

## **City Manager's Weekly Report**

This is the weekly report for the week ending December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

### 1. **Meeting Notes**

The next regular City Council meeting is scheduled for this Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, which will be the final City Council meeting during calendar year 2008. The meeting will begin with a Closed Session at 5:00 PM, followed by a 6:30 PM Redevelopment Agency meeting in advance of the 7:00 PM City Council agenda. The City Council is thereafter scheduled to meet on January 6<sup>th</sup>, January 13<sup>th</sup> (City Council swearing-in), January 20<sup>th</sup>, and January 27<sup>th</sup>.

Please note that the public hearing concerning the Kohl's project, which was originally noticed to be heard at this Tuesday's meeting, has been continued to the meeting of January 6<sup>th</sup>, with the concurrence of both the applicant and the appellant.

### 2. **RichmondBUILD Receives 2008 FBI Director's Community Leadership Award**

This past Wednesday, the RichmondBUILD Pre-Apprenticeship Construction Skills & Solar Installation Training program received the 2008 FBI Director's Community Leadership Award. The annual award recognizes the achievements of individuals or organizations in the area of violence, drug prevention and education.

Congressman George Miller released the following statement in conjunction with this award:

I extend my congratulations to RichmondBUILD on receiving the FBI Director's Community Leadership Award. RichmondBUILD is an excellent example of what is right in our community and I commend them for their hard work.... My recent visit with the RichmondBUILD students showed me the students' pure excitement in learning new skills that will move them forward in their careers. Not only does RichmondBUILD help to stem the use of violence and drugs in our community, the program gives students the opportunity and tools to succeed in a new economy. With programs like RichmondBUILD, we can help train the next generation of Americans so that they can succeed in green collar jobs – jobs that provide a secure future in the renewable energy and energy efficiency fields. What Richmond has built with this program is a model for cities around the country.

Congressman Miller plans to enter a statement into the Congressional Record congratulating RichmondBUILD on this and other recent achievements.

3. **“One Block at a Time” Returns Tomorrow (Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup>)**

The “One Block at a Time” program returns tomorrow (Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup>) this time in the Pullman area on the north side of Cutting Boulevard on South 34<sup>th</sup> and South 35<sup>th</sup> Streets. The organizational briefing for this event will be at 377 South 34<sup>th</sup> Street in the parking lot of the Holy Temple Church of God, with the event commencing at 9:00 AM.

4. **Update on the Renovation of the Plunge**

If you had a chance to go by the Richmond Plunge this week, you may have noticed a major change to the roof line. The structural steel frame of the roof monitor has been added to the peak of the roof. This is the first step in the process of reconstructing this original architectural element that helps ventilate the building. In the following weeks, the monitor will be framed out in wood in preparation for the glass windows.

The reconstruction of the east wall along Dornan Drive is finished and is waiting to be fitted with the new windows that are being manufactured to match the original window style. The concrete perimeter stem wall was completed along the west side of the building. This will allow the west wall to be completed by the end of the month. The south wall completion will follow shortly thereafter.

With the exception of the removal of the tile edge around the swimming pool, the interior pool demolition is complete. The next steps are to install the new plumbing and electrical so the new pool surface can be installed.

The contractor, aided by the weather, continues to stay on schedule to complete this phase of the work by June 2009.

5. **City of Richmond’s “2008” Charitable Giving Campaign**

Each year, Richmond employees participate in a Charitable Giving Campaign, which provides funding for a number of local agencies including Community Health Charities, Friends of Richmond Library, Friends of Disabled Children, Richmond Police Activities League, Richmond Youth Academy, the Firefighter Toy Program and the Police Explorers. With final commitment amounts in from all departments, the Campaign has received pledges from employees in the amount of \$41,078.97.

Many thanks to Finance staff member Theresa Austin who, once again, chaired the City-wide Campaign as she has done in past years, and thanks to all employees who participated.

6. **Risk Management Joint Powers Authority**

This past Thursday, I attended the board of directors meeting for the California Joint Powers Risk Management Authority (CJPRMA), along with Assistant City Manager Leslie Knight and Risk Manager Robyn Kain. The City of Richmond submitted an application for membership to this authority to obtain general liability

insurance coverage. The City stands to substantially reduce its current insurance premium payment by making a change in its pooled insurance carrier, which will allow us to improve our insurance funding to the required 80% confidence level as set by Council resolution. The CJPRMA members were very welcoming towards Richmond and asked several questions to evaluate our potential membership. Following this discussion, the CJPRMA voted unanimously to approve our membership. Richmond has also been approved for membership in the Excess Insurance Authority for the California State Association of Counties. Staff will be evaluating both options in the next few weeks in order to make a recommendation as to which organization to join.

