

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

This is the weekly report for the two weeks ending September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

### 1. **Meeting Notes**

The next City Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, beginning with a Closed Session at 5:30 PM, followed by the Richmond Housing Authority meeting at 6:15 PM and the regular agenda commencing at 6:30 PM.

### 2. **Point Molate Update**

During the past six months, the City Council and others have taken a number of significant actions with respect to the Point Molate property. At the Council's request, I have summarized these actions for *Weekly Report* readers below:

- On April 5<sup>th</sup>, the City Council decided to discontinue consideration of a casino at Point Molate and to commence the 120-day exclusive negotiating period for an Alternative Proposal under the Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) Section 2.8. The 120-day period ended on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Upstream Point Molate LLC submitted a "Non-Gaming Development Alternative" to the City on July 29<sup>th</sup>, but it was expressly not offered pursuant to LDA Section 2.8.
- On August 16<sup>th</sup>, the City filed a Declaratory Relief action against Upstream in Contra Costa Superior Court in order to expeditiously resolve outstanding issues between the parties concerning the LDA.
- The Assistant Secretary of the Interior for the United States disapproved the Guidiville Band of Pomo Indian's request for a positive restored lands determination, finding that the tribe does not have a historical connection or a modern connection to Point Molate, on September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- On September 16<sup>th</sup>, Upstream wrote to the City acknowledging the restored lands determination and giving the City "notice" of Upstream's intent to commence the 120-day exclusive negotiating period regarding its Non-Gaming Development Alternative.
- At the most recent City Council meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup>, the Council directed staff to negotiate with Upstream regarding an Alternative Proposal for a 120-day period commencing September 16<sup>th</sup>, notwithstanding the fact that the 120-day period under Section 2.8 of the LDA ended on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, as further demonstration of the City's good faith with respect to the LDA.

We will continue to keep you informed as this process moves forward.

### 3. **City of Richmond and Wells Fargo Bank Foreclosure and Blight News**

Several weeks ago, the Police Department participated in a meeting about foreclosure and blight sponsored by the Alliance of Californians for Community

Empowerment (ACCE), a grassroots community advocacy group. During that meeting, several members of the City Council and Chief Magnus expressed concerns about the role of some banks in destabilizing neighborhoods. It was perceived that some banks are doing a poor job of maintaining the properties upon which they have foreclosed. As a result of these issues being voiced, and thanks in part to additional follow-up on these matters by Supervisor John Gioia's Office, a local representative of Wells Fargo Bank conveyed these concerns to senior executives of his company.

On September 28<sup>th</sup>, a delegation of Wells Fargo executives and senior management met with the City Manager, Police Chief, Code Enforcement Manager, and Richmond Police Department staff/City Attorney to discuss the City's concerns. The discussion was followed by a tour of several properties that illustrate the problems involving blighted, foreclosed homes and multi-family dwellings in the community. The representatives from Wells Fargo were extremely helpful, engaged, and willing to work more closely with the City to address these problems.

The meeting, which lasted all morning, resulted in an action plan that included the following:

- Wells Fargo agreed that, if a house in Richmond is vacant and in the foreclosure process, even if they are not yet legally responsible for it, they will still take the needed actions to secure the house and maintain the exterior premises (weeds, trash, etc.). Wells Fargo is often the trustee for such properties, and not necessarily the legal owner, but they can still take steps to preserve a house from vandalism and blight. This benefits the surrounding properties and the neighborhood overall.
- The Police Department agreed to work closely with Wells Fargo in situations where squatters or other trespassers are occupying a foreclosed property. Wells Fargo would normally have to work through a cumbersome legal process to evict such persons from these properties before Wells Fargo could enter such homes to do necessary clean up and secure the properties. The City, on the other hand, can "red tag" these homes (properties usually without electricity and/or running water) that may be dangerous to occupy. The red tag makes it a misdemeanor for squatters or others to be inside the property. This gets rid of the trespassers and allows for immediate clean up and security efforts.
- Code Enforcement staff were given direct phone lines, e-mail addresses, and even the cell phone numbers of Wells Fargo executive officers and high-level managers who agreed to work directly with the City to resolve issues involving blighted properties, chain of title, and related matters.
- Wells Fargo agreed to address any issues Richmond Police Department's Code Enforcement unit has involving property maintenance companies that Wells Fargo hired to do board-ups, clean up work, etc. involving blighted properties.

- Wells Fargo reaffirmed their commitment to neighborhoods by agreeing to continue rehabilitation of foreclosed properties as quickly as possible and returning them to the market. Alternatively, this could include demolishing some properties if necessary. The average time on the market for Wells Fargo foreclosed homes is 41 days, which is well below the average time on the market for all home sales.

