

RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA, November 23, 2021

The Richmond City Council Evening Open Session was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Thomas K. Butt via teleconference.

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Contra Costa County and Governor Gavin Newsom issued multiple orders requiring sheltering in place, social distancing, and reduction of person-to-person contact. Accordingly, on September 15, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Assembly Bill 361 that allowed cities to continue to hold public meetings via teleconferencing.

DUE TO THE SHELTER IN PLACE ORDERS, attendance at the City of Richmond City Council meeting was limited to councilmembers, essential City of Richmond staff, and members of the news media. Public comment was confined to items appearing on the agenda and was limited to the methods provided below. Consistent with Assembly Bill 361, this meeting utilized teleconferencing only. The following provides information on how the public participated in the meeting.

The public was able to view the meeting from home on KCRT Comcast Channel 28 or AT&T Uverse Channel 99 and livestream online at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3178/KCRT-Live> and <http://www.youtube.com/user/KCRRTV>.

*The methods to submit public comment were via mail, email to cityclerkdept@ci.richmond.ca.us, teleconference, and telephone during the meeting. Written comments received by 1:00 p.m. on November 23, 2021, were put into the record and considered before council action. Written comments received after 1:00 p.m. and up until the public comment period on the relevant agenda item closed, were also put into the record. **Attached herewith all written public comments received.***

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmembers Claudia Jimenez, Eduardo Martinez, Gayle McLaughlin, Vice Mayor Demnlus Johnson III, and Mayor Thomas K. Butt. **Absent:** Councilmembers Nathaniel Bates and Melvin Willis arrived after the roll was called.

CITY COUNCIL

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL -
ANTICIPATED LITIGATION (initiation of litigation pursuant to paragraph (4) of Subdivision (d) of Government Code Section 54956.9):

Number of potential cases: two

CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS
(Government Code Section 54957.6):

Unrepresented employee: Interim City Manager
Agency Representative: Acting Deputy City Manager
Internal Services

CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY
NEGOTIATOR (Government Code Section 54956.8):

Property: Terminal One
Agency negotiators: Shasa Curl and Lina Velasco
Negotiating parties: Terminal One Development, LLC
Under negotiation: Price and terms of payment

PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT (Government
Code Section 54957.6):

Interim City Attorney and City Attorney
Interim City Manager

PUBLIC COMMENT BEFORE CLOSED SESSION

There were no public speakers via teleconference.

Mayor Butt announced his recusal from one of the potential anticipated litigation cases because he was named as the defendant.

The Open Session adjourned to Closed Session at 5:03 p.m.
Closed Session adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the Richmond City Council was called to order at 7:39 p.m. by Mayor Butt via teleconference.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmembers Bates, Jimenez, Martinez, McLaughlin, Willis, Vice Mayor Johnson III, and Mayor Butt.
Absent: None.

STATEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

AGENDA REVIEW

None.

REPORT FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY ON FINAL DECISIONS MADE DURING CLOSED SESSION

City Attorney Teresa Stricker reported that the labor negotiator at the Conference with Labor Negotiators for the unrepresented employee was the interim human resources director and not the acting deputy city manager for internal services. Ms. Stricker also reported that by a vote of 5-0-1-1, with Councilmember Bates abstained and Mayor Butt recused, the council directed the city attorney to report the following: by a vote of 5-0-1-1, with Councilmember Bates abstained and Mayor Butt recused, the council directed the city attorney to initiate litigation against the mayor for his improper disclosure of attorney-client privileged information.

REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Interim City Manager Shasa Curl encouraged the community to shop locally for the holiday season. Ms. Curl announced the Craneway Craft Fair on November 27-28, 2021. Ms. Curl acknowledged the Richmond Promise organization in

partnership with Beyond 12 and Contra Costa Community College District for awarding a Kresge Foundation grant.

