

City Manager's Weekly Report

This is the weekly report for the week ending June 11th, 2010.

1. **Meeting Notes**

The next meeting of the City Council will be on Tuesday, June 15th, beginning with a Closed Session at 5:00 PM, followed by a short Housing Authority Board meeting at 6:25 PM, and the regular agenda at 6:30 PM.

2. **Neighborhood Stabilization Program Update**

As of June 9th, the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) development team has closed escrow on 17 foreclosed properties, with several more in escrow and offers tendered on a number of others. The NSP is well on its way to its first round goal of 30 purchases as summer approaches. The next phase is to rehabilitate all of the homes and make them available for low-to-moderate income families. As homes are sold, and costs are thereby recaptured, additional foreclosed properties will then be purchased.

Also, as a result of NSP collaborations, Redevelopment Agency and Housing Authority staff, working with Richmond Neighborhood Housing Services and Wells Fargo Bank, was able to prevent a family that was renting a home from being evicted from their foreclosed house, and provided Richmond's first Section 8 purchase voucher. If all goes well, the family will become first-time home buyers.

3. **Bay Trail Gap Closure (Kaiser Shipyard #3 to Brickyard Cove) Project**

The City learned this week that it has received a grant from the Association of Bay Area Governments in the amount of \$150,000 to complete the funding for the design and construction of the Bay Trail Gap Closure project between Kaiser Shipyard #3 to Brickyard Cove. The grant proposal was coordinated by the Engineering Department.

4. **Park Plaza Neighborhood Series Street Light Conversion Project**

A very important and long awaited project to convert the antiquated series street lighting system in the Park Plaza Neighborhood to a parallel system using LED lights went out to bid this week. Among the benefits of this important safety project is that it will decrease energy consumption, reduce maintenance efforts, and increase average lighting levels to four times that of the existing system. The project went out to bid Thursday, June 10th, with bid opening scheduled for Thursday, July 1st.

5. **Save the Date for the Grand Reopening of the Plunge**

The grand reopening of the Plunge is scheduled for Saturday, August 14th, with the ribbon cutting ceremonies scheduled to begin at 11:00 AM and the pool open for public swimming at 1:00 PM.

6. **Union Pacific Fencing Project**

This past week, the City Manager, City Attorney and Public Works staff met with representatives from the Union Pacific Railroad, Capitol Corridor Joint Public Authority (JPA) and Amtrak to discuss the proposed installation by Union Pacific of pedestrian deterrent fencing along the railroad corridor on Carlson Boulevard from Broadway to Bayview Avenue. Erection of this fencing is being funded by a federal safety grant secured by the Capitol Corridor JPA. While details are still to be worked out, staff believes that the fence can be a significant improvement to public safety and aesthetics by eliminating access to the tracks and reducing opportunities for graffiti. A site visit is scheduled for June 29th to go over the installation details.

7. **Richmond YouthBUILD Program**

Nine young adults who were previous high school drop-outs, ages 18 to 24, that have been working in the Richmond YouthBUILD program since last October, have completed the requirements to receive industry-recognized certifications in carpentry, electrical, painting and facilities maintenance. In addition, they have completed the credit requirements and passed the required examinations to receive their high school diplomas or GED certificates.

The graduation ceremonies are scheduled for 10:00 AM, Friday, June 18th, at the YouthBUILD vocational facility, 636 Spring Street (Spring Street runs parallel to the railroad tracks where Cutting Boulevard crosses Carlson Boulevard), and the public is invited to attend. Those planning to attend should RSVP to Itzamariel "Itza" Gonzalez at (510) 307-8021.

8. **Via Verdi Sinkhole Update – Major Step Completed in Constructing Temporary Bypass**

Negotiations with the Rolling Hills Memorial Park cemetery trust for "permission to enter" for construction of an emergency two-lane access road that bypasses the sinkhole area were completed this week and an agreement was executed today. This helps pave the way (pun intended) for the start of construction of this access road for which a contract has already been awarded.

9. **Engineering Services Twitter Update**

Twitter postcard notifications were sent to those property owners and others affected by construction from the Carlson Boulevard Improvements Project and the 2009/2010 Pavement Rehabilitation Project. Progress on these and other Engineering Services projects can be at monitored at http://twitter.com/CoR_Engineering.

