

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

This is the weekly report for the week ending February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

### 1. **Meeting Notes**

The next regular City Council meeting is Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 7:00 PM, consisting solely of presentations and study sessions.

### 2. **Update on Federal Economic Stimulus Package**

One of the study session items on the City Council meeting agenda for this coming Tuesday concerns the federal economic stimulus package.

As you know, this past week Congress passed, and President Obama signed, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), the purpose of which is to preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery by providing needed investments in transportation, environmental protection, and other infrastructure projects that will provide long-term economic benefits. The total cost of the package is \$828 billion, and consists of nearly \$396 billion for upgrades to transportation, infrastructure, construction, health care programs, education and housing assistance, and energy efficiency projects; \$144 billion in state and local fiscal relief; and \$288 billion in personal and business tax credits.

To assist its cities in accessing and applying for funds under ARRA, the League of California Cities released this past week a "City Funding Book." The Book was distributed with the City Council packets and can be viewed online at:

[http://www.cacities.org/resource\\_files/27711.2009ARRA%20Report21908.pdf](http://www.cacities.org/resource_files/27711.2009ARRA%20Report21908.pdf)

### 3. **Compromise State Budget Package Passed**

Also of significance this week was the end of the long, hard-fought state budget negotiations when the Legislature passed a budget designed to address the current fiscal year deficit, and head off a deficit in the fiscal year that begins on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The budget package consists of actions over the next 17 months that comprise fiscal measures to increase revenues through temporary tax increases and borrowing from existing funds; reductions in current spending; various "economic stimulus" measures, including CEQA exemptions for state surplus property and changes in labor rules on some types of infrastructure projects; and reforms designed to "make government more efficient.

According to the League of California Cities, the budget package includes \$14.9 billion in spending reductions, \$12.5 billion in temporary tax increases, \$11.4 billion in borrowing and a reserve of \$1 billion. New taxes include increasing the state sales tax by 1 percent; and increasing personal income tax rates by 0.50 percent (which could be reduced, depending upon the level of federal economic stimulus funds received by the state). The package also increases the vehicle license fee

from the current 0.65 percent, to 1.15 percent, of which 0.15 percent is dedicated to fund local public safety programs (approximately \$500 million annually). The package will also reduce the dependent credit Californians are allowed to claim on their taxes.

The package transfers, for two years approximately \$460 million in tax revenues from Proposition 63 (tax on millionaires for mental health services). It transfers approximately \$1.4 billion over four years from Proposition 10 (tobacco tax for early childhood education programs) for state programs with similar objectives. The budget also assumes that the state will borrow about \$5 billion that will be securitized by a lottery modernization proposal passed as part of the initial 2008-09 budget (pending voter approval).

All the tax increases and borrowing would be in place for only two years. The tax increase proposals are contingent upon various triggers linked to the successful passage by voters of another critical piece of the budget package: an improved state reserve fund and a spending cap designed to impose greater discipline on spending when state revenues spike. That measure will be placed on the May 19<sup>th</sup> ballot along with the tax and borrowing measures.

4. **Department Managers' Strategic Planning Meeting**

Among the swirling economic news at the federal and state levels, not to mention in the City of Richmond, the City's department managers held an all-day strategic planning meeting this past Wednesday. We are preparing a five-year strategic planning document, which is intended to "operationalize" current City Council policies into a set of specific actions and performance indicators. This proposed document is scheduled to be presented to the City Council at its March 24<sup>th</sup> study session meeting.

5. **Civic Center Move-In Dates**

Due to a delay in furniture delivery and the Easter Holiday, the move into the City Hall building at the Civic Center campus is now firmly scheduled for the weekends of April 17<sup>th</sup> and April 24<sup>th</sup> (Friday through Sunday in both cases). The construction punch list is in progress and furniture delivery began this past Tuesday.

The move into the old Hall of Justice is still scheduled for June.

6. **Nystrom/MLK Park Community Meeting**

This past Thursday evening, the City of Richmond, together with its neighborhood council partners (Santa Fe, Coronado, and Iron Triangle), the School District, and the Richmond Children's Foundation hosted a well-attended community meeting concerning the Nystrom redevelopment effort, with a focus on finalizing the design for a renovated Martin Luther King, Jr. park. The meeting was expertly facilitated by Management Analyst LaShonda Wilson, and included presentations by Tim Jones, concerning the Nystrom Village redevelopment, Bill Savidge of the School

District, concerning the Nystrom School renovation, and Rich Davidson and several design architects, concerning renovation of park and recreation facilities. Following these presentations, community members met in small, facilitated groups to critique the preliminary park design and offer suggestions for improvement. We are hoping to break ground on the park renovation during the fall of 2009.