7. **California Budget Crisis Presents New Threats to Redevelopment**

Both the League of California Cities and the California Redevelopment Association (CRA) continue to keep us informed regarding the ongoing and deepening problems associated with the State budget. On December 1st, the new legislative session began, and on the same day Governor Schwarzenegger proclaimed a fiscal emergency under Proposition 58 and ordered the State Legislature into an extraordinary session to address the State's immediate budget crisis for 2008-09. The Legislature has 45 days to approve a plan to address the fiscal emergency. If it does not, legislators will be prohibited from working on any other issues until they resolve the budget crisis. On December 10<sup>th</sup>, the Governor announced that the deficit had worsened, and it is now projected to be \$14.8 billion this fiscal year and \$41.8 billion for the next two years. The State is expected to be out of cash to pay its bills by the end of February.

According to the CRA, legislators can once again be expected to look at redevelopment as a source of funds to balance their budget. As you will recall, the State has already taken in excess of \$3 million from the Richmond Redevelopment Agency. The new Legislative Analyst, Mac Taylor, has recommended to legislators that they increase the take from redevelopment agencies this year to \$400 million, which would mean another \$1 million hit to Richmond, and to make it a permanent diversion of these important local funds.

As you recall, the California Redevelopment Association and the City of Moreno Valley's Redevelopment Agency filed a lawsuit in Sacramento Superior Court seeking to block the legislation which authorizes the one-time raid of \$350 million in redevelopment funds. We will continue to keep you informed regarding the ongoing budget issues, and the status of this lawsuit.

8. **Status of Retail Space at the Macdonald – 80 Shopping Center**

The leasing of retail space at the Macdonald – 80 Shopping Center continues, and it has now been six months since the new Target store opened to anchor the center. The current leasing status is as follows:

**OPEN**

Game Stop  
Jackson Hewitt  
Panda Express  
Payless Shoe Source  
Radio Shack  
Target  
Wells Fargo  
Wingstop

**OPENING SOON**

AT&T  
Sally Beauty Supply  
Subway

**AVAILABLE FOR LEASE**

One (1) 978 sq. ft. space  
One (1) 3,600 sq. ft. space  
Two (2) 1,500 sq. ft. spaces

The Office of Economic Development staff continues to work with the developer and broker to attract new retail tenants to Richmond's newest shopping center.

9. **Main Street Holiday Festival**

The Richmond Main Street Holiday Festival at Nevin Center this past Wednesday was a great holiday event. The morning featured entertainment by Puppet Master, Nick Barone, who presented his original puppet show "Holiday Treats." In addition to keeping the children completely entertained, Nick also gave a mini-demonstration about how the puppets worked and how he put the show together. More than 300 children, teachers and parents from the Richmond College Prep School, YMCA Day Care and Le Petite from the Richmond Social Security child care program attended the event. There were also children and parents from the Iron Triangle neighborhood in attendance. The Contra Costa Chorale entertained the children with Christmas carols while they visited with Santa, took pictures and made special holiday arts and crafts. Volunteers from the community, the Richmond Recreation Department and Richmond College Prep School assisted with the event.

The evening program featured entertainment from the East Bay Center for Performing Arts Jazz Collective, the St. Mark's Catholic Church Mariachi band and vocalist, Nicole "Buttah" Pearson. Mayor Gayle McLaughlin greeted more than 150 people who enjoyed entertainment, food, visits, gifts and pictures with Santa, and the lighting of a tree provided by Sims Metal and decorated by Nevin Center director Vincent Seymour. Several people in attendance remarked that this was definitely "the best Christmas festival ever."

The festival was made possible by generous donations from Sims Metal, Courtyard by Marriott, Chevron, Joanne's Dress Sho, WRT, Wells Fargo, Snazz Cookies, Walgreens, Walmart, Linda Reinhardt, Michael Davenport of DP Security, and Galaxy Desserts. Kaiser kicked off donations with a toy/book drive at the Richmond hospital which provided a large number of gifts for the children. Every child had an opportunity to visit with Santa Claus and receive a gift.