RECENT CRIME REPORT BY THE DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF

Acting Police Chief Louie Tirona reported there were a total of 295 crimes in Richmond since the last report on October 26, 2021, with 40 classified as violent crimes primarily in the southern district, and 255 classified as property-related crimes primarily in the northern district. Mr. Tirona reported there was one murder since the last report; six firearms assaults (70 year to date); 21 robberies; five sexual assaults; 44 burglaries; and 101 vehicle thefts. Mr. Tirona stated that violent crimes in Richmond decreased by 22 percent compared to the previous month and property crimes increased by 8 percent. Mr. Tirona encouraged residents to remain vigilant especially during the upcoming holiday season.

OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The following individuals gave comments via teleconference:

Mark Wassberg gave comments regarding transgender individuals.

Jamin Pursell thanked the council for supporting transgender awareness. Mr. Pursell gave comments in support of Item H-11, declaring World AIDS Day.

Mike Parker and Yenny Garcia expressed concerns that the chair of the Community Police Review Commission was not recommended for reappointment with Item H-17. Ms. Garcia urged the council to consider the legacy that it would leave behind.

Nathaniel Bates stated that he observed a CalTrans crew cleaning and trimming trees at the Barrett Avenue freeway entrance. Mr. Bates recommended that a letter of appreciation be sent to CalTrans and the governor.

CITY COUNCIL CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion of Vice Mayor Johnson III, seconded by Councilmember Willis, the items marked with an (*) were approved by the unanimous vote of the City Council:

***H-1.** Accepted and appropriated into the Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget \$7,500 received from Share the Spirit East Bay, a project of the Bay Area News Group - East Bay Times.

***H-2.** Adopted **Resolution No. 136-21** proclaiming a local emergency due to the imminent failure of the North Richmond Pump Station and the urgent need to repair the pump engine and pertinent equipment in order to prevent flooding of the North Richmond community; approved an amendment to the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement between Contra Costa County and the City of Richmond and its allocation of costs for the repair of the North Richmond Pump Station; and approved a contract with Petersen Power to provide emergency repair for an amount not to exceed \$1,800,000, to be repaid to Contra Costa County with American Rescue Plan Act funding.

***H-3.** Adopted **Resolution No. 137-21** approving amendment one to agreement respecting the management, maintenance, and control of the common properties and improvements in the Brickyard Cove Subdivision No. 3520 to facilitate the City of Richmond's acceptance and ownership of the sewers and lift stations located within said subdivision.

***H-4.** Received the City of Richmond's Investment and Cash Balance Report for the month of September 2021.

***H-5.** Adopted **Resolution No. 138-21** authorizing the Finance Department to offer the Amnesty Program for a period commencing on November 23, 2021, and ending on June 30, 2022, to businesses with unpaid business licenses.

***H-6.** Approved an amendment to the contract with Donnoe & Associates in the amount of \$18,000, for a total not to exceed \$44,000, to administer promotional examinations of police sergeant and police lieutenant.

***H-7.** Approved a contract amendment with Allied Universal for additional security guard services at 450 Civic Center Plaza in an amount of \$65,000, with a new payment limit not to exceed \$1,009,350, through December 31, 2022.

***H-8.** Adopted **Resolution No. 139-21** requiring the continued use of teleconferencing for the meetings of all City of Richmond legislative bodies pursuant to the provisions of Assembly Bill 361.

***H-9.** Approved a third amendment to the contract with Colantuono, Highsmith, & Whatley, PC for legal representation, increasing the contract payment limit by \$59,000, for a total contract amount of \$284,000, while maintaining the term expiration date of June 30, 2022.

***H-10.** Adopted **Ordinance No. 14-21 N.S.** (second reading) amending Chapter 3.50 of the City of Richmond Municipal Code entitled "Commission on Aging" to add treasurer as an officer to the Commission on Aging.

