

City Manager's Weekly Report

This is the weekly report for the week ending August 14th, 2009.

1. **Meeting Notes**

The next regular City Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8th.

2. **Richmond Receives EPA Brownfields Job Training Grant Award**

The City of Richmond has been selected by the Environmental Protection Agency to receive a \$500,000 Brownfields Job Training Grant, one of just 26 grants awarded nationally. The Richmond BUILD program was one of four programs selected in California along with the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, the City of Long Beach's Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network, and Cypress Mandela Training Center, Inc.

These funds are part of more than \$6.8 million provided by the Recovery Act to provide brownfields job training across the nation. The program is intended to help communities assess, safely clean up, and sustainably redevelop property that has been contaminated by pollutants or hazardous substances. Richmond will use EPA funding to train 128 students, place 102 graduates in environmental jobs, and track graduates for one year following completion of the program.

The training program includes a total of 250 hours of training in a variety of environmental, green technology, and construction skills. Graduates will receive six certifications, including HAZWOPER; lead, asbestos, and mold abatement; and solar technology and installation. The primary trainers will be staff from the Richmond Employment and Training Department, as well as instructors from private environmental training firms who will be identified through a competitive procurement process. The city will work with private companies with local facilities such as MS Environmental Solutions, Veolia Water, and the Chevron Corporation to place graduates in environmental jobs.

Sal Vaca, Fred Lucero, Ron Shaw and Nicholas Alexander of the Employment and Training department were involved in the development of the EPA Brownfields Job Training Grant application, with the assistance of the Glen Price Group.

3. **California Communities Prop 1A Securitization Program**

A major part of the 2009-2010 California State budget included the required loan of 8% of local governments' property tax revenues to the state, with the (constitutionally-backed) promise to repay the loan within three years. The

effect on the City of Richmond would be a \$3.6 million reduction in property tax revenues, the loan of which we had intended to fund through our reserves.

As part of the budget package, local governments have the opportunity to receive an immediate repayment of the amount being borrowed by the state through a securitization financing offered by California Communities, a state-wide joint powers authority of local governments. Under the program, California Communities will issue bonds securitizing the future payments by the state, and remit the proceeds of the bonds to the local governments who opt to participate in the securitization program. The state will then repay the bondholders directly to pay off the outstanding bonds, including interest costs.

The structure, timing, and application details of this program are currently being developed. We will continue to monitor these developments to determine whether or not it makes economic sense for Richmond to participate in this program.

4. **Port Expansion Community Information Meeting**

On Thursday, August 6th, the City hosted a community information meeting on the Port Expansion project, which was intended to introduce the local contracting community to the business opportunities related to the Honda Port of Entry Project. Approximately 39 local vendors attended the presentation. The first phase of the \$37 million Honda project, which is the site/civil portion of the work valued at between \$6.0 million and \$7.0 million, was posted on the City's BidsOnline System on August 11th.

5. **Update on the Richmond Summer Youth Employment Program**

Paychecks for 660 youth at 140 worksites comprising over 62,000 hours of work and approximately \$512,000 in pay, were distributed during this third payday for the Richmond Summer Youth Employment Program.

Richmond YouthWORKS recently hosted a site visit by the State of California Employment Development Department's Regional Advisor, Linda Palmquist, and the Federal Department of Labor's Regional Representative, Janice Shordike, and received glowing reviews of the City's youth employment programs. Ms. Shordike's follow up e-mail indicated that she "met several different youth who all have gone from great depths of serious risk to becoming inspired and college bound..." Ms. Palmquist's follow up e-mail stated that "...Richmond runs the model Summer Youth programs I've seen, be it ARRA, WIA or otherwise."

Among the more interesting current worksites participating in the Summer Youth Employment Program include:

- Rising Sun/California Youth Energy Services (home energy auditor)

- UC Berkeley/Lawrence Berkeley Labs (clean energy Scientist Assistant)
- Main Street Initiative Storefront Retail Project (retail clerk and business aid)

6. **Public Works Highlights**

The Public Works/Parks Division hosted a ground breaking ceremony today for the new Skate Park at Nicholl Park.

This past week, the Public Works Department completed the resurfacing of the main Civic Center parking lot between 24th and 25th Streets on Barrett Avenue. Parking delineation for this parking lot will be done next week. Also next week, the Public Works Department plans to resurface Nevin Avenue from 23rd Street to 27th Street.

7. **Budget Reform Proposals Surfacing**

In the ongoing debacle that is the State of California budget process, a number of interesting budget reform proposals are being put forth. Some of these proposals are being crafted for submittal to the voters in November 2010 as initiative reforms. One such proposal is being put forth by the organization *California Forward* which I have provided below (using their descriptions):

Responsible Budgets on Time

1. **Pay-As-You-Go.** Require that new programs identify a funding source for any new spending they require.
2. **Base Budgets on Results.** Require the Governor and lawmakers to set clear goals for programs, measure their results and effectiveness when making budget decisions, monitor performance to improve efficiency, and consider eliminating outdated and duplicative programs.
3. **Two-year Budget.** Require the Governor and Legislature to craft two-year budgets with midcourse correction authority, and provide long-term revenue forecasts and capital investment plans.
4. **One-Time Use of One-Time Revenues.** Reduce future budget shortfalls by prohibiting the use of unexpected spikes in revenues to increase spending on programs that continue year after year.
5. **Reduce the Budget Vote Requirement.** Reduce the likelihood of budget stalemates by changing the legislative vote requirement for state budget approval to a simple majority (to be adopted in conjunction with the plan's other fiscal reforms, and while retaining the two-thirds majority vote requirement for tax increases).
6. **Provide Certainty Regarding Passage of Fees.** Clarify the circumstances in which the Legislature and the Governor can impose fees without a two-thirds majority vote to those areas with a clear and justifiable nexus to the service provided.

Government that's Closer to the People

- 1. Protect Local Revenue.** Give communities more control over community-related services and prevent the state from siphoning off local revenue by giving local governments legal ownership of specific funds for community services.
- 2. Remove Barriers to Local Government Coordination.** Encourage community-level governments to coordinate, consolidate districts when this makes sense, and give county governments authority to redistribute local property taxes to improve efficiency, improve services and deliver better results.
- 3. Foster and Fund Long-Term Regional Collaboration.** Allow cities, counties and school officials who craft long-term flexible plans to address community needs, to seek majority vote approval to provide funds to pay for them, while retaining the vote thresholds established under Proposition 218.

Constituent Access and Accountability

- 1. Term Limit Reform.** Reduce the total time newly-elected state legislators are allowed to serve from 14 years to 12 years, regardless of whether the time is spent in the Assembly or Senate.
- 2. Constituent Access and Accountability.** Require legislators to spend part of every year in their district, in consultation with constituents and local leaders.

Another effort that is currently underway is to convene a constitutional convention to address what are viewed as severe systemic problems at the state level.

There will undoubtedly be more information regarding these various efforts coming out of the League of California Cities in future months.