

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

### **Mayor and Councilmembers:**

This is the weekly report for the week ending May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

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

The next meeting of the Richmond City Council is a special budget study session that is scheduled to begin at 9:00 AM this Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. The Council will then convene at 5:00 PM this same day for its regular fourth Tuesday of the month evening meeting. The Closed Session will begin at 5:00 PM, with the regular agenda (presentations and study sessions) scheduled to begin at 6:30 PM.

#### **2. Richmond Receives California Preservation Foundation Award**

On Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, Vice Mayor Tom Butt accepted, on behalf of the City of Richmond, the President's Award from the [California Preservation Foundation](#) at its annual California Preservation Conference in Santa Monica. The award was not for a specific project but instead for Richmond's ascendance into the top tier of preservation communities within just the last decade with multiple award-winning projects and initiatives recognized on a national level. Notable projects include the former East Brother Lighthouse, the Ford Assembly Building and Craneway Pavilion, the rehabilitation of the Civic Center, the Richmond Plunge, the Winters Building, the Maritime Center and the establishment of Richmond as the home of the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park.

#### **3. Richmond Recreation Receives Honorable Mention Award**

On April 14<sup>th</sup>, at the annual awards presentation of the California Parks and Recreation Society, District 3, the Recreation Department's 3<sup>rd</sup> of July Celebration received an Honorable Mention Award for Outstanding Special Event. This category acknowledges special events that increase cultural unity, facilitate problem solving, promote health and wellness, and foster human development.

#### **4. Update on the State Budget**

On Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, Governor Brown released the FY2011-12 revised budget which contained some good news. Reflecting the positive economic data of the early months of 2011, the State's projected budget deficit, originally estimated in January at \$26.6 billion, has been revised to \$10.8 billion. This reduction is due in part to the \$13.4 billion in cuts and other solutions previously adopted by the State Legislature. One important piece of information is that higher-than-anticipated cash receipts have resulted in an upward revision of \$2.8 billion to the current-year tax revenue forecast, and has increased the FY2011-12 tax revenue forecast by \$3.5 billion. These amounts are combined with other minor revenue

adjustments to result in a two-year total increase in revenue forecasts of \$6.6 billion.

Despite the April 28<sup>th</sup> Legislative Counsel Bureau opinion that the Governor's Redevelopment proposal violates the state Constitution, there have been no changes to his proposal to eliminate redevelopment agencies and shift \$1.7 billion for state purposes.

The California Redevelopment Association (CRA) has developed two alternative proposals:

Voluntary State Budget Assistance. Redevelopment agencies would be granted extensions of their project life-spans in exchange for voluntarily contributing to local schools. This proposal could generate approximately \$1 billion for the budget with more funds ongoing.

Redevelopment Reform. SB286, sponsored by Sen. Roderick Wright (D-Los Angeles), is a comprehensive redevelopment reform package that would significantly enhance accountability of redevelopment, limit redevelopment's footprint, and focus redevelopment on key priorities like job-creation, crime reduction, revitalization of rundown and blighted neighborhoods, and toxics cleanup and affordable housing.

Given its comprehensive nature, the measure remains a "work in progress" and additional amendments will be added to the bill to clarify and resolve specific concerns raised by cities and other parties.

Together, these two credible proposals provide responsible and viable alternatives for Legislators to consider when responding to the Governor's elimination proposal.

## 5. Local Budget Meetings

City staff, and especially those in the Finance Department, has been working hard to complete the City's proposed FY 2011-12 budget, which will be presented to the City Council at a special study session this Tuesday morning at 9:00 AM. As part of this effort, staff is doing significant public outreach through the Neighborhood Councils. During the month of May, Finance Director Jim Goins, together with members of his staff, the city manager, and various department heads, have made presentations to the Richmond Neighborhood Coordinating Council, and the Marina Bay, Park Plaza, Laurel Park, Pullman, Parchester, Iron Triangle, Belding Woods, North and East, Richmond Heights, and Richmore Village Neighborhood Councils encompassing six separate neighborhood meetings. West County School Superintendent Bruce Harter has also been in attendance at most of these meetings so that he and the city manager can provide information and answer questions about Measures C and D on the June 7<sup>th</sup> ballot. Additional meetings are still ahead for the Richmond Annex and May Valley Neighborhood Councils.

6. **Police Appreciation by our Local Target Store**

In honor of Police Appreciation Week, our local Target store delivered a gift basket of snacks to the department's break room. Ever since they came to Richmond, Target has been a great supporter of the Richmond Police Department, and helped fund efforts to improve the department's capacity to serve the community. They also are continued partners in many other activities within the community, and regularly support National Night Out and the Police Activities League. Their true "gift basket" is in being a great business community member.

7. **YouthWORKS Academic Summary for 2011**

The Youth **WORKS** Academic Program is operated by Straight Talk on Prison (STOP) and was funded in part this past fiscal year by a State Employment Development Department Grant, "Bridges to Success. The program objective was to combine academic support with work experience opportunities and decrease the number of youth dropping out of high school. STOP Executive Director, Mr. Pedro Lespier, and his team of tutors, is to be congratulated for their outstanding work with some of the most at-risk and **IN**-risk youth in our community.

Of the 70 youth enrolled in the Bridges grant, fifty were active in the Academic Program. All have, or will receive summer work experience through the Summer Youth Employment Program. All participants were at no more than 70% of the locally adjusted federal poverty rate (\$27,200 for a household of 4), and a 2.0 GPA, or less. In addition, all participants had significant involvement in the juvenile justice system, or were at risk of such involvement as measured by risk factors they experience in their daily lives.

