

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

### **Mayor and Councilmembers:**

This is the weekly report for the week ending April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 (note that no April's Fool's jokes are included).

#### **1. Meeting Notes**

The next City Council meeting is scheduled for this Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, with the sole agenda item being whether or not a casino use will continue to be considered at Pt. Molate. Because a large public turnout is expected at this meeting, it will be held at the Auditorium instead of the City Council Chambers. A special City Council meeting to consider other business items is scheduled for Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, and the regular meeting schedule will resume beginning with the meeting on Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### **2. Miraflores Site Remediation Ground Breaking Ceremony**

A press conference and kick-off ceremony to celebrate the start of demolition and environmental cleanup at the Miraflores site in Richmond was held this past Wednesday morning. Over 150 people turned out for the event which culminated in the demolition of one of the houses located on the site. Among the attendees at the ceremony were Keith Takata, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Deputy Regional Administrator; Stewart Black, Acting Deputy Director of Brownfield and Environmental Restoration for the California Department of Toxic Substances Control; members of the Oishi and Sakai families with the historical connection to the nurseries; many Richmond residents; and a host of other officials that included Mayor Gayle McLaughlin, Councilmember Jovanka Beckles and the city manager.

Of particular note were the very moving remarks by Keith Takata, reflecting on his own Japanese-American heritage, and the personal pride that he felt in his Agency playing a critical role in this development. The speakers highlighted the many objectives that were being accomplished with the Miraflores project, including blight removal, remediation and removal of on-site contamination, preservation of historic structures, restoration of Baxter creek, and achievement of a LEED neighborhood development standard. It was also noted that the development utilizes public/private partnerships that include the state and federal government, local non-profits, and for profit entities, and that the design was crafted using a community participation process.

Thanks to the Redevelopment Agency and its Housing Division, and especially Natalia Lawrence, for their outstanding work on this project.

*(Editor's note: As I listened to all of the objectives being achieved through this Miraflores development, I kept reflecting on the importance of redevelopment to the Richmond community. Yes, reform is necessary and would provide financial*

*benefits to the state; but simply eliminating it would punish those communities where blight and environmental degradation remains a problem.)*



3. **Youth Entrepreneur Program**

The Richmond Main Street Initiative (RMSI) announced this week that they received a \$5,000 grant from the Kaiser Permanente East Bay Community and Government Relations Department in support of their Youth Entrepreneur Program which, when added to grants from PG&E and Wells Fargo, brings total contributions to \$27,000.

Since 2008, the RMSI has hosted the five-week Youth Entrepreneur Program with an emphasis on work readiness in partnership with the City of Richmond's YouthWORKS Summer Youth Employment Program. Within this time period, young adults will participate in a ten-day training session designed to develop professionalism, interviewing skills, communication, jobsite awareness, and retail

business principles. Following the ten-day training period, youth are matched with local businesses where they gain work experience and earn income.

The Youth Entrepreneur Program has contributed to the development of Richmond youth by providing leadership opportunities for more than 30 low-income individuals. In addition to providing job-readiness training and skills to youth ages 16-21, the RMSI has developed strong partnerships with downtown businesses and community volunteers. This program is a win-win-win for businesses, youth and the City of Richmond.

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

Despite the loud protests of City staff, PG&E has once again rescheduled activating service to the new street lights in the Park Plaza neighborhood citing recent inclement weather and the resulting backlog of work requests. This makes at least the fifth time that PG&E has cancelled a committed activation date, with the new date now delayed until April 19<sup>th</sup>. City staff has expressed our continuing and growing frustration to PG&E representatives in their not fulfilling their work commitments. For their part, they have stated that they “aware of the urgency” (Editor’s note: *are you kidding?*) and they are working with their contract crew to try to advance the current scheduled date of April 19<sup>th</sup>.

We will keep you informed.

5. **Medical Marijuana Collectives Permit Applications**

Pursuant to the ordinance recently adopted by the Richmond City Council, permit applications for Medical Marijuana Collectives are now available. They can be obtained through the City’s website:

<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=2414>

at the Richmond Police Department, or at the permit counter at City Hall. On Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, there will be a forum for potential applicants to ask questions about the application submittal and review process. The forum is scheduled from 2:00 PM until 5:00 PM in the City Council Chambers at 440 Civic Center Plaza.

6. **Lillie Mae Jones Community Garden Project**

The YouthBUILD Richmond Program has been assisting in the development of the Lillie Mae Jones Community Garden Project (located at 6<sup>th</sup> and Macdonald Avenue) by constructing planter boxes, picnic tables and compost bins. They will be preparing the site for installation and planting throughout all next week, and the final project will be officially unveiled next Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 AM at the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Macdonald Avenue.

## 7. **Recreation Highlights**

**Maya's Spring Music Festival:** In conjunction with the Maya Music Therapy Fund (MMTF), the Disabled Person's Recreation Center (DPRC) hosted the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Maya's Spring Music Festival on Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, at the Richmond Recreation Complex. Over 200 people attended this inspiring event which supports the musical talents of participants from varying organizations for disabled persons who are in music therapy. A participant at the DPRC, who was the emcee for the event, presented the Mayor with a published copy of photos of MMTF participants.

**Shimada Commission:** The Richmond Shimada Friendship Commission welcomed Shimada Ambassadors from Japan on March 19<sup>th</sup>. The delegation consisted of one teacher and six students. The week's itinerary included daily visits to schools in the West Contra Costa Unified School District, tours of Richmond, meeting Mayor Gayle McLaughlin and Fire Chief Michael Banks, visiting Galaxy Desserts, bowling, swimming at the Richmond Plunge, a welcome presentation at a City Council meeting, and much more. Their visit concluded at the Richmond Senior Center on Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, for a sayonara dinner. Over 77 attendees enjoyed food and a presentation from the ambassadors. The commissioners presented them with sayonara gifts.

## 8. **Public Works Updates**

**Facilities:** The interior of the Parchester Community Center is continuing to be painted and the project is now at 50% completion.

**Parks and Landscaping:** Next week, crews will be planting 13 Redwood trees at Tiller Park; putting in green irrigation; performing weed removal on Castro Ranch Road; working on sports fields maintenance; median landscape maintenance on Carlson Boulevard west of Cutting Boulevard; continuing the irrigation/planting project along the UPRR fence line along the Carlson Blvd.

The tree trimming crew responded last week to three emergency tree removal calls as the result of storms on Solano, Panama and Coalinga Avenues. Next week, the crew will work on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets, Ripley Avenue and at Lamoine Park.

**Streets:** The paving crew completed the resurfacing of 15<sup>th</sup> Street from Chanslor Avenue to Macdonald Boulevard this week. Next week, they will resurface Ocean Avenue from Marine Street to Western Drive in Point Richmond.

*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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