



Redding construction blossoms in June

Building valuation of \$13.2 million reaches highest level since September

By David Benda
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Buoyed by another strong month for housing starts and the high-profile Trader Joe's store, the city of Redding recorded \$13.2 million in building valuation in June.

It was the highest month since September, when \$15.2 million in valuation was reported.

Trader Joe's is building in the Kohl's shopping center near the corner of Browning Street and Hilltop Drive. The store, which would be the first one in California north of Chico, is expected to open by Oct. 1.

Another commercial project that received a building permit in June was a gas station-convenience store on the northeast corner of College View Drive and Churn Creek Road. The station will feature six pumps. Developer Steve Woods said the corner development also will have room for a restaurant. Woods expects construction to be done in about eight months.

Meanwhile, the city issued 24 single-family home permits in June. Combined with May, Redding's Building Department has recorded 53 housing starts in two months.

Once again, the bulk of the single-family home permits in June was issued to national builder D.R. Horton, which is building the River Crest subdivision in south Redding. D.R. Horton took out 14 home permits in June, three more than it was issued in May.

The \$13.2 million in total valuation issued in June was up from \$9.3 million in May.

Despite the increase, the \$44.2 million in valuation in the first half of 2008 is about a 31 percent drop from the first six months of 2007.

While housing starts in the first half of this year were off 41 percent from a year ago, the past two months have helped the city avoid a dubious distinction.

The first three months of 2008 were so dismal that Redding was in jeopardy of recording fewer than 100 housing starts for the first time since 1974, when 51 were reported.

With 82 single-family home permits issued through June, it appears the city will avoid the low-light.

And July could be another strong month for housing as the city's temporary incentives kick in.

Redding is cutting building fees in half, boosting energy-efficient incentives by 50 percent, postponing annual impact fee increases from July through January and allowing builders to pay these fees after the final home inspection has been completed.

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