

City Manager's Weekly Report
For the week ending October 17th, 2008

1. **Meeting Notes**

The next regular City Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 21st.

As a reminder, the City Council will have a regular business meeting on Tuesday, October 28th, rather than reserving that 4th Tuesday meeting for Study Sessions only, as is the custom. The meeting that would normally be held on the first Tuesday in November (November 4th [Election Day]) is cancelled.

2. **City Receives Another "Safe Route to School" Grant**

The Engineering Department received word from Caltrans this week that its \$477,000 "safe route to school" application to improve the street safety for the children walking or biking along Harbour Way South to Nystrom School was approved. This program is highly competitive, with only 119 projects funded out of 401 applications. The grant funds will be used to widen the sidewalk area, improve the crosswalks and construct a median between the school site and the Greenway bicycle path on Harbour Way South. These improvements will be coordinated with the construction work being done by the School District at Nystrom School.

My thanks go to Engineering Department staff, the Glen Price Group, and all others involved in the preparation of this grant application.

3. **Housing Authority Receives Lead Hazard Control Grant Award from HUD**

This past week, Richmond Housing Authority staff received notification by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that it was awarded a \$3,000,000 grant to implement a Lead Hazard Control program. Richmond's proposal was one of 61 local projects nationwide to receive funding, and it was funded for the full amount requested in the City's application.

The grant proposal, which was coordinated by Housing Authority staff, was to continue the City of **Richmond's Effort to Abate Lead** program called "Project REAL." This program, with funding from two prior successful HUD grants, has made great strides in the community to abate lead-based paint hazards, with over 400 households with children age six and under having been inspected and abated. Staff continues to build local capacity to support this effort through the training and development of qualified lead abatement contractors.

This third grant will expand upon this much needed and successful endeavor, in collaboration with partners such as the Contra Costa County Department of Health Services, Contra Costa County Housing Authority, the City of San Pablo and various community-based organizations.

My thanks to the Housing Authority staff and all others involved in the preparation of this grant application.

4. **Credit Rating Upgrade for Wastewater Bonds**

Standard & Poor's Ratings Services (S&P) raised its rating and underlying rating to "AA-" from "A+" for the City's existing wastewater revenue bonds. The raised ratings reflect the system's strong debt service coverage, approved rate schedule and system capacity. S&P has also assigned a "Debt Derivative Profile (DDP)" of 1.5, reflecting S&P's view that Richmond's swap portfolio reflects a very low credit risk at this time, due to the low degree of involuntary termination risk and strong management practices, as evidenced by formalized debt and swap management policies. S&P's DDP scores range from 1 to 4, with 1 representing no risk and 4 representing high risk. This upgrade will result in lower interest rates and associated costs for future bond issues.

5. **Police Officer Trainee Examination**

City staff members are continually working to bring more Police officers into the department and into the community. Most recently, on Saturday, October 11th, the Human Resources Management Department conducted an examination of thirty-one (31) applicants in the exam for the Police Officer Trainee position. This examination consisted of the California Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Entry Level Test Battery and a writing exercise. Candidates also took the physical abilities test that was administered by the Richmond Police Department. Candidates who pass the POST Entry Level Test Battery and the physical abilities test will be invited to interview with the Police Department. Candidates who are successful in the interview process will be placed on an employment list. These candidates will be eligible for selection, after passing a polygraph exam, a thorough background investigation, and psychological and medical evaluations. Individuals selected from the employment list will attend a POST Certified Police Recruit Academy.

6. **Payroll System Conversion**

As you may recall, City staff members are working to implement a new integrated finance and accounting system, MUNIS, to replace the current SAP system. The payroll/human resources function is a key component of this new system, and ideally, one would always like to make the system conversion beginning January 1st to simplify annual tax reporting. With this looming deadline in mind, the City's Payroll/Human Resources team spent this past week, including many hours over this past 3-day weekend, entering and proofing in MUNIS to prepare the system for the conversion process, which includes running 3 "parallel" payroll runs with the old system. Dozens of City employees, including those from outside the Finance and Human Resources Departments, responded to a call for volunteers and came in to help out on Saturday, Sunday and Monday (a City holiday!), working from 5:30 am until 6:00 pm. With the help of the volunteers, the group completed all tasks necessary for the City to have its first parallel payroll processing next week, and is still planning to "go live" in MUNIS on January 1.

7. **Recreation Highlights**

The following are highlights of activities from the Recreation Department:

Annual Super Saturday Family Fest: The Recreation Department participated in the Citywide Annual Super Saturday Family Fest on Saturday, October 11th. The department provided a booth with programming information available to families and community members.

Flag Football League: The nationally recognized under-11 NFL Licensed Flag Football League has begun at LaMoine Park. Four teams of 32 youth will participate.

Twilight High School Basketball: The Twilight High School Basketball League continues with exciting action. The El Cerrito Junior Varsity team beat De Anza by 1 point within the final buzzer of the game. Participants and fans spilled into the hallways with celebration. Currently 46 boys and 72 girls participate in the league.

Futsal: Over 55 participants are in the under-10 league, and over 40 youth are in the under-13 league competing in the Futsal league.

8. **Web Site Fun Facts**

Continuing the trend, the number of website visitors is up substantially for the first quarter of FY 2008-09 as compared to last year. The number of international visits continues to increase substantially.

Visitor Summary 1st FY quarter July – September			
	FY08	FY09	% Change
Unique Visitors	126,829	228,950	80.52%
Visitors Who Visited Once	98,478	194,545	97.55%
Visitors Who Visited More Than Once	28,351	34,405	21.35%
Average Visit Length	00:09:51	0:11:01	11.84%
International Visits	4.04%	14.23%	252.23%