

City Manager's Weekly Report

This is the report for the week ending October 30th, 2009.

1. Meeting Notes

The next City Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 3rd beginning with a Closed Session at 5:00 PM, followed by the Housing Authority Commission meeting at 6:20 PM prior to the regular 6:30 PM City Council agenda.

2. Honda Port of Entry Groundbreaking

The Port of Richmond held a groundbreaking event as the official start of the construction phase of the Honda Port of Entry Project. The ceremony was hosted by Port Executive Director, Jim Matzorkis and Auto Warehousing CEO, Steve Seher. The festivities included comments from Mayor Gayle McLaughlin, Councilmember Nat Bates, and the City Manager, with the keynote address delivered by Scott Crail of American Honda. Also in attendance from Honda were Tosh Muraviov, Michael Goicovich, and Julio Tapanes.

The \$37 million development project brings a 15-year commitment by American Honda to distribute a minimum of 145,000 vehicles annually through Richmond. This volume commitment will guarantee \$84 million in Port revenue. The project is estimated to create more than 100 construction jobs and 200 permanent jobs. The event was well attended by project partners including business and industry neighbors, the National Park Service, and the Trails for Richmond Action Committee (TRAC) and received local television, radio, and print media coverage. Honda's operations are scheduled to commence in April of next year.



3. **City Bond Rating is Affirmed by Standard & Poor's**

City staff recently met with analysts from the Standard & Poor's Credit Corporation (S&P) to provide an update on the financial and operational performance of the City, as well as to present the details of the upcoming Civic Center refinancing. After reviewing estimated fiscal year 2008-09 financials and the revised fiscal year 2009-10 budget reflecting Council-approved adjustments, S&P has affirmed the City's Issuer Credit Rating of "A+", and assigned a rating of "A" to the Civic Center Refunding Bonds. Credit strengths cited by S&P include:

- Consistently strong reserve levels despite a one-time draw-down in FY 2008;
- Demonstrated ability to adjust its expenditures to offset revenue declines following state funding shortfalls and an economic downturn;
- Strong financial management policies.

Had the City not received this rating affirmation, it is likely that staff would have needed to recommend to the City Council more budget cuts beyond those that have already been made. This rating will now allow the City to proceed with the Civic Center refinancing without any adverse impact to the operating budget.

4. **Pricing on Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes**

As you recall, the City has been working on the issuance of TRANs, which is a form of short-term cash flow financing that recognizes the uneven flow of revenue, and especially property tax revenue, received by the City during any given fiscal year. We reported last week that Standard & Poor's gave a rating of SP-1+ to Richmond's TRANs, which is the highest possible rating for such short term financing.

This week, the City of Richmond TRANs were priced at an interest rate of 0.78%. By comparison, out of 70 municipalities that issued TRANs between May 27, 2009 and October 27, 2009, the average price was .875%, with the lowest being .33% and the highest 2.375%.

5. **Zhoushan, China Mayor and Delegation Visit Richmond**

Last week, the City of Richmond hosted Mayor Zhou and a 13 member delegation from our sister city of Zhoushan, China. Their delegation was greeted by Mayor Gayle McLaughlin and the city manager, who introduced each of the department managers and explained their role in the organization. Councilmember Nat Bates, who has a long standing relationship with Zhoushan, served as the host for the two-day visit. Former Mayors Rosemary Corbin and Irma Anderson also attended various events. The delegation's tour of Richmond included visits to the renovated Civic Center, the Ford Point Business Park, the Port of Richmond, Point Molate, and Contra Costa College.

Among the formal activities occurring during the sister city visit was the updating of the Mutual Agreement between the two cities. The agreement addresses exchange in the areas of arts and culture, public health, education, and business development. Mayor Zhou extended his invitation for Richmond to visit Zhoushan in 2010.



6. **Local Economic Development Initiative (LEDI) Contracting Opportunities Fair**

Recently, representatives from the Finance Department's Purchasing Division and from the Employment and Training Department attended the Local Economic Development Initiative (LEDI) Annual Contracting Opportunities Fair sponsored by West Contra Costa Business Development Center. The local vendor community was invited to this event to learn about upcoming projects and resources available through the participating public agencies and major corporations. These organizations included the City of Richmond, Chevron, West Contra Costa Unified School District, McCarthy Building Companies, PG&E, Department of General Services, BART, Contra Costa County, West County Transportation Advisory Committee (WCCTAC), Caltrans, East Bay MUD, AC Transit, and the City of San Pablo. LEDI was created in direct response to the current economic crisis and the effect it has had on local businesses. As an integrated public-private partnership, LEDI will work to increase the stability and prosperity in the communities of West Contra Costa.

