

City Manager's Weekly Report

This is the weekly report for the weeks ending August 27th and September 3rd, 2010.

1. **Meeting Notes**

The next meeting of the Richmond City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, September 7th, beginning with a closed session at 5:00 PM, followed by the regular agenda at 6:30 PM. I hope that you have enjoyed a restful August.

2. **City Offices Closed on Monday, September 6th and Thursday, September 9th**

The City offices will be closed on Monday, September 6th in observance of Labor Day, and Thursday, September 9th in observance of Admission Day.

3. **New Interim Library Director**

An Interim Library and Cultural Services Director has been hired while we recruit for Monique le Conge's replacement.

Roger Pearson, retired director of the Sonoma County Library, began his interim assignment on Tuesday, August 31st. Since his retirement from Sonoma, Roger has served in interim roles around the United States (Kansas City, MO; Spokane, WA) and Northern California (Berkeley, Dixon, Yolo County, Colusa County, Butte County). He has held library management positions in both Corpus Christi, TX and Madison and Green Bay, WI.

In addition to his Master of Library Science Degree, Roger holds Bachelor and Masters Degrees in Sociology. Before embarking on his professional career, he served a two-year stint in the Peace Corps in Mato Grosso, Brazil.

Welcome, Roger!

4. **Union Pacific Fencing Project**

You may recall that, last June, I reported to you that the City Manager, City Attorney and Public Works staff met with representatives from the Union Pacific Railroad, Capitol Corridor Joint Public Authority (JPA) and Amtrak to discuss the proposed installation by Union Pacific of pedestrian deterrent fencing along the railroad corridor on Carlson Boulevard from Broadway to Bayview Avenue. During the past three months, details have been worked out among all of the participating entities, with the active participation by City Public Works staff, regarding installation of the fence. Construction activities are now scheduled to begin next Wednesday, with the entire construction project, including removal of brush, installation of fencing, and re-landscaping as necessary, expected to last approximately two months.

Staff believes that, when completed, the fence can be a significant improvement to public safety and aesthetics by eliminating access to the tracks and reducing opportunities for graffiti. Funding for this project is provided by a federal safety grant secured by the Capitol Corridor JPA.

5. **Via Verdi Sinkhole Update**

With the temporary bypass road now operational, the next phase of the Via Verdi restoration project is to excavate the collapsed portion of the culvert and install a temporary channel with retaining walls to convey the San Pablo Creek during the rainy season. It is critical that this work be completed by the end of October, as mandated by the Army Corp of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, State Fish & Game, and the East Bay Municipal Utility District.

Currently, we are at a very time sensitive stage in the project and must ensure that the San Pablo Creek reopens, not only for anticipating winter rains, but also to allow for the San Pablo Reservoir to discharge its waters into the San Pablo Creek. Construction on the temporary channel improvements will begin Tuesday, September 7th, with construction initially occurring 12 hours every day for the first 2 weeks.

We have appreciated the understanding and patience of the residents in the area as we continue to make necessary repairs.

6. **Bond Finance Team Meets with Credit Rating Agencies**

This past week, the City's bond finance team, led by Finance Director Jim Goins, met with both Standard & Poor's Rating Agency and Moody's Investor Services. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update of the financial and operational performance of the Wastewater Enterprise, as well as present the structure of the proposed Wastewater Revenue Bonds, Series 2010. The bonds will finance \$37.5 million in capital needs for both the collection system and the wastewater treatment plant over the next three years, and will be supported by the recently approved 5% rate increase. The finance team expects to receive the ratings results by early next week, in time for the bonds to be sold by the end of the month.

