



# Do you want more?

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- VOICE IN PLANNING ISSUES
- OFFICE SPACE/COMMERCIAL IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS
- TRUST IN OUR CITY REPRESENTATIVES

## PRIORITIES

The December 2005 issue of HoodLink teased an upcoming topic: *Blood on the Tracks*. We will cover that topic. Later. Since the world didn't stop spinning, other topics have become more immediately important.

### WE WANT CLEAN WATER...

Let's get two things clear up front. The personal physical health of anyone who spends a lot of time in the ocean is affected by water quality. And being a beach community, Encinitas' economic health, both present and future, depends to a great extent on a clean ocean and white sandy beaches.

Proposition C, the mail-in ballot currently in the hands of Encinitas property owners, is entitled "Proposed City Clean Water Regulatory Fee". The existing program at the core of Prop C was set up to address the non-point source pollution spoiling our water ways and beaches. It is designed to address federally mandated issues, but without such a program our beaches would be a fetid mess.

The few among us, who were here back in the day, would argue that our coastal waters are dirty when compared to the state of things in the '60s. At that time, it was rare NOT to see the bottom when riding a wave. Whether you were at Tomato Patch, Dabbers, Suckouts, or Boneyard, you could see the bottom fly by below you as you surfed.

People who were born here in the last 25 years, as well as the folks who have moved in from LA, OC, or TX, have no way of knowing of the paradise we have been systematically killing since then. They may not know how clean our waters were before the current levels of suburban runoff (which is encouraged by legal over paving and non-enforcement of anti-litter laws) flow with every local drizzle and over-watered lawn.

So yes, with the help of the City's Clean Water Program, relatively speaking our waters may be clean. But they are not actually clean and they are not getting any cleaner.

### WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT...

We, the citizens of Encinitas, should be pioneering efforts to **regain** the quality of our coastal waters.

We should be leading the way to show our neighboring upstream inland communities how to keep filthy suburban runoff out of the creeks which flow into our lagoons and onto our beaches.

We should be leading the way to show our neighbors how to limit the amount of non-permeable surfaces and encourage the charging of ground water sources long before the streets turn into unbridled creeks, which require extensive storm drain systems to keep unfiltered runoff out of our coastal waters.

These are serious issues and ones which deserve attention to affect real improvements.

### PROPOSITION C TO THE RESCUE? NOT!

So, since we are for expanding clean water efforts, then surely we must be in favor of Prop C?

Unfortunately, we can not be. Prop C does nothing more than shift a good chunk of the costs of running the existing program from the City's General Fund to the smaller subset of property owners who are currently paying for active water meters.

Prop C proposes NOTHING MORE to help the tadpoles in Cottonwood Creek. Nothing more would be done to keep trash off the beach or suburban runoff out of the waves. Nothing at all would be done to keep kelp ON the beach where it helps stabilize the sand, keeping ours a clean sandy beach.

No, passage of Prop C would do nothing but add an additional revenue stream to what seems to be an under-disciplined City government. IF C passes, it will be the result of the Council's hiring of firm(s) which offer local governments scientifically-tested voter-manipulation marketing tools.

We suggest you explore <http://www.tramutola.com/> Our Council Representatives should be leading us to do MORE than the minimum guidelines of so-called unfunded mandates. They should stop complaining about how the State or the Feds are forcing

something upon our community and do what we should already WANT to do for the good of all.

We believe that the least expensive and most equitable way to protect the quality of our waters is to ACT as if it is the RESPONSIBILITY of ALL people living in the watershed to STOP contributing to the non-point-source troubles we are inflicting on our coastal watershed.

### I THOUGHT YOU WANT CLEAN WATER?

We do. And there are myriad things which can be done to improve the quality of our watershed. This list of things DOES NOT include having Council pay 100s of thousands of taxpayers' dollars for consultants to figure out how to hoodwink the public into approving new revenue streams in the false name of doing something wholesome.

Shared responsibility in fixing shared problems is right. Providing or paying for vital services, when no one else will do the right thing, is honorable. And such honorable actions are only sustainable when a concerted parallel effort is being made to address the root causes of the troubles.

We must insure that those who are responsible, for perpetuating these troubles by choosing to waste everyone's time and money, are addressed.

*So, to everyone who really wants clean water: please join us and Vote NO on Proposition C.*

- Send your signed ballot via US Postal Service Certified Mail to insure it will be properly received and counted.
- Send a note to our representatives telling them how you voted and why. Request that they act with leadership and honesty when dealing with all of the quality-of-life issues we face.
- We need to let them know: if they come up with a plan to improve the quality of life, for all life which relies on the health of our watershed, we will gladly work with them to figure out how to equitably pay for it.