7. **Meeting with School Superintendent**

I met this past week with School Superintendent Bruce Harter, as part of our regular monthly meetings, but timely in the context of the recent school closure discussion. We agreed that we would start in short order to schedule joint meetings with selected members of our respective management teams to bring forth ideas for a school services agreement that can be mutually beneficial in maintaining neighborhood schools for the long term. We will keep you informed as our discussions move forward.

8. **Bookmobile Librarian Receives Award**

Odette Batis, the bookmobile librarian, was selected by the Public Library Association (PLA) Awards Juries for the competitive DEMCO New Leaders Travel Grant. Odette will receive a travel grant of \$1,000 to attend the PLA conference in Portland in 2010. The purpose of the New Leaders grants are to enhance the professional development and improve the expertise of public librarians new to the field by making possible their attendance at major professional development activities. Odette wants to attend the PLA in 2010 to speak with other public librarians involved in urban outreach activities and participate in training on the same subject. She is especially interested in improving her communication skills with the general public on issues of children's freedom to read. PLA will recognize all award winners at the PLA President's Program to be held during the American Library Association's 2009 Annual Conference in Chicago. The Program will take place on the evening of Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup> and will be followed by a reception at which political commentator Cokie Roberts will be the featured speaker.

Our congratulations to Odette on this honor.

9. **Earthquake Management Course**

Several City of Richmond managers took additional steps during the week before last to prepare for their roles in the event of a major earthquake here in the Bay Area. Fire Chief Michael Banks, Police Chief Chris Magnus, Director of Planning and Building Services Richard Mitchell, and Administrative Chief Janet Schneider all spent four days in San Francisco, along with nearly 60 other staff members from other cities, attending the California Specialized Training Institute's Earthquake Emergency Management Course. These managers received intensive training regarding the various functions that occur when a city activates its Emergency Operation Center (EOC) to undertake a coordinated response. Training included such topics as first responder issues, activating mutual aid requests, disseminating emergency public information, operations, planning, and logistics action planning. The course culminated in a realistic 4-hour earthquake simulation where the 60

participants became members of an emergency management team. City of Richmond employees played major roles in the simulation such as EOC Police and Fire Chief, Public Information Coordinator, and Deputy Director of Planning and Intelligence. There are plans to send more City employees to emergency management training.

10. **Picturing America Award**

As the result of an application prepared by the Library's Arts and Culture division, the library has been awarded *Picturing America*, a free education resource of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), distributed in cooperation with the American Library Association. *Picturing America* introduces citizens of every age to our nation's history and culture by bringing great works of American art into classrooms and libraries. The award materials include a collection of 40 high-quality reproductions of American art mounted on twenty double-sided, laminated posters for display and classroom use, and a teacher's resource book. The book includes information on all the images and suggestions for using them to enhance classroom and library learning in a wide range of subjects including: American history, social studies, writing, literature, art, and civics. An electronic version of the book and links to additional resources are available online at <http://www.picturingamerica.neh.gov/>. These materials will be shipped to awardees in March and April of 2009, and will be the City's to keep at no cost. Arts & Culture applied for this resource as part of their outreach to the schools, and the library will help in making additional materials available to the community.

11. **Recreation Highlights**

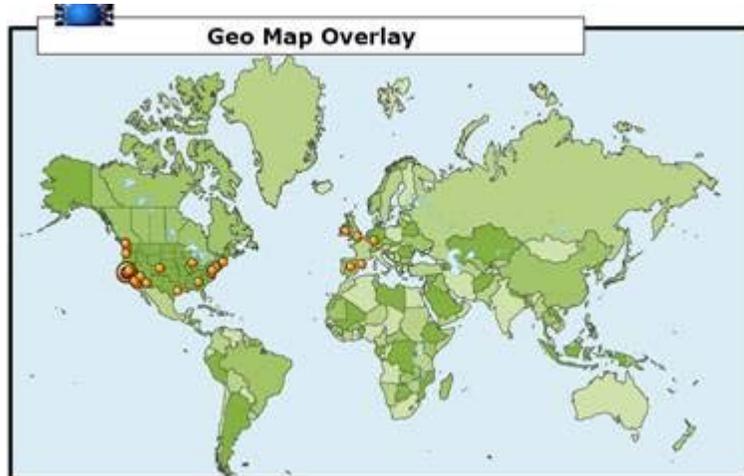
The following are highlights from the Recreation Department during recent weeks:

