

## City Manager's Weekly Report

### **Mayor and Councilmembers:**

This is the weekly report for the week ending March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

#### 1. **Meeting Notes**

The next meeting of the City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, beginning with a Closed Session at 5:00 PM, a Housing Authority meeting scheduled for 5:30 PM, and the regular City Council agenda (mostly presentations and study sessions) scheduled to begin at 6:30 PM.

#### 2. **Japanese Nuclear Reactor Update from Contra Costa County Health Services**

The City received the following information from the Contra Costa County Health Services Department on March 15, 2011:

At this time there appears to be no risk from the reactors in Japan to our community and it is not recommended that Contra Costa residents take potassium iodine. Given the thousands of miles between here and Japan, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission does not expect to find any harmful levels of radioactivity in Hawaii, Alaska or the West Coast. It is important to know that iodine is not without risks. Taking it may be harmful for some people, particularly those with a thyroid disease and those who are allergic to iodine. If you have a seafood or shellfish allergy - it can mean that you are allergic to iodine.

The California Department of Public Health is working with authorities and experts in the Energy Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to closely monitor the situation.

We are in contact with the state, and if the situation changes, we will immediately let the public know of any precautionary measures that should be taken.

For questions about the impact of the situation in Japan on public health in California, visit the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) website: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov>, or call the public information hotline at (916) 341-3947. The hotline is staffed from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily. We encourage residents to be prepared in the event of any emergency. For general disaster preparedness tips, visit <http://cchealth.org/topics/emergencies/>.

#### 3. **Double Disappointment from HUD This Week**

Two doses of bad news came out of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development this past week.

Disappointment number 1 came yesterday when we learned that the House of Representatives voted to rescind the third round of funding for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The House passed the NSP Termination Act ([H.R. 861](#)) 242-182 with only five Democrats supporting the measure. H.R. 861 is the third of four bills passed by the House to rescind programs that provide funding to address foreclosures and abandoned properties. As you know, the Richmond Community and Economic Development Agency's Housing Division has implemented a program using NSP 1 funds to acquire and rehabilitate blighted and foreclosed properties using local labor – both repairing Richmond's neighborhoods and creating local jobs.

Disappointment number 2 came today when we learned that Richmond was not a recipient of a Choice Neighborhoods planning grant for its proposal related to the NURVE/Nystrom partnership. Although the program was very competitive (only 17 projects nationwide for \$4 million), the NURVE partners had all worked very hard to produce what I (objectively) felt was an outstanding proposal. For a list of recipients, please see the following link: ([See the full list of Choice Neighborhood grantees here](#)). We are planning to follow up with HUD to determine where our grant proposal did not measure up.

#### 4. **Smoke-Free Housing Ordinance**

The Richmond City Council passed the Smoke-Free Housing Ordinance (Richmond Municipal Code Chapter 9.57) on July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009. The ordinance prohibits smoking in residences with two or more units, and bans smoking in all common areas of multi-unit housing facilities except in areas designated for smoking by those with legal control over the common area. The ordinance does not require any property owner or manager to create a designated smoking area. The law also requires landlords to add specific lease terms to their tenants' month-to-month and new leases that reflect this smoking ban. All provisions of the smoking ordinance became effective on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011.

The City is taking active steps to educate the Richmond community regarding the Smoke-Free Housing Ordinance. City staff, in collaboration with the American Lung Association and the California Apartment Association, is in the process of developing outreach programs. As part of this outreach, the City has mailed brochures to all landlords within the City of Richmond summarizing the requirements and applicability of the ordinance, and providing language developed by the California Apartment Association that can be added to new and month-to-month leases. Richmond's rental inspection program staff is also providing materials to landlords to help educate them about the ordinance.