7. **California Redevelopment Association Files Appeal to Fight \$2.05 Billion State Raid of Redevelopment Funds**

On August 30th, the California Redevelopment Association (CRA) submitted its opening brief on appeal with the Third District Court of Appeal to overturn a \$2.05 billion raid of redevelopment funds by the state. The CRA is appealing a May 2010 Sacramento Superior Court decision by Judge Lloyd Connelly which upheld the legality of Assembly Bill (AB)X4-26. ABX4-26 was passed in July 2009 as part of the 2009/10 state budget and authorized a total of \$2.05 billion in local redevelopment tax revenue shifted to fund the state's obligation to schools. The appeal states that in requiring this transfer of redevelopment funds from local

communities ultimately to fill state budget holes, ABX4-26 violates the state constitution.

Under the complex payment transfer terms of ABX4-26, the \$2.05 billion was divided into two payments: \$1.7 billion in 2010; \$350 million in 2011. In each of the two years, redevelopment agencies are forced to turn over their funds to local county auditors. County auditors then transfer that money into a special fund, the Supplemental Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund (SERAF). SERAF funding then is turned over to school districts in redevelopment areas. Finally, the state lowers its contribution to those same school districts by an equal amount so that school districts do not, in fact, benefit from this transfer of funds.

The first \$1.7 billion payment was paid by redevelopment agencies to county auditors on May 10th, 2010. The appeal seeks repayment of those funds by the state and a prohibition of the second payment of \$350 million due in 2011. CRA hopes the Court of Appeal will rule by May 2011 before the next payment is due.

8. **Public Works Department Update**

Public Works crews completed the resurfacing of Acacia, Elm and Maple Avenues between 7th and 8th Streets last week, and this week completed the resurfacing of Burbeck Avenue from 15th to 20th Streets. Due to next week's holidays, crews will only work on pothole repairs throughout the city.

The Parks and Landscaping Division (in addition to general parks maintenance) will be performing the following improvements:

- The region east of 23rd Street will continue with vegetation control management along the Richmond Greenway from San Pablo Avenue to Carlson Boulevard.
- Landscaping work will continue at the Nicholl Park bowling green.
- Crews will work on the west region (Hilltop and west of 23rd Street) on Hilltop Drive and the Richmond Parkway from I-80 to I-580 next week.
- Crews will also work next week on the south region (south of Cutting Boulevard) on Boorman, Virginia, and Judge Carroll Parks and the Marina District.

9. **Recreation Highlights**

WCCUSD: The Recreation Department and other City of Richmond staff have been working to finalize a Joint Use Agreement with the West Contra Costa Unified School District. The agreement is pending final review, and upon approval, it will begin a collaborative relationship to benefit the entire community.

Senior Idol Auditions: Two auditions for the singing only West County Senior Idol competition were held on August 31st and September 2nd from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium. In order to compete at the final event, participants were required to attend at least one of these auditions. The final competition will be held at 6:30 PM (doors open at 6:00 PM) on September 17th at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium. All ages are welcome to attend the final event at \$5 per person.

Adult Softball: The City of Richmond/Social Security Administration collaborative co-ed adult softball league culminated with the championship game at 5:00 PM on Wednesday, August 25th, 2010. The Social Security Administration team, Terminal Digits, took the lead in the final innings and won against the City of Richmond team.

Basketball: The Under 21 Young Men's Basketball Playoffs and Championship games were held on Friday, August 20th, 2010. The "Richmond Bad Boys" came from behind to beat "Team Casper" and took home the Championship T-Shirts. The Under 21 league provided a place for young adults and teenagers to come on Friday nights for the summer. All the games proved to be peaceful and a huge success.

10. **Web Fun Facts**

A significant change in the City's website took place today that will not be readily apparent to the browser. Information Technology staff member Wendy Schwartz, who was primarily responsible for website maintenance, and who played a significant role in the City's website transformation into one that is (literally) an award winner, retired as of today. We thank her for her wonderful contribution to the City organization and wish her the best in the future.

In addition, the City of Richmond's website now has a Photo Gallery that allows browsers to view descriptions and photo credits along with a slideshow view.

The current Photo Gallery Album is of the Civic Center Public Art. There are 2 links from the Civic Center Public Art page <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=2311>. One link opens the album so that you can view the details for each photo. The second link opens the album as a slideshow. Enjoy!