10. **Public Works Highlights**

1. Public Works completed the resurfacing of 34<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> Streets north of Cutting Boulevard this week in preparation for the "One Block at a Time" event in this area. Next week, Public Works will resurface 16<sup>th</sup> Street from

Pennsylvania Avenue to Burbeck Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street from Ohio Avenue to Wall Avenue.

2. The JFK Swim Center was reopened to the public this past Thursday after the forensic research data collection and testing was completed in preparation for construction plans for future facility repairs.

## 11. **Recreation Highlights**

The following are highlights from the Recreation Department for the current week:

- The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Senior Winter Ball will be held on Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup> (tonight) at the Richmond Convention Center Auditorium from 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM. Dinner and drinks will be served while family, friends and West Contra Costa County community members will be entertained by The Junius Courtney 18 Piece Big Swing Orchestra. Participants will also enjoy line dancing and will have the opportunity to compete in a dance contest.
- The 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Snow Ball will be held on Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup> (tomorrow night) at the Richmond Convention Center Auditorium from 7:00 PM to 12:00 midnight. Over 1,500 high school students from the West Contra Costa County Unified School District will attend the event. Eight judges have chosen a Snow Ball Queen from a panel of 8 students all representing their respective schools. The Snow Ball Queen, along with grade-level Princesses, will be crowned in a ceremony during the evening. The students will be entertained by a local DJ.

***The picture below shows the newly renovated Richmond Auditorium dressed up for winter for the Senior Winter Ball and the Snow Ball.***



- The Annex Senior Center Christmas Luncheon was held this past Thursday at the Annex Senior Center, with over 50 seniors enjoying a buffet-style luncheon. A Qigong demonstration was given and participants had the opportunity to enjoy a Christmas carol sing-a-long with a 96-year-old community member playing the piano.

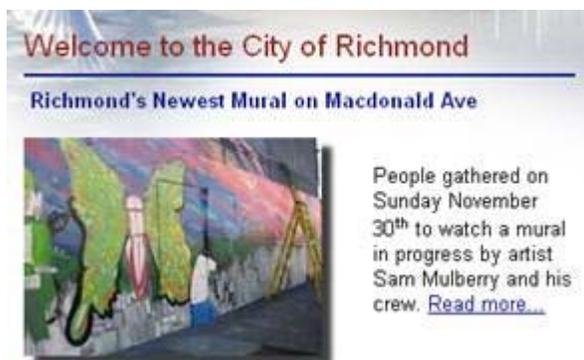
## 12. **Digital Progress Continues in the City Clerk's Office**

Scanning and indexing of the minutes, resolutions, and ordinances is progressing very well. There have been a combined total of 166 books scanned encompassing records from 1905 to 2008. Scanning and indexing of the ordinances has been completed and the CDs are in the Clerk's Office. The minutes and resolutions will be completed next week and CDs should be delivered to the clerk by the end of the calendar year. The documents will then be loaded into the automated records management (SIRE) system and will be made available to staff and the public.

The agenda and packet preparation for City Council standing committees is now automated in the AgendaPLUS system. With the addition of the standing committees to AgendaPLUS, all of the Council and other agencies (e.g., Redevelopment, Housing Authority, etc.) have been automated. While this is a benefit to staff efficiency, and helps reduce paper, it also allows the public to more readily access this information through the City's website and is a capability that we are looking to expand.

## 13. **Web Fun Fact**

This week the City is featuring the mural-in-progress event that took place November 30<sup>th</sup> on the 800 block of Macdonald Avenue. This is the site of Richmond's newest mural on Macdonald Avenue near Harbour Way.



## 14. **KCRT News**

This past week, KCRT covered two press conferences that will play back on Channel 28 and be archived on the web. As part of its Holiday presentations, KCRT staff put the Chevron Donations Press Conference on the air. It is tagged with information for viewers to donate to the Richmond El Cerrito Toy Program, GRIP, and the Bay Area Rescue Mission.

KCRT also continues to film the Civic Center Campus construction as it progresses, and continues to add historical research of the past to include in the Campus site construction documentary. The picture at left, though labeled Christmas 1953, we believe was shot a few years later. Hopefully next year, the Civic Center Plaza will be glowing with holiday lights again.