***H-11.** Proclamation declaring December 1, 2021, as World AIDS Day in the City of Richmond.

*** H-12.** Approved appointments to the Youth Council: appointed Arika Ona, new appointment, seat #1, term expiration date October 1, 2022; Kevin Ruano Hernandez, new appointment, seat #2, term expiration date October 1, 2022; Anuoluwapo Olabode, new appointment, seat #3, term expiration date October 1, 2022; and Diego Castro Curry, new appointment, seat #4, term expiration date October 1, 2022.

***H-13.** Approved an appointment to the Workforce Development Board: appointed Carole Dorham-Kelly, new appointment, seat #2, education and training representative, term expiration date September 22, 2025.

***H-14.** Approved appointments to the Housing Advisory Commission: appointed Carol Hegstrom, re-appointment, seat #5, term expiration date November 1, 2023.

***H-15.** Approved an appointment to the Economic Development Commission: appointed Arnon Oren, new appointment, seat #13, term expiration date March 30, 2022.

***H-16.** Approved an appointment to the Urban Forest Advisory Committee: appointed Sidonia Aguilera, new appointment, seat #2, term expiration date November 17, 2024.

***H-17.** Approved appointments to the Citizens Police Review Commission: appointed Donnell Jones, re-appointment, seat #5, term expiration date November 1, 2024; and Oscar Garcia, re-appointment, seat #8, term expiration date November 1, 2024.

***H-18.** Approved an appointment to the Recreation and Parks Commission: appointed Aaron Rowden, new appointment, seat #6, term expiration date October 26, 2024.

***H-19.** Adopted **Resolution No. 140-21** amending the City of Richmond City Council Rules of Procedure and Order (initially adopted by Resolution No. 27-06 and amended in subsequent years) to modify the Section II C. (1) of that policy to specify the individual who shall report out in public session any reportable action taken during closed session, and any other information from closed session authorized to be disclosed by a majority vote of the City Council.

STUDY/ACTION ITEMS

I-1. The matter to approve an employment agreement with Shasa Curl as interim Richmond city manager, providing for a three-month term commencing December 2, 2021, to March 1, 2022, at an initial base salary of \$21,250 per month (approximately \$364,602 total compensation if calculated on an annual basis), with subsequent salary increases subject to a satisfactory performance evaluation, and other specified employment terms was introduced by Interim Human Resources Director Marc Fox. A motion made by Vice Mayor Johnson III, seconded by Councilmember Willis, approved said employment agreement by the unanimous vote of the City Council.

I-2. The matter to approve the Fiscal Year 2021-22 multi-year comparative position listing and amend the salary schedule to implement the city manager's reorganization of specific City of Richmond departments was introduced by Interim Human Resources Director Marc Fox. Discussion ensued. Interim City Manager Shasa Curl requested the council to consider the following positions: planner II, senior planner, capital projects manager, deputy public works director, housing manager, deputy director community services recreation, and deputy director community services employment and training. Discussion ensued. The council recommended consideration for the additional positions of Rent Board general counsel and chief assistant city attorney. Tarnel Abbott gave comments via teleconference. Further discussion ensued. A motion was made by Councilmember Jimenez, seconded by Councilmember Willis, to approve the positions proposed by Ms. Curl and the positions of Rent Board general counsel and chief assistant city attorney. Further discussion ensued. A friendly amendment made by Councilmember McLaughlin to add the position of deputy director community services library was accepted. The motion with the friendly amendment passed and adopted **Resolution No. 141-21** by the unanimous vote of the City Council.

I-3. The matter to direct staff to draw up a Measure U regulation to provide for the crediting of the rent board fees paid by small landlords with four rental units or less and submit this to the City Council for approval as soon as possible was introduced by Councilmembers Martinez and Willis. Discussion ensued. A motion made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember Martinez, to approve said direction to staff passed by the unanimous vote of the City Council.

