

City Manager's Weekly Report

This is the weekly report for the week ending June 25th, 2010.

1. **Meeting Notes**

The next City Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 6th, which will be the first meeting of the new fiscal year. Enjoy the week off in the interim.

2. **Ballot Measure to Stop State Raids on Local Funds Qualifies for November Ballot**

California Secretary of State Debra Bowen announced this week that the *Local Taxpayer, Public Safety and Transportation Protection Act of 2010* has qualified for the November 2010 ballot. Counties have verified through a random sampling of the 1.1 million signatures submitted that the measure has the 694,354 valid signatures needed to place it on the ballot.

The provisions in the measure will protect funding for local redevelopment efforts and local public safety, transit, and other vital local services by closing loopholes to prevent the State from taking, diverting, or borrowing local government, transportation, and public transit funds. If passed, the measure's provisions would:

- Add additional constitutional protections to prevent the State from raiding redevelopment funds or shifting redevelopment funds to other state purposes.
- Prohibit the State from taking or borrowing the Highway User Tax on gasoline, which currently funds city, county and state road, highway, transit and other transportation improvements and services. (It should be noted that the City of Richmond uses these funds as a major source for its pavement management program.)
- Prevent the State from redirecting or diverting locally levied taxes, including: parcel taxes; sales taxes; utility user taxes; transit occupancy taxes; and other locally imposed taxes that are currently passed by local governments and/or local voters and dedicated to cities, counties, and special districts.
- Prohibit the State from taking, borrowing or redirecting Public Transportation Account revenues dedicated to public transit.

3. **Assemblymember Skinner's Staff Provides Briefing to West County Elected Officials Regarding the State Budget**

This past Thursday, Mayor McLaughlin hosted several West County Mayors and City Managers to receive a briefing from Assemblymember Skinner's staff regarding the state budget. In particular, Assemblymember Skinner's staff described the various versions of the budget that have been prepared

(Governor's, Senate's, and Assembly's) and how each one attempts to close an approximate \$19 billion budget gap. In addition to proposals regarding proposed increases in revenues and decreases in expenditures to close this gap, the Senate version of the budget offers some language regarding a realignment of services between the State and local governments. (As noted by the League of California Cities, "The term ... 'realignment' ... has been historically regarded with trepidation given the state's tendency to give responsibility for certain functions to local government without adequate funding.")

The input that was provided to Skinner's staff members by West County officials included the message that the State should stop taking local tax dollars to balance its budget (see item 2 above). In particular, local officials stressed that they should not implement the planned raid on redevelopment dollars for FY 2010-11, and, in fact, should seek to return to redevelopment agencies the dollars that they took in 2009-10.

4. **Library Receives Family-Friendly Community Grant Award**

The Friends of the Richmond Public Library has been awarded \$10,000 in *Family-Friendly Community Grant* funding to support the children's librarians in an early childhood program integrating music and dance into story time programs. Funding will be provided by the First 5 Contra Costa Children and Families Commission. The program, called "Move It and Groove It," will commence this coming fall. Participants who attend three or more of these story times will receive a free gift of materials to take home and keep. This way, parents will be able to continue with the activities at home whenever they wish.

The Friends of the Richmond Public Library was one of 42 applicants, of which 32 received awards. Kathy L. Haug, Administrative Librarian for Children's Services at the Richmond Public Library, wrote the grant proposal. She has attended numerous workshops and other trainings regarding brain development in babies as well as how to provide literacy-enhancement activities for very young children. In an e-mail notification of the award, the grantor noted, "The review panel found your application to be exceptional."

5. **Meeting with MTC Executive Director Regarding Cyber Tran**

As you may recall, several months ago, the City Council received a presentation and unanimously endorsed working with Cyber Tran to help facilitate their proposed development of an ultra-light rail prototype system as both a transportation project and economic development project for the City of Richmond. Since that time, representatives from the City and Cyber Tran have had a number of meetings with local, state, and federal elected officials and staff members to describe this innovative system and to seek ideas for funding.

The most recent such meeting was today (Friday), with Metropolitan Transportation Commission Executive Director Steve Heminger, and several members of his staff, meeting with Vice Mayor Jeff Ritterman, Senior Planner Lori Reese-Brown, the City Manager, and two Cyber Tran representatives. The

meeting was very productive, with Cyber Tran delivering an excellent presentation regarding their system concept, and stressing that there seems to be no program at any level of government that is funding innovation for the transit industry – something that is sorely needed to meet both long-term transportation and environmental goals. This lack of funding programs was acknowledged by Mr. Heminger, who, nonetheless, had some good suggestions for Cyber Tran in seeking funding sources, and for the City of Richmond in seeking economic development opportunities in the transit industry.

We will keep you informed in this ongoing effort.

