, usually over 30 years. A \$50 million bond is really a \$100 million bond, although City Hall won't admit that in its taxpayer-funded campaign mailings. Problem is, Pacifica's paltry commercial tax base (12,800 total properties) means that most of the tax falls on residents, increasing the cost of living here. Landlords will pass the tax on to renters.

Pacifica chose a lousy location for its Taj Mahal on the Beach. City Hall could have sold the Sharp Park site to a hotelier, which would have produced tax revenue and brought tourists. Instead, it's trying again for another tax increase, which seems to be the only play in the book. City Hall has sought to increase taxes at least since 1973. The voters usually told our government to make do. Presently, Pacifica is flush with high revenues from increasing property values, with taxes increasing automatically. But still they whine about insufficient revenue, almost all of which goes to staff salaries and benefits.

How will our car-less neighbors — seniors, disabled, poor, and kids — get to the Sharp Park "library"? City Hall doesn't seem to have an answer. After all, it hears only from people who drive to meetings. Our population is mostly in the north and south, so why would the library be sited miles from where most live? Is it because it'd be convenient for City Hall staff?

Bonds are also unfair. Identical homes with different assessed valuations pay wildly different taxes.

Pacifica could have opted for a parcel tax, in which everyone pays the same and there are no wasted interest payments.

Most Pacificans don't use our libraries. Like others, I use libraries outside Pacifica, and the cost is zero.

Bill Collins