I-4. The matter to adopt resolutions authorizing staff to execute a Task Authorization to NHA Advisors, LLC (NHA) for Municipal Advisor services and authorizing staff to execute professional services agreements with Willdan Financial Services (special tax consultant) and Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth (bond counsel) for services related to land-secured financing district(s) for the Point Molate Development was introduced by Public Works Director Joe Leach. Mark Northcross of NHA presented a Powerpoint that highlighted the following: risks; “worst case” scenario; potential mitigation for risks; and an overview of Community Facilities Districts (CFDs). Discussion ensued. A motion by Councilmember Martinez to table this matter died for the lack of a second. Further discussion ensued. The following individuals gave comments via teleconference: Jim Hanson, Paul Carman, Deborah Bayer, and Tarnel Abbott. Further discussion ensued. A motion was made by Councilmember McLaughlin, seconded by Councilmember Jimenez, to approve the item and when the matter returned to the council with a process for CFD formation, direct staff to include various costs scenarios and mitigations. A friendly amendment by Councilmember Martinez to include a table of exactly how much the Mello-Roos would cost each resident with various numbers of money in the bonds and housing was accepted. Further discussion ensued. An **amended motion** by Councilmember McLaughlin, seconded by Councilmember Jimenez, to approve the item and when the matter returned to council in February 2022, direct staff to include various costs scenarios and bond risk mitigation as well as a breakdown of each homeowner's costs they would pay through the CFD passed and adopted **Resolution No. 142-21 and Resolution No. 143-21** by the unanimous vote of the City Council.

I-5. The matter to receive a presentation on the Cannabis Equity Assessment and provide input on the draft citywide Cannabis Equity Manual was introduced by Interim City Manager Shasa Curl. Kyle Tankard of SCI Consulting Group presented a Powerpoint that highlighted the following: cannabis equity grant funding (GO-Biz); Cannabis Equity Assessment; outreach and education; adopting a Cannabis Equity Program; and next steps. Discussion ensued. The council requested that a set-aside policy for storefront and non-storefront cannabis businesses be included when this matter returned to the council on December 7, 2021. The council requested the following information: the number of cannabis businesses in Richmond, owners, demographics, who were the direct and indirect beneficiaries, and police data. The following individuals gave comments via teleconference: Raymond Chimezie, Deborah Small, Ahmad Anderson, and Mark Wassberg. The council requested information for current cannabis-related arrests in Richmond and how many were processed by the district attorney.

I-6. The matter to consider whether to adopt a resolution of the City Council of the City of Richmond censuring Mayor Tom Butt for releasing confidential attorney-client privileged information and confidential information discussed during closed session, and directing the city attorney to refer the matter to the Grand Jury and Contra Costa County district attorney was introduced by City Attorney Teresa Stricker. Mark Wassberg gave comments via teleconference. Discussion ensued. On motion of Vice Mayor Johnson III, seconded by Councilmember Martinez, adopted **Resolution No. 144-21** by the following vote: **Ayes:** Councilmembers Jimenez, Martinez, McLaughlin, Willis, and Vice Mayor Johnson III. **Noes:** Councilmember Bates and Mayor Butt. **Abstentions:** None. **Absent:** None.

(At 11:00 p.m. – a motion made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Vice Mayor Johnson III, to adjourn the meeting passed by the following vote: Ayes: Councilmembers Bates, Martinez, Willis, Vice Mayor Johnson III, and Mayor Butt. Noes: Councilmembers Jimenez and McLaughlin. Abstentions: None. Absent: None).

STUDY SESSION ITEMS

J-1. CONTINUED to the December 7, 2021, City Council meeting – the matter to receive a report from the chair of and investigator from the Community Police Review Commission.

