

CONTRA COSTA TIMES

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## Housing fees vs. builder greed

By John Hunter  
YOURTURN COMMENTARY

Raising fees to complete Highway 4 and other projects? "Where is the urgency," says Councilman Arne Simonsen. It is hard to believe an Antioch City Councilman can be that far out of touch with the reality of commuting to work on Highway 4.

The issue is not the increase, but who will pay for it? Guy Bjerke of the Home Builders Association said it very plainly "Developers likely will pass on the higher fees to the home buyers unless the housing market softens."

The home builders are saying that the price of the home depends on supply and demand they will price their homes as high as they can. The price of their homes has nothing to do with the cost of building the home. It is about getting as much out of the buying public as they can.

According to the Times, homes have doubled in price in the last 5 years. Does anyone believe that the cost to build a home has doubled in the last 5 years. A \$350,000 house is now \$700,000. A \$350,000 increase in profits.

If home builders had a conscience they would take the \$15,000 increase fees for better roads out of their excessive profits.

It is shameful to see what people have to go through to commute on Highway 4.

Maybe the Times can help the public by doing a full and detailed investigation of the home builders and the cost of building a home.

Today the home builders are part of the problem and not part of the solution. It is time they step up to the plate and become part of the solution.

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*John Hunter lives in Clayton.*

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