—The editors



**FEBRUARY 2006 SPECIAL PROP "C" ISSUE**

**PROP C NUMBERS**

The numbers don't add up to an equitable tax/fee. Ballots were sent to 22,110 parcel owners (payers of property taxes) for approval. If approved by a simple majority, only the owners of approximately 19,000 active water meters will pay this tax/fee. That's 3,110 votes or 14.1% of the total ballots that can vote yes but won't have to pay anything as they don't currently have a meter.

That is not equitable.

If a parcel owner has one piece of property with seven (7) meters on it, he has one (1) vote only, but if approved, will pay on seven meters.

Conversely, if an owner has ten (10) parcels without meters he has ten (10) votes and if approved, he has no liability.

Water meter usage does not correlate to storm water runoff. This voting procedure is inequitable. As such, this writer is voting no on Prop. C.

*Kathleen Lindemann*



\*note: As of Wednesday, February 1, 2006, the City has recieved back about 5,000 ballots

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**A FUNDING ISSUE**

If political observers are looking for the kind of controversy that Proposition A generated in the Encinitas November elections, they may be disappointed.

Either outcome in the January mail ballot election known as the clean water regulatory fee, or Proposition C, will produce the same result as far as the cleanliness of our ocean and lagoons. Both sides in this debate are demanding that the city of Encinitas continue to comply with all state and federally mandated requirements as they have since 2001. And both sides should congratulate the city for setting an example of excellence throughout the state in complying with those regulations.

The differences of opinion will become more apparent when the discussion leads to the funding for the program. The City has been funding the program from current property taxes via the general fund, and it can easily continue with that method. Despite the fact that the Encinitas City Council in recent months chose to grant substantial employee pay raises and a 35% increase in City pension benefits, Councilwoman Christy Guerin admitted that the City could afford to continue the

clean water program. Then why the new tax?

If there is controversy in this election, it will revolve around the City's plan to deceive the voters. They have spent at least \$110,000 with three consulting firms (Tramutola LLC, Godbe Research and MuniFinancial) whose websites and proposals promise to assist the City in passing a new tax.

They also promise to assist in the wording of opinion surveys and the actual ballot language to achieve the desired result. If this new tax was so good for the voters, it would not have cost a penny to spread the word.

It is clearly time for the citizens of Encinitas to send a message to their elected officials that we do not care to spend our taxpayer dollars to be manipulated by high-priced consulting firms. We need to tell them that we certainly do not want to pay twice for the same service. We need to tell them that they have to practice fiscal conservation as well as environmental conservation. A no vote on Prop C will communicate the concept that they either work for us or find another line of work.

*Bill Rodewald*

Cardiff-by-the-Sea resident Bill Rodewald is president of the Encinitas Taxpayers Association.

**TAX OR FEE**

Encinitas Property Owners...

**DID YOU RECEIVE A MAIL-IN BALLOT IN YESTERDAY'S MAIL?** All registered property owners in Encinitas are being asked to vote on a "fee" increase to be assessed against each active water meter. The fee is being promoted as a clean water fee. I recommend voting NO on this TAX increase.

**WE ALL SUPPORT CLEAN WATER.** This issue is not about clean water. It is about tax increases. Whether the ballot passes or not the clean water program will continue in full.

**SAY NO TO THIS TAX INCREASE.** The ballot language and information packet are misleading in that they imply the fee increase is necessary to continue protecting the quality of our clean water. The City is required to comply regardless of the outcome of this ballot. The information packet describes the program's accomplishments and results. These results were fully funded in our current and past years' budgets without an additional "fee."

**WHY THE NEW FEE?** The City claims it is needed to fulfill the state and federally mandated clean water programs. The City currently spends \$1.3 million from

its general fund. The new \$60 per year per water meter "fee" would provide an additional \$1.1 million in yearly revenue. The increased revenue will free up the City's general fund money for increases in other programs. So is it a "clean water fee" or another way to increase the City's revenues?

**NORTH COUNTY TIMES EDITORIAL** says "Voters in Encinitas and Solana Beach should reject ballot measures by their City Councils that would raise dedicated taxes for programs that already fall within ordinary business of the City. Politicians are essentially disguising a run-of-the-mill tax hike by assigning the revenue to a noble purpose." (January 4th Editorial by North County Times)

**WHY ARE THEY ARE CALLING IT A "FEE?"** Most likely it is to avoid the 2/3 vote threshold mandated by Prop 218 for tax increases. Paradoxically, the same program is currently being paid for by taxes paid through the City's general fund. The general fund is the budget account used to fund most of common City services provided to the City's general populace. A 2/3 majority is needed to approve increases to taxes currently supporting the general fund. According to the City, Prop C can be approved by a simple majority.

**PLEASE VOTE NO.** Say no to tax increases and be sure to return your ballot by March 7th.

**FORWARD THIS TO A FRIEND.** Tell your neighbors and friends. Voting has begun and getting the word out immediately is crucial to stopping this TAX increase.

*Bruce Ehlers*

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