7. **West County Cities CERT Bi-Annual Drill**

This past Saturday, October 24th, the Richmond Fire Department Office of Emergency Services hosted the West County Cities CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Training/bi-annual drill. This is the first time that six Contra Costa County cities (Richmond, El Cerrito, Kensington, Pinole, Rodeo and San Pablo) have worked together to provide CERT training. Thanks to this consortium of trainers, the Pinole Fire Department was able to offer their first CERT course this fall. The drill was considered a great success thanks to the volunteers and staff from El Cerrito Fire, Pinole Fire, Richmond Fire, Rodeo-Hercules Fire, the San Pablo Police Department and the Richmond Fire Department Office of Emergency Services.

110 new CERT students received 20 hours of life saving training, which will help emergency responders across West County cities during a disaster as well as in day to day emergencies. Graduates participated in three separate events:

1. Major earthquake scenario functional exercise;
2. Incident Command System (ICS) CERT team organization and table top exercise; and
3. Skills stations, in which participants practice their newly developed skills in ICS and CERT team management, triage and first aid, fire suppression, damage assessment, search and rescue, and cribbing and lifting.

As graduates of the program, these CERT students will now be able to go out and make a difference in their respective neighborhoods.

8. **The City of Richmond Receives “Green Business” Designation**

The City has been notified that it has been certified as a “Green Business” under Contra Costa County’s *Green Business Program*. The stated mission of the *Green Business Program* is “to strengthen and sustain the quality of the environment in Contra Costa County through a collaborative partnership of public and private organizations that encourages, enables and recognizes businesses taking action to prevent pollution and conserve resources.” To be certified as a Green Business, an organization must implement a variety of measures to save energy, water and other materials, reduce waste, and pledge to continue these efforts.

The City of Richmond will be officially recognized by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors at a ceremony for all of the County’s new Green Businesses for the year in April 2010.

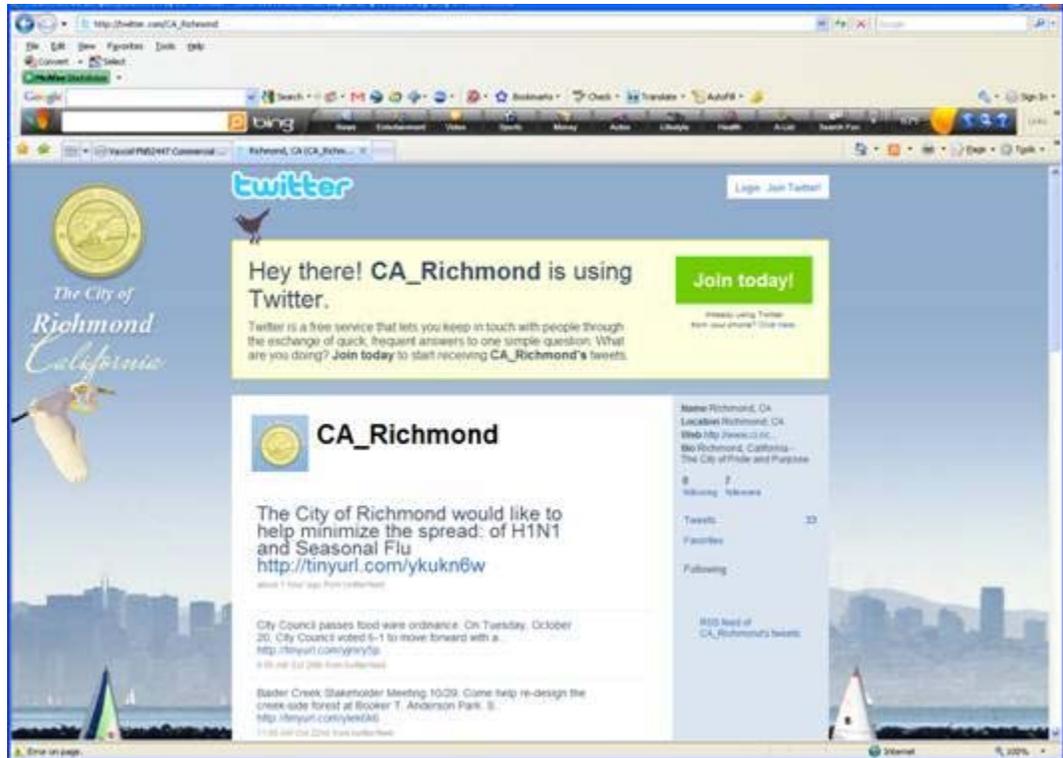
9. Web Developments

The City's Facebook and Twitter account are now live, and we will soon be linking these from our website. Users can currently access our Facebook page using: http://www.facebook.com/pages/City-of-Richmond-CA/139438544014?v=box_3

News Flash and Calendar items on our website feed onto the Facebook page, and a link on the Facebook page is provided to bring users back to our website to view the full post. An example here is the Teen Perspectives Calendar item:



You can access the City's Twitter page using: http://twitter.com/CA_Richmond. New Flash and Calendar items on our website feed onto our Twitter page as 'Tweets'. A link on the Twitter page links back to the full post on our website. Here is an example:



Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are becoming more commonly used in municipal environments, and staff is in the process of exploring how best to use these tools to outreach to the community.