It is worth noting that Wells Fargo is the *only* bank that has reached out to the City in this way and we appreciate their taking the initiative. We hope to open up similar dialogue in the near future with other banks that will focus on how we can best work together to preserve neighborhoods and reduce blight.

#### 4. **The San Francisco Foundation Community Leadership Awards**

This past Tuesday, I played “hooky” from a portion of the City Council meeting to attend The San Francisco Foundation 2011 Community Leadership Awards presentation. Of the five 2011 awardees, two are stalwarts of the Richmond community.

I was especially pleased to have nominated award winner Jordan Simmons, artistic director of the East Bay Center for the Performing Arts, and see him honored as a community leader. Jordan was acknowledged for “creating better futures for young adults through music and cultural education and engagement.”

It was also wonderful to see Gonzalo Rucobo, co-founder and executive director of Bay Area Peacekeepers, honored as a community leader for “helping former gang members reach their aspirations and successfully contribute to society.” As you know much of Gonzalo’s work is here in the broader Richmond community.

It was truly inspiring to see Jordan Simmons, Gonzalo Rucobo, and the other three award recipients, honored for their work.

#### 5. **RichmondWORKS Receives \$400,000 Grant to Serve Dislocated Workers**

RichmondWORKS was notified by the State Workforce Services Branch that it has been selected to receive \$400,000 to serve dislocated workers. The funding is being made available from the Department of Labor’s National Emergency Grant program to the State of California. Six areas have been selected, including Richmond, to receive the funding. Richmond’s selection was based upon exemplary performance on a current dislocated worker grant. With the additional funding, RichmondWORKS’ staff will be able to serve 50 to 60 dislocated workers with intensive case management, training, job placement assistance, and on-the-job training opportunities with local businesses.

Richmond residents interested in participating in the dislocated worker program must meet the following criteria:

- Must be receiving or have exhausted unemployment insurance; and

- Been unemployed for the last five months.

Interested applicants can call (510) 307-8014, or stop by the RichmondWORKS One Stop Career Center located at 330-25<sup>th</sup> Street. Office hours are from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

6. **FEMA's *Getting Real* Conference II**

From September 12<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup>, Richmond's Emergency Services Manager Kathy Gerk attended FEMA's (Federal Emergency Management Agency) *Getting Real* Conference II in Washington D.C. The City of Richmond was selected as one of 66 Promising Practices in Emergency Management for PWD/E (People with Disabilities/Elderly). Ms. Gerk was invited by FEMA to make a presentation on the work accomplished thus far in the area of PWD/E. Richmond was one of only seven local government agencies across the nation invited to share their promising practices.

The three-day conference's goal was to build partnerships and share promising best practices in emergency management for PWD/E across the nation. Other presenters included 25 state agencies, 14 higher education institutions, and 20 community-based organizations.

7. **Carlson Boulevard Improvements**

This past week, the contractor completed the backfilling of the medians on Carlson Boulevard. In another cost-saving measure, the City provided all of the topsoil for the medians which had been stockpiled from the Martin Luther King Jr. Park project. All of the remaining center lanes will be paved this Saturday with the second layer of asphalt to follow early next week. The second layer of paving along the center of the project will allow left turns and cross traffic to finally reopen to all of the side streets in the area.

Depending on the weather, the major activities will then shift to the Carlson/Huntington intersection. Previously, this has been the only route to cross Carlson Boulevard. With the opening of the side streets, Huntington Avenue will now be closed to cross traffic, and the intersection will be lowered and reconstructed in two phases. Huntington Avenue will be closed; however, Carlson Boulevard will remain open during the entire transition.

Following concrete repair, traffic signal loops and other final work, the current schedule anticipates the final layer of asphalt of pavement across all lanes the last week in October.

8. **Clean-Tech *Game Changers* in Richmond**

As you know, Richmond is the home to some outstanding companies that are committed to improving the economy and lessening demand for fossil fuels. Today, Grow-California announced its "Top 40" Clean Tech Innovators for 2011, and three Richmond companies are represented in this group. From the elite

group of 40 clean technology leaders, fifteen nominees will be presented “Game Changer of the Year” awards at a luncheon culminating the first Clean Tech Innovation Conference, scheduled for November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Kaiser Center in downtown Oakland.

The three Richmond companies making the Top 40 list are:

MBA Polymers  
Pax Water Technologies  
NanOasis

We congratulate these Richmond companies for this achievement and wish them luck to become a “Game Changer of the Year.” They are already “game changers” in Richmond.