- **Special Guest**: The Recreation Department was surprised with a guest visit from Nate Robinson of the New York Knicks on Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. He cordially spent time helping kids with their basketball shot and signed several autographs, one of which is displayed in the Recreation Complex Gymnasium. Nate has expressed interest in conducting a basketball camp for the summer programming. Undoubtedly inspired by his visit to Richmond, Nate went on to win the Slam-Dunk Contest during the NBA All-Star weekend.
- **Winter Basketball**: The Recreation Department Youth Sports section currently engages thirty teams in the Winter Basketball League. Games are played at the Richmond Recreation Complex, the Coronado YMCA, RPAL and the Memorial Auditorium.
- **Kidgits**: The Recreation Department Youth Activities section is currently in discussion with Hilltop Mall management to begin a program called "Kidgits" after-school and on weekends. Adults will be able to register children in programs sponsored by the Recreation Department at a Hilltop Mall location while they shop.

- Volleyball: Volleyball games are conducted every Tuesday evening at the Recreation Complex. Currently, twenty adults participate.
- CPR: Several weeks ago, a number of staff members of the Recreation Department attended a CPR training and certification course presented by DU-ALL Safety. Every current staff member will be scheduled to complete the course in the future.
- Futsal: The Recreation Department hosts 50 players on eight Futsal teams every Wednesday evening at the Recreation Complex. Typically, at least 200 spectators attend every week.
- Tennis Grant: The Recreation Department's Tennis Program has written a proposal for submission to request a \$50,000 grant from the United States Tennis Association.
- Swim Center: A Swim Center lifeguard responded promptly to an incident and rescued a child last week. A parent and her two-year-old child were swimming when the parent lost her focus, resulting in the child becoming submerged. Following the incident, the child was responsive and did not require any further medical attention.
- Senior Center Forum: Recreation Department staff, along with the Secretary of the Commission on Aging attended the Senior Center Forum held in Sacramento and hosted by the California Commission on Aging. Senior Center staff, aging professionals and senior organizations from across the state attended this event to learn and share ideas about trends and issues regarding the baby boomer population and its affects on senior centers. With the proclamation of February as Senior Center Month by Governor Schwarzenegger, his staff attended as well and delivered the opening address.
- RouteMatch Software: The Recreation Department Paratransit Division staff members were recently provided personal training on RouteMatch, the scheduling software that is expected to improve the efficiency of the City's paratransit program. The Paratransit Division plans to officially begin using the software on March 9<sup>th</sup>.

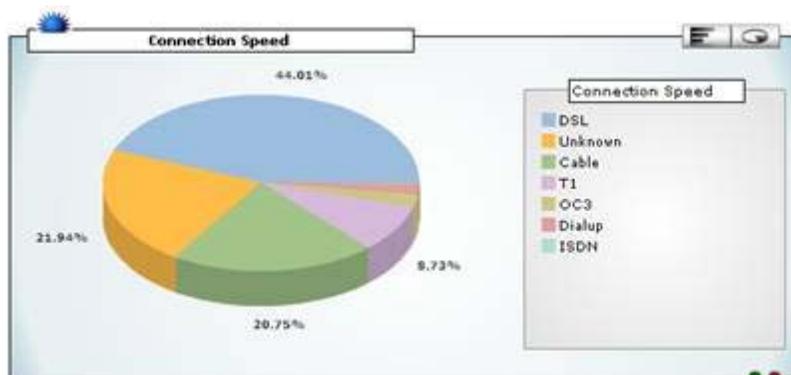
12. **Information Technology: Website Fun Facts**

We now have a new Web Stat provider that has additional displays like the Geo Map below. Of the 135,610 people who visited our site during the last quarter of 2008, the top 10 regions they are visiting from are:



Ranking	Country/Region	Visits
1	United States	128,202
2	Canada	1,969
3	Spain	553
4	United Kingdom	443
5	Germany	339
6	India	240
7	Japan	210
8	Ireland	182
9	Australia	90
10	China	79

The new web stat system also provides us with information on how people are connecting to our website. These numbers are for the last quarter of 2008.



Connection Type		Percent
1	DSL	44.01
2	Unknown	21.94
3	Cable	20.75
4	T1	8.73
5	OC3	2.36
6	Dialup	1.98
7	T1	0.23

For the last quarter of 2008 our 5<sup>th</sup> most visited page was the tribute to fallen officer Bradley Moody. The top 4 pages were 1- Home Page, 2- Library, 3-Police and 4- Employment.