The Academic Program had outstanding outcomes this past year. The average increase in GPA after three months in the program was a full point, from 1.50 GPA to 2.56; the California High School Exit Examination pass rate was 68% for English and 71% for Math (compared to the school district's average of 39% and 38% respectively for all populations), and; participants increased their attendance at their home school by an average of 15%.

This year's program has the largest number of graduating seniors that we have ever experienced. Case Managers Bouakhay Phongboupha, Chris Karnsouvong, LaKema Sams and Gilbert Pete, with the assistance of Mr. Lespier and the tutors, succeeded in having 26 seniors prepared for graduation this year!

Some of the individual case histories are truly remarkable, and include multiple college scholarship recipients, and offers of admission to the University of California system and to Ivy League schools. Congratulations to the students and to all those who have contributed to this program.

Unfortunately, with the reduced Workforce Investment Act formula funding this year, and the lack of any additional academic funding, the program is scheduled

for elimination in the upcoming fiscal year. We are working hard to identify alternative sources of funding for this outstanding program.

8. **Richmond Promotes Bicycling as an Everyday Means of Transportation on Bike to Work Day – May 12<sup>th</sup> and Throughout May**

The City of Richmond’s Environmental/Health Initiatives partnered with the East Bay Bicycle Coalition, 511 Contra Costa, SunPower, Building Blocks for Kids, Richmond Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Groundwork Richmond, and Richmond Spokes to promote bicycling as a means of transportation this month.

On May 12<sup>th</sup>, over 300 bicyclists were counted at the four “Energizer Stations” hosted by groups along key bicycle routes. Stations provided Bike to Work Day bags, refreshments, and other resources to bicyclists. The Environmental/Health Initiatives team is continuing to promote bicycling throughout the month of May, through group bike rides and other activities. View more [Bike to Work photos](#).

Find out more about Bike to Work Month at [www.youcanbikethere.com](http://www.youcanbikethere.com).

Thanks to Mack 5 and BKF Engineering for their generous donations to Bike to Work Day.





9. **Richmond Organizations Whip Up Bicycle Fever with Two-Day Event**

Richmond’s Lincoln Elementary School playground and parking lot were turned into a Bike Fiesta on May 21<sup>st</sup>, with scores of neighborhood bike riders and dozens of bicycling enthusiasts from throughout the city coming out to celebrate cycling. It was mild mayhem as bike-riding youngsters careened, sometimes on wobbly wheels, around the school grounds dodging bystanders and each other. There were areas to get bikes repaired; the county health department and the Richmond Police Department handed out free helmets; the police department set up an obstacle course to teach bike safety; and there were pedal-powered rides and free smoothies blended by pedal power.

The event was the second in a two-day celebration of biking in Richmond put on by Fix the Cycle, a collaboration between a number of city and county agencies and non-profits including the Building Blocks for Kids Collaborative, the Contra Costa Interfaith Sponsoring Community Organization, the police department, county mental health services and Richmond Spokes, an entrepreneurship training program for young people.

Fix the Cycle aims to encourage bicycling in Richmond and educate people about the health benefits of safe bike riding. On May 20<sup>th</sup>, Fix the Cycle put on a celebration of the life and accomplishments of Marshal “Major” Taylor at the Nevin Community Center. Taylor was a turn-of-the century African-American cyclist whose story is largely unknown, despite the fact that he was hailed as the fastest man in the world by his contemporaries and won the 1899 one-mile track cycling world championship.

Raymond Neuman, a therapist who heads up the county health department’s West County Child and Adolescent Services, said Major Taylor is a forgotten hero whose endeavors are relevant today. “Major Taylor is an inspiration. What he accomplished is just coming out and we feel he can be an inspiration to young people. He had to overcome overwhelming challenges without any support and he triumphed,” said Neuman.

10. **Public Works Updates**

Parks and Landscaping Division: Crews completed mowing and cleaning along the Greenway, Nicholl Park, Bay Vista Park and Country Club Vista Park; they also completed the Shane Drive median landscaping renovation project.

Additionally, crews completed the installation of the new fence at the Country Club Vista Park. Crews will continue mulching the Shimada Park, East Richmond Avenue and Tewksbury in Point Richmond and troubleshooting the Marina Bay Landscape Maintenance District irrigation systems.

Next week, crews will start pruning and weeding at the May Valley Community Center, Burg, Wendell and John F. Kennedy Parks; begin fire fuel mowing in the Hilltop Landscape Maintenance District; prepare the Nevin Plaza for the ribbon-cutting ceremony; begin the landscaping planting project at the Shimada Park; and aerate and fertilize turf at various parks.

Tree trimming will be performed on McLaughlin Street, Burlingame and Mariposa Avenues.

Streets Division: Crews performed asphalt concrete pavement crack-sealing operations on Park Central and Partridge Drive in the Hilltop Green neighborhood, and pothole operations throughout the city. Next week, crews will resurface Shane Drive between Hilltop Drive and Hilltop Mall Road, and Garrity Way from Blume Drive to the easterly end.

Facilities Division: The painters continued painting the exterior and interior (70% complete of interior) of the Disabled Person's Recreation Center (DPRC) and soliciting bids to replace the upper windows at the Senior Center to improve ventilation at this facility. Stationary Engineers repaired the water fountain at the Shields Reid Community Center; repaired heaters at the Memorial Youth Center gym, the Plunge women's locker room, and the Hilltop Richmond Police Department substation; cleaned the solar panels at the main library roof; repaired water leaks at the Richmond Swim Center, Senior Center and the Plunge women's showers.

*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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