10. **The Ground Zero Initiative**

The third Ground Zero Initiative (GZI) event was held Saturday, June 5th, at the Nevin Recreation Center and Park with more than 250 community members attending the event. GZI is a grass roots movement that provides immediate help to communities in Richmond where gun violence is prevalent. With an initial outreach into a targeted area, ONS staff, local pastors and volunteers ask residents to identify and voice their neighborhood's resource needs. The information is then collected and organized, and follow-up telephone calls are made to advise residents where the requested resources can be found in local nearby churches. There are currently more than 164 registered churches in the City of Richmond. These churches can be viable resource outlets for susceptible individuals and communities. While providing targeted outreach in these neighborhoods to those most likely to be involved with and/or confronted by gun violence, relationship building occurs, and an offer of care and support is provided.

Each GZI event concludes with a community block party which includes live music, free food, and jumpers for kids. Thanks go to the Richmond Public Works Department and the Richmond Police Department for their support at the event.

11. **Office of Neighborhood Safety/RPAL Camping Trip**

On June 4th, the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS), in collaboration with Richmond PAL, took 10 high-risk youth and young adults from North Richmond camping at Camp Lodestar about 30 minutes east of Pine Grove, California.

ONS Neighborhood Change Agents accompanied the youth on this two-day excursion where the participants were able to use the experience to relax away from the every day drama, fear and level of violence experienced in North Richmond. Participants also engaged in intensive life skills and character/leadership development activities. Nine out of the 10 participants had never been camping before. This trip was a reward for all of their hard work in the One Richmond pre-employment project.

12. **Office of Neighborhood Safety's Partnership with the Parchester Village Community**

ONS staff, working with retired San Quentin Lieutenant Vernell Crittendon, hosted two-hour workshops introducing the youth of Parchester Village and Crescent Park to the San Quentin R.E.A.L Choices program. The R.E.A.L Choices prevention program helps kids to better appreciate, understand and experience what healthy choices are and the potential consequences of unhealthy choices. A total of six workshops and tours are scheduled for San Quentin State Prison's Outreach Prison Program through the end of August 2010. At the conclusion of this effort, a graduation ceremony for the participants will be held for those that have completed the program. The graduation is scheduled for August 14th.

Six Parchester Village youth also participated in a bowling excursion facilitated by ONS Peace Keepers. This was a collaborative effort with The Fighting Back Partnership of Solano County.

13. **Public Works Updates**

- The Streets Paving Crew completed the grinding clean-up and sealing of cracks on Macdonald Avenue from Garrard Boulevard to 6th Street this week. Starting next Monday, Public Works will initiate the resurfacing work of this area.
- The Parks Division completed the installation of a solar lighting system for the Atchison Village basketball court and the conventional lighting system for the Lamoine Park pathway this past week.
- Work continues on the Main Library roof parapet to prevent water leaks. The new Bayview library floor is completed and this facility is scheduled to reopen on Monday, June 14th.

14. **Recreation Highlights**

- **Softball League:** The co-ed adult softball league began on June 2nd. Games are played at Nicholl Park every Wednesday and Thursday at 5:10 PM.
- **Basketball Playoffs:** Basketball playoffs will be held at the Recreation Complex on June 11th at 6:00 PM for the 21 and under Young Men's Basketball teams. The winner will represent the Recreation Department in the Richmond Recreation City-Wide Championship game next week.
- **Father's Day Celebration:** The Recreation Department's Disabled Persons Recreation Center will hold a special Father's Day Celebration and gift presentation the evening of June 16th from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM.

- Richmond Swim Center Collaboration: The Richmond Swim Center is entering a partnership with the East Bay Regional Aquatics program to secure grant money to provide free swim lessons in the fall for low-income families.

15. **Personnel Notes**

Fire Department Badge Pinning for New Fire Engineers

On Wednesday evening, June 9th, a Fire Department badge pinning ceremony was held in the City Council Chambers for five newly appointed Fire Engineers. Accepting the promotions, which are effective June 1st, were Anthony Woodards, Noah Brownlow, Dylan McCombe, Dan Kennedy and Phil Zarubin. Each new Engineer has been assigned to an Engine company located at one of the fire stations throughout the City.

Senior Civil Engineer Andy Yeung Receives American Public Works Association's Supervision & Management Certification

Andy Yeung, Senior Civil Engineer from the Engineering Services Department, has obtained certification for Supervision and Management from the American Public Works Association. Mr. Yeung was one of 225 nationwide recipients enrolled in four modules, each consisting of three full days of instruction and exams.

16. **Web Site Fun Fact**

New visitors continue to be the majority of people visiting our web site. In May 2010, 64% of the visitors were new.

