

City Manager's Weekly Report

This is the weekly report for the week ending December 18th, 2009.

1. **Meeting Notes**

The next regular City Council meeting is not until next year: Tuesday, January 5, 2010. Enjoy the time off!

2. **Moody's Investor Services Affirms Redevelopment Agency's Credit Rating**

Following up on their prior actions regarding the City's credit rating (as reported last week), this past Wednesday, Moody's Investor Services ("Moody's") affirmed its existing issuer credit rating of "Baa3" for the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency ("RCRA"). Like last week's report, this is also good news because the RCRA has experienced a sharp decline in assessed valuation causing a 36% decline in tax increment revenue for FY 2009-10. This is in addition to the State of California's shifting \$10 million in local project funds for its own purposes. Moody's indicated that, as with the City, the RCRA has taken appropriate steps to manage its debt portfolio and other obligations in light of the current economic environment justifying this affirmation.

3. **City Loses Measure T Court Challenge**

As you have undoubtedly heard, on Thursday, the City received the ruling in Chevron's lawsuit challenging Measure T. The Court concluded that Chevron's challenge to Measure T is "well-taken," and that "the tax scheme that has been selected and put in place cannot be enforced." In reaching this conclusion, the Court found that Measure T violates the Commerce Clause, and that the City's implementing regulations were both unauthorized and insufficient to cure the constitutional violation. The Court also found that Measure T is an "inventory tax" in violation of the Bradley-Burns Act. The Court suggested that the appropriate remedy would be a return of the taxes collected in excess of the "alternative" tax permitted prior to the enactment of Measure T.

The City Attorney has asked our outside counsel in that matter to provide a memorandum analyzing the ruling and providing recommendations for next steps.

4. **State Employment Training Panel Announces Grants Benefiting Richmond and Other East Bay Cities**

On December 10th, the Employment Training Panel announced the award of over \$6 million in training funds. The East Bay received four of the seventeen grants – one of the nursing skills grants and three critical projects grants for a total of \$1,559,540 in training funds. East Bay companies receiving funds are:

- Amyris Biotechnologies, Inc. Emeryville, \$319,200;
- Bayer Healthcare LLC, Berkeley and Richmond, \$497,040;
- Solyndra, Inc., Fremont, \$494,000;
- Kaiser Foundation Hospitals – Northern California, Oakland, \$249,300.

Kaiser has its regional training facility in Richmond and Bayer has research and manufacturing operations in Berkeley and Richmond at the former Berlex site, so these funds will help maintain jobs and training opportunities in Richmond.

5. **Office of Neighborhood Safety Assists College of Alameda**

The Office of Neighborhood Safety (“ONS”) was recently asked to participate on a planning steering committee as a part of a series of events to introduce The College of Alameda’s new Community Development and Violence Prevention Leadership Initiative. This new initiative is a partnership between the College and a diverse field of grassroots, community-based, public systems and academic leadership.

The initiative has a simple goal: to prepare community members for careers and leadership opportunities in the field of community development and violence prevention while at the same time growing the capacity and strength of the many organizations currently involved in the work. The Office of Neighborhood Safety was pleased to be able to contribute to this effort.

6. **Meeting with Senator Feinstein’s Staff Regarding CyberTran**

We continue to work with CyberTran to gain support for the stimulus grant proposal to initiate the development of a prototype ultra-light rail system project in Richmond. This past week, City staff members, Councilmember Ritterman, and representatives of CyberTran met with Christine Epres, Field Representative for Senator Diane Feinstein, to provide information on the project and the grant proposal. We will continue to keep you informed as these efforts to gain legislative support move forward.

7. **Recreation Department Update**

The following are highlights from the Recreation Department for the current week:

- **Candy Cane Classic:** The Recreation Department will host the Candy Cane Classic Basketball Tournament this weekend from Friday, December 18th through Sunday, December 22nd from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM at the Richmond Recreation Complex and the Richmond Memorial Auditorium. Fourteen recreation, AAU, and club teams with players ages 7 to 14 will play in the annual tournament competition.

- Snow Ball: The Recreation Department held the 57th annual High School Snow Ball last Saturday, December 12th at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium. The gala themed “A Night at the Orient” included 1,350 high school students from 8 schools within the West Contra Costa Unified School District. Students enjoyed the evening with few incidents, and there was excellent cooperation among DP Security and Sergeant Russell and his officers from the Richmond Police Department. Each year the Recreation Department looks for ways to provide an exceptional program while still being mindful of costs. This year, program costs were reduced by 58%, with only \$8,800 spent from the allocated budget of \$13,000, but it was still a positive experience for those in attendance.
- Holiday Gift: The Recreation Department’s special programs unit, which includes the Senior Center, Annex Senior Center, and the Disabled Persons Community Center, hosted a holiday gathering on Wednesday, December 16th from 4:00 to 6:00 PM for all Recreation staff. A wonderful homemade meal and holiday cheer were enjoyed by all.

8. **Update on Public Works Projects**

- The construction of the Hilltop Richmond Police Department substation continues its excellent progress. Installation of ceiling grid, windows and doors were completed this week and the project now stands at 80% completion.
- The lead and asbestos abatement at the Martin Luther King Community Center is now at approximately 90% of completion.
- The replacement of existing roofs at Fire Stations 62 and 64 and the park lighting improvements at the Atchison Village, Kern and Nichol Parks are now scheduled to start after the holidays.

Enjoy a wonderful holiday season!

