

City Manager's Weekly Report
For the week ending March 21st, 2008

1. **Meeting Notes**

The next City Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 25th, 2008 beginning at 7:00 PM. As is customary, the meeting agenda includes presentations and Study and Action Session items only.

The joint meeting between the City Council and the West County Unified School District Board of Trustees has been scheduled for Thursday, May 1st.

2. **Richmond Natatorium (the Plunge) Funding**

The Plunge received another funding boost last week with the notification that the project to renovate the facility will receive a matching grant from the Valley Foundation in the amount of \$500,000. The grant is for work on Phase II of the renovation, and was secured through the hard work of The Friends of the Richmond Plunge. The \$500,000 grant award must be matched by private funds in order for it to be realized, and fund raising efforts are gearing up for this challenge.

3. **Redevelopment Agency Award**

The Redevelopment Agency's Office of Economic Development received notification last week that it has received an Award of Merit for Economic Development Promotions from CALED for the ***richmondca4business.com*** website, which is in English and Spanish. This website was one result of the economic development marketing initiative with Brand Design that produced the website and collateral materials, including a brochure, handouts and a CD that is linked to the website. Last month, there were over 40,000 hits on the website, which links to the City, Visitor & Convention Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce and commercial real estate brokers with listings in Richmond.

4. **Point Richmond to Point Molate Bay Trail Gap Closure**

Members of the technical committee (ABAG, Chevron and the City) working on the project to close the Bay Trail gap between Point Richmond and Point Molate, participated in a conference call on Monday with two members of the State Lands Commission to review their last week's meeting with Caltrans' Advanced Planning staff. Meeting attendees agreed that the project would benefit greatly if the Lt. Governor's Office would make a call to Caltrans and make this a priority project. The technical committee is scheduled to meet in the next three weeks to discuss project sponsorship and cost estimates.

5. **Sale of Bear Stearns to JP Morgan**

As you may have read, last week, Bear Stearns was purchased by JP Morgan Chase after requesting financial assistance from the Federal Reserve Bank. Both of these investment banks are members of the City's Underwriting Pool, with Bear Stearns being the counterparty to the City on three interest rate swaps (Wastewater, 2005 Pension Obligation Bonds A and B). JP Morgan will guarantee Bear Stearns' position on these transactions while the sale is in progress; upon close of the sale, JP Morgan will then replace Bear Stearns as the City's counterparty.

6. **Street Outreach**

The City's Street Outreach strategy/Neighborhood Change Agents (NCA's) continue to go through training and field exercises. The NCA's are identifying community support services and resources to connect to those contacted by our outreach efforts. Additionally, the NCA's have met with parole staff and participated in the Parole and Corrections Team (PACT) meetings held in Richmond, making presentations and contacts with more than 30 parolees this week.

This past week, ONS and RPD staff participated in a site visit to the City of Stockton to learn about their "Peace Keepers" street outreach program. The City of Stockton is currently the only city in California other than the City of Richmond where the street outreach strategy resides within City Hall and the City Manager's Office. The Stockton program began in the early 1990's and was modeled on the City of Boston's Ceasefire approach to preventing and intervening in street violence. Stockton city officials communicated to our staff the importance of the program, its positive impact and the numerous gains they felt it had achieved in helping the City effectively address gang and street violence. However, they emphasized the importance of their city government's:

- a) Understanding that enforcement and suppression alone would not deliver sustained reductions in street violence,
- b) Buy in, long term support, and commitment to the street outreach program,
- c) Appreciation that the street outreach program should not be communicated nor seen as the panacea strategy, and
- d) Recognition that it takes time to gain trust, achieve traction and reap the benefits within each community touched and engaged by the approach.

Program officials also noted the importance of the program's strategic partnerships, including support from other city and county agencies and community based organizations, in building program success.

7. **California Gang Prevention Network**

As a follow up step to the California Cities Gang Prevention Network meeting held in Los Angeles two weeks ago, ONS met with representatives from the City of Oakland, the City of San Francisco and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) this week to discuss potential ongoing collaborative efforts within the region, specifically around our street outreach efforts. As a result, the participating agencies all have agreed to hold a joint training/summit for our collective outreach staff. We have tentatively committed to holding this event on May 14th and 15th of this year. Although we have not finalized an agenda, we have begun to identify topics and training components that relate to all of our cities.

8. **Mountain Hardwear Opens in Ford Assembly Plant**

Mountain Hardwear has moved into over 70,000 square feet of space in the Ford Assembly Building, opening their doors Monday, March 17th. A grand opening event is scheduled for April. Mountain Hardwear is already in Richmond, but is relocating and expanding their operation which purveys quality climbing and camping equipment. Their old site near Costco is in the entitlement process to potentially host a Kohl's Department Store.

9. **FY 2008-09 Budget Building is Well Underway**

Finance staff, along with the City Manager and Assistant City Manager Leslie Knight, began meeting with all departments to review the first draft of their FY 2008-09 budget submittals. As you will recall, by the Ordinance adopted last year by the City Council, the proposed FY 2008-09 Operating and Capital Improvement Plan Budget are due to the City Council for review by the May 6th Council meeting.

10. **Planning Department Update on Major Projects**

The following is an update on three major Planning Department projects:

- **Chevron Renewal Project**

On Thursday, March 20th, Chevron's proposed renewal project was heard by the Planning Commission. Two hours were reserved for formal presentations and the balance of the time was made available to hear community input. The Commission voted to continue the item to a special meeting scheduled for April 10th.

- **General Plan Advisory Committee meeting**

On Wednesday, March 19th, the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) met to review the Land Use Element and received a draft of the Housing Element.

- **Neighborhood Design Standards**

Standards are ready for presentation to the City Council in April.