#### 5. **Compost Giveaway on April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM**

Compost is always a hot commodity in the spring as ambitious gardeners begin planting activities. The City will be hosting a compost giveaway on April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM in the parking lot in front of the Civic Center at 27<sup>th</sup> Street and Macdonald Avenue. The compost is made from organics generated from the residential food scrap collection and composting program that began in

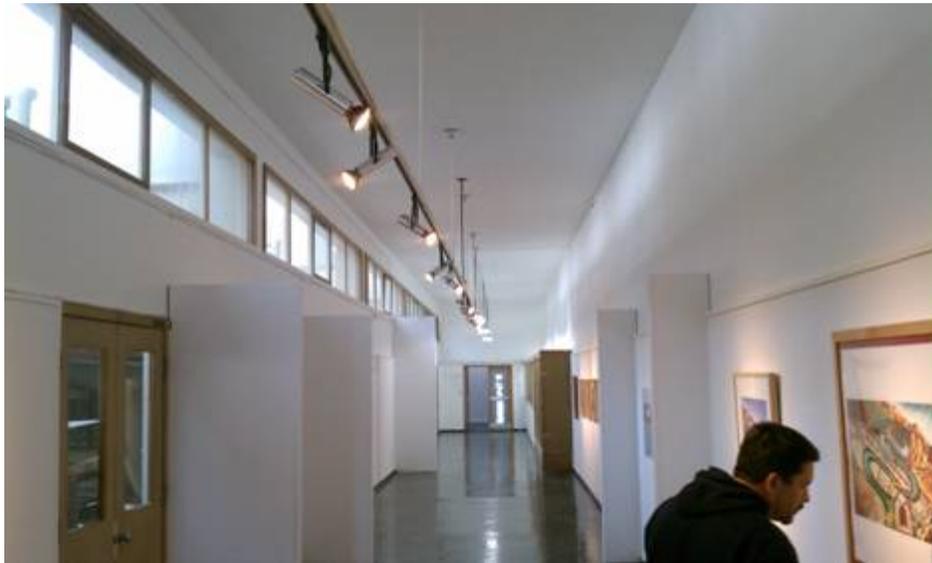
July 2010. Richmond residents may pick up 2 cubic feet of compost each, while supplies last. Compost is not bagged.



6. **City Facility Lighting Retrofits**

The City is continuing to retrofit lighting systems at all City facilities with a goal of providing better lighting quality and reducing operating and electricity costs. The project is funded entirely by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), also known as the “federal stimulus package.” The City recently completed comprehensive retrofits at Community Services Center, the Recreation Center, Nevin Community Center, Shields Reid Community Center, Booker T. Anderson Community Center and a new LED installation and lighting track repair at the Art Center. The retrofits coincided with facility events such as the Nevin Center program launch event and the Art Center Gala on March 26th.

The City is surpassing the local hiring goal with 50% of the work being completed by RichmondBUILD graduates with the City’s contractor Energy Conservation Options (ECO). Over 20% of the project costs were funded by upfront PG&E rebates through the Smart Lights Program and the City expects an average payback of 5 years for the projects. The utility savings are also being tracked and monitored in the City’s newly installed Utility Manager Software.



## 7. **Green Energy Training Services**

The City is proud to offer the Green Energy Training Services (GETS) program, which is a FREE “Building Performance” program for moderate income Richmond homeowners. The City program is offered through a partnership between the City of Richmond and Rising Sun Energy Center and is funded entirely by the ARRA.

The goal of the program is to help lower residents’ utility bills by making their homes more comfortable, healthy, durable, and energy efficient. By participating in the GETS program, we hope to reduce residents’ utility bills by at least 20%.

The program also provides workforce development opportunities with a workforce comprised of all Richmond residents and graduates of the RichmondBUILD green collar job training program. Qualifying households are eligible to receive up to \$5,000 per home to cover the energy evaluation and work on the home.

Space is limited in the program, and interested persons should call 510.647.8182 or email [mcgill@risingsunenergy.org](mailto:mcgill@risingsunenergy.org) to get an application.

## 8. **Save the Date for the Carquinez Rededication Ceremony**

The Carquinez, at 400 Harbour Way, will be rededicated at a ceremony on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

The Carquinez, originally built as a hotel in 1926, is a 36 unit affordable senior housing development. The building was acquired by BRIDGE Housing in 1990 and restored as apartments for low-income seniors. In 2009, with funding from the Redevelopment Agency and HUD, BRIDGE began a substantial rehabilitation of the building, including waterproofing, seismic retrofit, interior improvements, improved disability access and the addition of a new garden. These improvements ensure the longevity of the structure and enhance the quality of

life for the senior tenants by providing a safe and functional environment for all seniors.

To celebrate the completion of construction, BRIDGE Housing and the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency would like to invite City elected officials and staff to celebrate this achievement on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Food and beverages will be provided.