9. **Educational Session on How a Refinery Operates**

This past Thursday in the City Council Chambers, the Planning and Building Services Department hosted the third of four educational sessions on key technical subjects critical to understanding the methodology for analyzing impacts of the proposed Chevron Revised Renewal Project and other projects. The workshops provide participants with the information needed to understand the science and the methods for analyzing potential environmental impacts. This session covered the information of how a refinery operates, terms commonly used in refining, and characteristics of crude oil that are important for refining.

10. **Utility Users Tax Database Correction Results in Additional Receipts**

By working with PG&E to compare addresses of customer service locations against information provided by the First American Spatial Solutions GIS System, the City was recently able to identify several locations that had been either incorrectly assigned by PG&E to Richmond, or incorrectly assigned to other cities, but actually located in Richmond. The net result of the adjustments is reflected in an additional payment of \$186,347 utility users tax payment for 2007, 2008 and 2009.

11. **Single-Use Bag Ordinance Update**

On September 13<sup>th</sup>, the Richmond City Council approved a resolution supporting collaboration with the West Contra Costa Integrated Waste Management Authority (WCCIWMA/RecycleMore), and member cities, to develop a regional single-use bag ordinance. The proposed ordinance would prohibit the distribution of plastic single-use bags in Richmond retail establishments and charge a fee for the use of paper bags. In conjunction with implementation of the ordinance, Richmond Environmental Initiatives anticipates conducting a reusable bag campaign, including the distribution of free reusable bags in target communities, in fall 2011.



12. **California Coastal Cleanup in Richmond**

On Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 583 volunteers gathered along the Richmond shoreline from Point Isabel to Bruener Marsh, and a segment of Baxter Creek, as part of the California Coastal Cleanup. In addition, 29 volunteers performed a trash assessment on Baxter Creek alongside the greenway. Combined efforts collected over 11,500 pounds of trash, and 500 pounds of recyclables off the shoreline and creek banks. City staff assisted the Watershed Project, East Bay Regional Parks, and staff from John Gioia's office. Volunteers from the community, Contra Costa College and Youth Enrichment Strategies (YES) assisted City staff in collecting and recording trash at Baxter Creek along the greenway.

On September 19<sup>th</sup>, Veolia crews assisted City staff in another trash assessment and removal at Castro Creek in West Richmond. Information on the types and percentages of these trash assessments will assist the City in its short-term trash reduction plan to meet stormwater permit requirements.

13. **Update on Sewer Pipeline Repairs**

The City and Veolia continue working on the 2011-12 annual sewer pipeline repair and rehabilitation projects. On September 19<sup>th</sup>, staff conducted a community outreach meeting and a presentation to the Richmond Neighborhood Coordinating Council. This past week, the contractor, Ghilotti Brothers has been working to finish potholing and begin excavation on identified pipeline replacements and the point repairs required in preparation for lining. This work is being administered by Veolia, and the City has worked with Veolia staff to facilitate public outreach efforts and ensure that City standards are being met. The City is also using Twitter to notify interested residents of upcoming work locations, as well as placing information on the City's website. Those requiring additional information on this project can contact Fadi Alabbas of Veolia at (510) 412-2001.

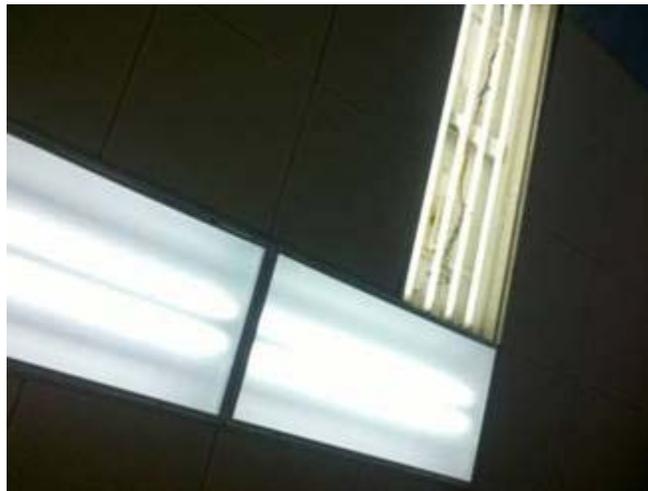
14. **Lighting Upgrade Project Update**

The City Manager's Environmental Initiatives Division completed Phase 1 of a lighting upgrade project for the main library. The project was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and included lighting upgrades for the Children's Room, back offices and book storage areas. Environmental Initiatives' staff estimates that the lighting upgrades will save the City \$5,589.45 with a

simple payback of 4.1 years, and will result in a greenhouse gas emissions reduction of 25,018 pounds per year. Phase 2 of the main library lighting upgrade is currently in the design process and will include the foyer and main entryway to the library.



Lighting technicians replacing old lights in the Children's Room



The improvement in lighting quality is significant. New energy efficient, brighter lights on the bottom left. The older, dimmer lights are shown on top right.