J-2. CONTINUED to the December 7, 2021, City Council meeting – the matter to receive a presentation on a draft summary proposal for a new city-wide Community Benefits Policy.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS: REFERRALS TO STAFF, AND GENERAL REPORTS (INCLUDING AB 1234 REPORTS)

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m., to meet again on Tuesday, December 7, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

Clerk of the City of Richmond

(SEAL)

Approved:

Mayor

From: [Cordell Hindler](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Public Comments- Open Session Prior to Closed session
Date: Thursday, November 18, 2021 4:54:46 PM

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good evening Mayor Butt, council members and city staff, I have some comments for the record

1. I would hope that the council would think carefully on who they select to be our Interim City Attorney
2. and also for our interim City manager

Sincerely
Cordell

From: [Phillip Front](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: public comments – Open Forum
Date: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 8:11:24 AM

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Dear Councilmembers,

I just read the Declaration of Gareth O'Keefe related to the pending litigation regarding Upstream Point Molate LLC and the City of Richmond (link: <https://bit.ly/3xfM3mE>). If what it says is true, I expect Claudia Jimenez and Gayle McLaughlin to resign immediately. What this document accuses them of doing is absolutely shameful, and we should have no place in any city for this kind of unlawful behavior. As council members, you have a fiduciary duty to the city, and you are bound by oath to uphold it. Colluding with an organization that is suing the city, actively working against the city's own interests in a lawsuit, and ignoring court judgments are clear violations of your oaths.

If you do not resign, I look forward to hearing your sworn testimony in the December 1st evidentiary hearing in Federal Court.

Sincerely,
Phillip Front
Richmond resident

From: [Cordell Hindler](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Public Comments- Open Forum
Date: Thursday, November 18, 2021 4:59:30 PM

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good evening Mayor Butt, council Members and City staff, I have a couple of comments for the record

1. I am In full support of H-12 thru H-18 on the consent calendar
2. for a future agenda, the council should consider reinstating the committees

Sincerely
Cordell

From: [Cordell Hindler](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Public Comments- I-1 Study session
Date: Thursday, November 18, 2021 5:10:37 PM

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good evening Mayor Butt, Council Members and city staff, I have some comments for the record

1. I think that Shasa Curl would make a excellent interim City Manager
2. also she communicates very well with her staff members

Sincerely
Cordell

From: [Cordell Hindler](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Public Comments - 1-2 Study Session
Date: Thursday, November 18, 2021 5:17:07 PM

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good evening Mayor Butt, council members and city staff, I have some comments for the record

1. I had previously mentioned to the City Manager on her first day of Employment about the idea of having an Assistant City Manager on board to carry out the duties

2. and she liked the idea of having another manager on board.

so I am asking the council to Approve the fiscal year 2021-22 Position listing as prepared by staff

Sincerely
Cordell

From: [Jacquelyne Vera](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Agenda Item I-5
Date: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 10:07:58 AM

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Hello,

The West Contra Costa Alcohol Policy Coalition works to address underage marijuana and alcohol use prevention. The coalition is invested in community equity, but we are concerned that the focus here is only on economic equity, not health equity. Upper-middle class communities like Orinda do not have any marijuana dispensaries. Our coalition isn't anti-dispensary or anti-cannabis use among adults, but we do want to make sure cannabis isn't being marketed, promoted, or used by young people. We are also concerned about having an oversaturation of cannabis dispensaries, since Richmond is currently suffering from an oversaturation of alcohol outlets. We are aware that the younger youth start using, the more likely they are to have negative health consequences. The human brain is not fully developed until the age of 25 and marijuana use can affect the young brain's difficulty thinking and problem solving, problems with memory and learning, impaired coordination, and difficulty maintaining attention. The goal of the coalition is to promote health equity. Having more cannabis dispensaries in Richmond, will reduce health equity for our city.

sincerely,

The West Contra Costa Alcohol Policy Coalition
Jacquelyne Marlene Espejo Vera
Alcohol & Marijuana Policy Coordinator
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
Bay Area Community Resources
11175 San Pablo Ave
El Cerrito, CA 94530
(619)804-1959
jvera@bacr.org

From: [Jacquelyne Vera](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Agenda Item I-5
Date: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 12:23:04 PM

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Hello,

I am a resident of Richmond as well as the coalition coordinator for the West Contra Costa Alcohol Policy Coalition. The coalition works on alcohol and marijuana youth prevention. I am concerned with the number of cannabis licenses the program wants to give out. They didn't state an exact number or an estimate during their community forums. I am concerned with an over saturation of cannabis retail in my community.