6. **Presentation by Intellergy Corporation**

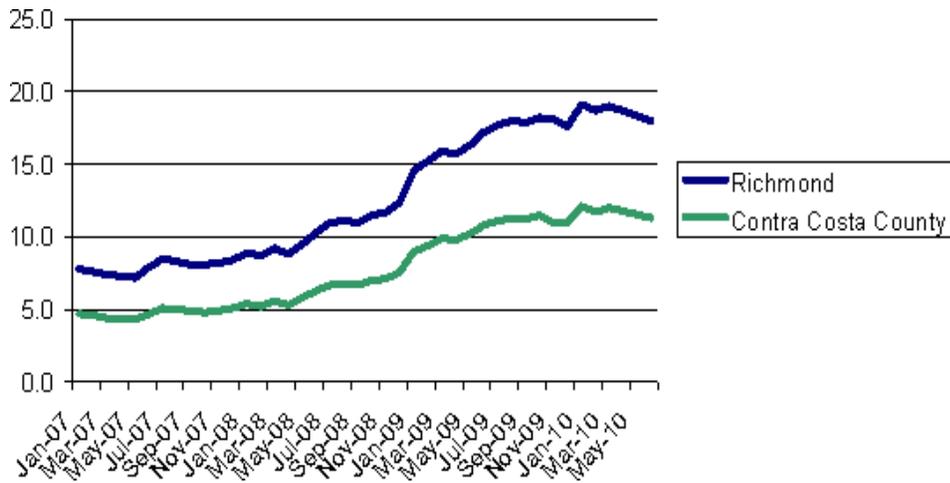
This past Thursday, Councilmember Bates arranged for City staff members to receive a very interesting presentation by Dr. Terry Galloway, Chief Technology Officer for Intellergy Corporation. Among the City representatives in attendance were Councilmembers Bates and Lopez, Redevelopment Director Steve Duran, Planning Director Richard Mitchell, Deputy City Attorney Mary Renfro, and the City Manager.

Intellergy is a Richmond-based company, that is relocating to 1401 Marina Way (the former temporary City Hall building), which specializes in developing systems that utilize wastewater treatment plant sludge to generate electricity. This clearly has potential application at Richmond's wastewater treatment plant, as well as at other sewer systems throughout the region that are dealing with the problem of sewer sludge disposal.

Staff is planning to follow up on this technology, and we will keep the City Council informed.

7. **Local Economic Indicators (or, “we’ve been down so long, it feels like up...”)**

For the month of May 2010, the unemployment rate in both Contra Costa County and the City of Richmond decreased for the first time since 2007. Contra Costa's unemployment rate dropped from April's 12.0% to 11.3% for May 2010, while Richmond saw a full percentage point decrease for the same time period, from 19.0% to 18.0%.



The housing market in Richmond adds some good news as well. As reported by RealtyTrac.com, the average sales price of a home in Richmond increased 68% in the past twelve months, from \$124,824 in June 2009 to \$210,014 in May 2010.



It will be interesting to observe (1) whether these statistics begin a trend, and (2) if so, how they will ripple through to impact the City’s revenues.

8. Recreation Highlights

- **Movies:** The 2nd Annual Family Free Movies have begun. The first of three in the series was shown on June 18th, where approximately 40 participants enjoyed a showing of “The Goonies.” The remaining two in the series will be “This is It” on July 16th and the “Princess & the Frog” on August 6th, both from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The whole family is invited. All ages are welcome.
- **Summer Camp:** The Kids ‘N’ Motion summer camp officially began on Monday, June 21st. The first week of camp has been well received throughout the community centers with the following number of participants:
 1. May Valley (41)
 2. Booker T. Anderson (45)
 3. Parchester (15)
 4. Nevin (10)

5. Shields Reid (42)
6. Recreation Complex (81)
7. Pt. Richmond (17)

- Teen Eco Week: The after school program at the Recreation Complex referred 10 participants to the East Bay Regional Park's Teen Eco Week program, which brings 13 to 18-year-old youth together from West Contra Costa County to explore environmental issues relevant to their lives, while making a positive difference in the community. The participants will receive a \$100 stipend upon completion of the week long program.

Youth activities staff, Tetteh Kisseh, Recreation Coordinator, has been invited by the program to speak as part of a "Next Steps Panel" to be held on Friday, June 25th at Lake Anza in Tilden Park.

- Collaboration: The Recreation Department and the Center for Human Development (CHD), located at the Shields-Reid Community Center, have established an MOU, pending legal approval, for year-round collaborative programming efforts.

9. Public Works Updates

- The Parks Division completed the repair and painting of the Richmond Parkway sound wall between I-80 to Lakeside Drive. They also completed the repair of the North Richmond Ball Field's infield lighting system. Additionally, they started the repair of the North Richmond Ball Field's electrical security system.
- Crews will be sealing cracks all next week along the Richmond Parkway.

10. Web Site Facts

The cyber community connects to the City of Richmond's website through many different avenues. Current statistics show that the primary way people find the City's website is by performing a search on *Google*. The second most common way people reach the City's website is by typing the City's address: www.ci.richmond.ca.us.

For the month of May 2010, it is interesting to note that ABAG was the City web site's number 7 referring source. Of the City's 47,807 visits this past month, 479 of them were referred to us from the ABAG site. You may recall that, in April, ABAG honored the City of Richmond with its *Growing Smarter Together Award* in the *Building a Better Bay Area Urban Design Award* category for the Richmond Memorial Civic Center Revitalization Project. This award announcement and video is now prominently displayed on ABAG's web site, which may account for this connection to the City's web site.