15. **Recreation Highlights**

**Baseball:** Shields-Reid Community Center staff and local volunteers are working with the North Richmond Panthers Baseball Team to enroll youth, ages 9 to 12, on various baseball teams with the Hercules and Pinole fall little league organizations. Once complete, the teams will begin practice at the Shields-Reid baseball field.

Aquatics: The Richmond Swims youth swim team is developing its new practice schedule to begin preparing for competitions now that the bulkhead has been successfully installed at the Richmond Plunge.

DPRC: On September 25<sup>th</sup>, the Gourmet in the Garden event was held as a benefit for the Maya's Music Therapy Fund. A Disabled People's Recreation Center participant, Brandon Crowl, was a featured singer as part of the program.

Golf: Eight youth are participating in a series of golf clinics being held between September 2011 and April 2012 at the Richmond Country Club every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM. In addition to golf fundamentals and techniques, the youth learn the rules and etiquette of the game. The clinics also provide a forum for discussion of life skills and leadership tools. This free program is sponsored by the Northern California Golfers Association in collaboration with the Recreation Department, Girls, Inc., Richmond Police Activities League, Salesian Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, Richmond Country Club, and Mechanics Bank. City of Richmond staff member, Janet Johnson, played a crucial leadership role in helping make this program possible.

Camping: Thirteen youth, ages 14 to 17, went to the San Luis Reservoir, from September 16<sup>th</sup> through September 18<sup>th</sup>, for a hands-on camping trip to gain experience and training in leadership, team-building, and adventure and recreation planning. All camping equipment and food was provided by the Outdoor Youth Connection, in collaboration with the California State Parks Foundation, and the Pacific Leadership Institute. Graduates from this camp are planning one recreational activity and one community service project to do with their peers.

Youth Activities: Indoor soccer or gymnastics, for children ages 3 to 5, is currently available for participation every Monday and Tuesday from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the Richmond Recreation Complex. Both activities are 6-week programs. The cost is \$10 to participate.

16. **Puppet Show at the Richmond Public Library**

On Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 PM, the Richmond Public Library will be hosting the Tricks & Treats Halloween Puppet Show and ghost dance sponsored by the Friends of the Richmond Public Library. Hear a zombie sing! See robots duel! Learn the tricks of "Trick-or-Treating!" Filled with friendly monsters, this comical puppet show by Nick Barone will delight children of all ages. Kreepie, the crazy green cat, a vampire bat, a zombie, a ghost, a werewolf, a mummy and other monster friends will all be in attendance. Learn about Halloween safety and laugh along with Tommy the scarecrow and his pal Crow, as they tell one silly joke after another. Come in costume if you like, and bring all your friends for Halloween fun.

This event is free, suitable for the entire family, and requires no advance registration. Interested persons may call (510) 620-6557 for more information,

or drop by the library at 325 Civic Center Plaza. [www.richmondlibrary.org](http://www.richmondlibrary.org)  
<http://www.richmondlibrary.org>

17. **Public Works Updates**

Parks and Landscaping Division: This week, crews performed median maintenance on Carlson Boulevard from Broadway to Bayview Avenue; cleaned the Martin Luther King Jr. baseball field; performed infield maintenance at Nicholl and Wendell parks; and weed abatement and general maintenance at Hilltop Lake. Next week, crews will continue working at the Marina Bay Trail project; mulching vegetation in the Cutting Boulevard median; vegetation clean up at Rydin Road; and continue weed abatement and trash clean up on the north side slope of Hilltop Mall Road.

The tree trimming crews trimmed trees along the following blocks: 1300 Mariposa Avenue, 2800 Nevin Avenue, 4000 Potrero Avenue, 300-43<sup>rd</sup> Street, and 700-52<sup>nd</sup> Street. Next week, they will be trimming trees on the following blocks: 12000 San Pablo Avenue, 500 Alamo Avenue, and 300 South 36<sup>th</sup> Street.

Facilities Maintenance Division: Electricians replaced lighting in the Marina District and continued troubleshooting the power outage in the Parkview Neighborhood in partnership with PG&E.

Painters repainted all the curbs around the Civic Center Plaza. Carpenters and stationary engineers finished repairing one of the exterior public restrooms at the Shields-Reid Community Center.

Streets Division: This week, paving crews completed grinding on Nevin Avenue from 37<sup>th</sup> Street to 45<sup>th</sup> Street. Next week, crews will work on resurfacing this section of roadway.

Equipment Services Division: The division decommissioned and auctioned off thirteen old vehicles, reducing the City's fleet size. A new striping truck was put in service to improve pavement striping maintenance.

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*Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments about these or any other items of interest to you.*

***Have a great week!***

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