Thank you,
Jacquelyne Marlene Espejo Vera
Alcohol & Marijuana Policy Coordinator
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
Bay Area Community Resources
11175 San Pablo Ave
El Cerrito, CA 94530
(619)804-1959
jvera@bacr.org

From: [Joan Binalinbing](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Agenda item #1-5 Public Comment
Date: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 12:16:08 PM

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Hello,

Below is the comment from DROC - Discovering the Realities of Our Community:

Discovering the Realities of Our Community, also known as DROC, is a youth alcohol and other drug prevention and awareness program that encourages leadership in policy advocacy and enacting change at the environmental/community level.

One of DROC's main focuses is to reduce cannabis use/consumption amongst youth. DROC is neither anti-cannabis dispensaries nor anti-cannabis use when it comes to adult use, but also want to make the point that the more dispensaries present, the higher the exposure and access to young people. Cannabis use especially from a young age can cause negative long term effects on attention, memory, motivation, and learning. A few studies have also shown that the closer young people are to cannabis dispensaries, the more likely they are to use from a young age.

We are all for the initiatives that the cannabis equity board wants to implement to address the long standing harms caused by the war on drugs. However, we want to ensure that it isn't at the expense of the community's, and especially the young peoples', health. Thank you.

--

Joan T Binalinbing
DROC Program Coordinator
She/Her/Hers
P: 510-559-3083

From: [Nabila Sher-Oliver](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item I-5
Date: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 7:36:50 AM
Attachments: [Public Comment on Agenda Item I-5.docx](#)

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Bullet Points

- Cannabis is the most common illicit drug used in the United States by teens as well as adults
- Cannabis use can cause **SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS.**
- **NEARLY 17% OF TEENS** that use marijuana regularly **WILL DEVELOP AN ADDICTION**
- **Teen use of cannabis makes it 3 TIMES MORE LIKELY** that they will **DEVELOP SYMPTOMS OF SCHIZOPHRENIA** as an adult
- Antoine Whitley the 17 year old Richmond teen who ingested cannabis edibles and became paranoid. His body was recovered in the San Pablo Bay. And Antoine Whitley is not alone.
- We aren't anti-dispensary or anti-cannabis use among adults, but we do want to make sure cannabis isn't being marketed, promoted, or used by young people.
- Goal of coalition to promote health equity - more cannabis dispensaries in Richmond, will reduce health equity for our city.
- Increasing access to cannabis isn't the right decision for our youth and our community.

Coalition Public Comment:

The Alcohol, Marijuana, and Prescription Drug Coalition (AMPD Coalition) focuses on **marijuana** and **prescription drug prevention** and education in the city of Richmond.

Research shows that cannabis is the most common drug used in the United States not only by adults, but by teens as well. Problematically, cannabis use can cause **SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS.**

- Hallucinations
- anxiety panic attacks
- depression
- sleep disorders

These symptoms can have serious repercussions for youth. Let's not forget Antoine Whitley the 17 year old Richmond teen who ingested cannabis edibles and became paranoid. His body was recovered in the San Pablo Bay. And Antoine Whitley is not alone.

Here are the facts:

- Research shows that **NEARLY 17% OF TEENS** that use cannabis regularly **WILL DEVELOP AN ADDICTION**.
- Teen use of cannabis makes it **3 TIMES MORE LIKELY** that they will **DEVELOP SYMPTOMS OF SCHIZOPHRENIA** as an adult.
-

While we would love to see the city prioritize economic equity initiatives, increasing access to cannabis isn't the right decision for our youth in our community.