## 9. **Engineering Services Capital Improvements Project Updates**

**Bidding Process Update:** Currently, Engineering Services highlights the City's Local Business Opportunity Ordinance, Local Employment Program Ordinance and Living Wage Ordinance requirements in its bidding process with 1) mandatory pre-bid meetings with representatives from Employment & Training to reiterate these local requirements; 2) dissemination of local business contact information from Employment & Training's database at pre-bid meetings; and 3) uploads onto the City's automated BidsOnline with the names of contractors that have attended the pre-bid meeting so that local businesses can directly contact them for partnership opportunities. In addition to this routine process, Engineering Services has initiated direct notification through the BidsOnline system of all pertinent Richmond businesses listed on Employment & Training's database to maximize their awareness of bid opportunities.

**Annual Pavement Rehabilitation Project:** This project went out to bid on March 10<sup>th</sup>, will have its mandatory pre-bid meeting on March 24<sup>th</sup> in the City Council Chambers, and will have its bid opening on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Annual Traffic Safety Improvements Project:** Top traffic calming priorities, based off the recent traffic safety study with public input through an on-line survey, are being addressed with a number of traffic safety improvement projects. The project went out to bid on March 11<sup>th</sup>, will have its mandatory pre-bid meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup> in the Richmond Conference Room, and will have its bid opening on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Surface Drainage and Sidewalk Gap Closure Project:** Proposed improvements to address sidewalk gap and drainage issues on Stege Avenue between Cutting Boulevard and South 37<sup>th</sup> Street, and drainage issues on South 41<sup>st</sup> Street north of Ohio Avenue went out to bid on March 9<sup>th</sup>. The mandatory pre-bid meeting will be on March 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Richmond Conference Room, and the bid opening is on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Roosevelt and McLaughlin Sewer Pipe Rehabilitation Project:** The installation of the last 150' of the new 18" sewer main is on hold pending Caltrans permit approval for work on the intersection of San Pablo Avenue and Roosevelt (80 East on-ramp). That work will commence 7 days after the permit is issued. On Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, the paving of the final lift of asphalt on San Pablo Avenue from Nevin Street to 400' north of Barrett Avenue will start. This will bring all pavement in the affected intersections to finish grade and will end lane restrictions at Barrett Avenue and San Pablo Avenue.

10. **Engineering Services Outreach Activities**

Staff has made a recent effort to streamline the permit application process and inspection scheduling for utility companies working in the City limits. Meetings were held individually with each utility company to explain the process and to improve communication. A group utility meeting will be held quarterly to discuss and coordinate upcoming capital improvement projects.

Engineering staff also hosted a contractor's forum on March 9<sup>th</sup>, which was attended by eight plumbing contractors doing business in the City of Richmond, to review the City's encroachment permit process, City standards regarding sewer lateral replacement, expectations of contractors and proposed changes to warrantee bonds and insurance requirements. Based on a request from many of the contractors, city staff will explore accepting electronic or faxed applications to allow one-stop issuance of permits.

Engineering staff also attended the Broker Associates Weekly Training Meeting at Security Pacific on March 16<sup>th</sup>. Forty realtors were present at this forum. A discussion took place on the permitting process and proposed changes to the Sewer Lateral Compliance Plan. An emphasis was placed the procedures and timeline for the issuance of lateral compliance certificates. After the overview presentation, a Q&A session resulted in a better understanding of the compliance plan and its process. An invitation was extended to repeat the presentation for a future regional Realtor's Board meeting.

11. **Public Works Updates**

Facilities

The painters continued painting the interior of the Parchester Community Center (three-week project).

Parks and Landscaping

Next week, crews will continue with median clean up and irrigation repairs along the medians on Carlson Boulevard between Bayview Avenue and Cutting Boulevard; weeding and pruning at Kern and Burg Parks, and the Richmond Parkway; weed abatement in the Hilltop Business District; and general maintenance throughout the city. The tree crew will trim trees on Gilma Drive, and Grove Avenue. Staff is also working on the North Richmond Ball Field restrooms.

Streets

The weather continued to prevent crews from paving this week, but crews continue to work from the city pothole list, patching various locations throughout the city. Sand bags are available at the Public Works Corporation Yard gates for this coming weekend storms.

*Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments about these or any other items of interest to you.*

***Have a great week!***

*You can sign up to receive the City Manager's weekly report and other information from the City of Richmond by visiting:*

[www.ci.richmond.ca.us/list.aspx](http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/list.aspx)

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