Thank you,
Nabila Sher-Oliver
Alcohol and Other Drug Policy Coordinator
Alcohol, Marijuana, and Prescription Drug (AMPD) Coalition Coordinator
Bay Area Community Resources
11175 San Pablo Ave,
El Cerrito, CA 94530
510-559-3004
Nsher@bacr.org

From: [Raymond Chimezie](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: Re: Public Comment-Agenda Item #1-5
Date: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 12:39:44 PM

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Easy Access to Cannabis Impacts Youth Health

Local cannabis legislation that increases the number of dispensaries can potentially influence cannabis initiation, frequency of use, abuse and disorder. Recreational cannabis can expose users to clinical substance use disorder (addiction). Ease of access to cannabis in Richmond will lead to ease of use and consequently, abuse. Mental health issues will be common as well as driving related accidents, personal injuries, poisoning and inclination to other drug uses. As concerned health educators, we fear that the health of young teens will further be jeopardized by the presence of many cannabis dispensaries in their neighborhoods already saturated with liquor stores where teens can easily get alcohol and tobacco. The number of liquor corner stores already in the neighborhoods should be considered in the implementation of the cannabis equity assessment.

With many low performing teens in schools, unprotected youth access to cannabis will exacerbate more youth health problems such as difficulty thinking, coordinating, and focusing in school, poor brain development, low educational and vocational outcomes, and poor social life. In other words, our youth will be exposed to more crisis and risk factors. Smoking cannabis, however, involves ingestion of noxious smoke, which produces potentially negative or undesirable sensations, and delivers known carcinogens into the body.

The City of Richmond should be concerned with the health and wellbeing of our young people than focusing on the profits that come from increase number of cannabis dispensaries. We recommend that the city invest in youth drug-use health education and work with the school district to educate teens on the dangers of marijuana, tobacco, and other drugs use before they initiative and become addicted.

This is the stand of our organization, Health for Schools and Communities Foundation (<https://healthfsc.org/>) which in collaboration with Breathe California (<https://www.lungsrus.org/tobacco-control/>) is working on tobacco control outreach and intervention in high-risk communities to promote a healthy population. The City of Richmond is one of the communities.

Ray O. Chimezie, Ph.D., MA.Ed., CHES®, FRSPH
U.S. Fulbright Scholar to Sub-Saharan Africa &
President, Health for Schools & Communities Foundation

<https://www.healthfsc.org>

In partnership with Breathe California

From: [Elizabeth Dailey](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept User](#)
Subject: public comments agenda item #J-1
Date: Sunday, November 21, 2021 12:25:04 AM

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Dear Richmond Mayor and Council Members,

Our community is being impacted on a daily basis by environmental hazards like fossil fuels. We need to treat this like the emergency it is and put in place protections for all Richmond residents. The ordinance brought forward by Councilmember Martinez is a good step for actions our community can take to resolve these pressing issues.

Fossil fuels don't just exacerbate climate change, but also poison people. Study after study has shown that extracting, transporting, refining, and burning fossil fuels harms environmental and human health – and new evidence shows that toxic air pollution from fossil fuels also makes people more vulnerable to poor outcomes from COVID.

We must phase out fossil fuels from our daily lives – and we can start with gas hookups that cause asthma and other illnesses like cancer. It's clear we must start moving to clean energy systems – and soon. Our community should be running on clean, renewable energy no later than 2030.

But it's not just fossil fuels that are harming our community. Many neighborhoods in Richmond suffer from disproportionately high levels of particulate matter in the air, which can lead to serious developmental and health issues. The city must do more and protect our residents.

Addressing these issues won't just improve our health, it will also improve our local economy. The Biden administration is investing money in green infrastructure buildout, and we need to make sure we have shovel ready jobs prepared. What's more, cleaning up environmental pollution and converting our energy systems are massive job opportunities that could bring family-wage jobs to thousands of people in Richmond.

I'm writing to you today to ask you to please pass the ban on natural gas hookups to new buildings. We can reduce pollution that is cooking the planet and poisoning our communities while improving the quality of life for every Richmond resident.

Please please pass this ordinance and commit to taking local action to phase out natural gas hookups to new buildings, speed up the clean energy transition, reduce local pollution, and empower our local community and economy.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Dailey, 55405