

RICHMOND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY NEWSLETTER

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Civic Center Renovation



Renovation of the historic Richmond Civic Center campus, a 30-month, \$100 million project, nears completion on schedule and on budget. This project will return to full public use the 13 acre historic campus, designed in the mid 20th century by noted modernist architects Timothy and Milton

Pflueger. The Memorial Auditorium, which received seismic upgrades and limited cosmetic improvements, reopened for public events in mid December 2008, in time for the annual Senior and Snow Ball festivities. The Richmond Art Center and KCRT offices have stayed open throughout the renovation process.

Seismic Upgrades and a complete overhaul of the building interior have been completed at City Hall, which has sat unoccupied since 2002. The City is currently installing state-of-the-art data systems infrastructure and new furniture, and City employees will return to the building

in April 2009. Renovation efforts at this campus centerpiece have been spearheaded by local contractor Overaa Construction. The formerly open first story has been fully enclosed and converted to office space. The main lobby features glass art walls by glass artist Gordon Huether depicting Richmond geography and history. The second floor features a 60-foot long serpentine counter made of locally produced Vetrazzo, which will be the City's One-Stop Center for Planning, Building, Fire, and Engineering permit services.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ◆ \$100 Million Project Nears Completion
- ◆ Memorial Auditorium Re-opens for Public Events
- ◆ City Staff Moving Back to City Hall



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BIKE TO WORK DAY MAY 14, 2009

The Richmond community is again encouraged to participate in the nine county San Francisco Bay Area's celebration of Bike to Work Day coming up on Thursday, May 14, 2009. Richmond employees will be supporting three Energizer Stations this year. These stations can be found at Richmond BART, the San Francisco Bay Trail at end of Marina Way South and a new En-

ergizer Station hosted by Sunpower. This new Energizer Station will be located along the Richmond Central Greenway at Harbour and approximately half-way between BART and the Marina Bay area. Participants can obtain a Musette bag full of bicycling goodies and receive good cheer from fellow bicyclists on this day to try bicycling as an alternative transportation to work. Local Rich-

mond companies can participate in Bike to Work Day Energizer Stations in the community by volunteering or giving donations. Each company will be recognized by the community. Last year various Richmond based companies including Target, WalMart, Starbucks and Zoe's Cookies providing refreshments and bicycling comfort and safety items

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BART Station Parking Garage

Phase 1 of the Richmond Transit Village includes the construction of a 762 stall parking garage with 9,400 square feet of commercial space at the Richmond Transit Village (BART) station. The proposed parking garage was originally contemplated as part of the Transit Village development. In exchange for BART transferring property on the east side of the station to the agency, the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency (RCRA) was required to fund the construction of the parking garage and upon completion transfer it to BART. The land on the east side will be for residential development (Phase 2 of Transit Village).

The art deco architectural style proposed for the garage is characteristic of buildings that exist now and existed then in the downtown area in its heyday. The retail space will be coordinated to match the other commercial spaces approved in the Metro Walk (housing) portion of the Transit Village. The proposed parking structure will be six levels, with the ground being partially reserved for BART police and monthly pass holders. The retail component is designed to create a pedestrian oriented streetscape on Macdonald Avenue.

Public input and feedback was established early on in the process. Some of the comments

received included concerns about light spillage to the residences to the north and west from the garage, desire for public art component, the inclusion of retail opportunities and limiting traffic through the residential development. This project will have an art component that will be coordinated by the Arts and Culture Commission. In terms of traffic and lighting, the garage was designed to have most of the circulation in the middle, including walls high enough to screen vehicle headlights. The parking garage provides a significant opportunity to further enhance important goals and policies of the General Plan in regards to urban infill development within the City.

PARKING AT BART \$1.00 ...

NOT STUCK IN TRAFFIC ...

ON TIME FOR WORK ...

PRICELESS



RICHMOND BART PARKING GARAGE

RICHMOND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA
PERSPECTIVE -1



NOVEMBER 2008

REV.

Civic Center Renovation

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The former Hall of Justice, which will be re-dubbed 440 Civic Center Plaza, is being converted from its former Police Department use to additional City offices by contractor Pankow Builders. The ground floor of the building will also house the new City Council Chamber. 440 Civic Center Plaza will be complete and fully occupied by Summer 2009, at which time the City's temporary City Hall at Marina Way South will be retired from City use.



"THE FIRST
MODERN
CIVIC CENTER
BUILT IN ANY
AMERICAN CITY"
1950



Photos By mack5



From The Director's Chair

Weathering The Financial Storm

The good news is that the City of Richmond and the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency (RCRA) are in much better financial condition than most cities and redevelopment agencies in the state. The bad news is that, while we may get an A grading on the curve, reduced revenues, cancelled projects, and reducing staff through attrition demonstrate that our ability to continue to expand programs and take on new projects has been severely diminished.

In the 2008—2009 fiscal year, the RCRA projected a 2% increase in tax increment income. The Agency received about a 2.5% increase, mainly due to Target, the Ford Assembly Building and a few other projects coming on line. What could not have been projected was the state of California taking nearly \$2.1 million of tax increment funding from the RCRA. That's 8.8% of the Agency's tax increment and well over 20% of the Agency budget for salaries, benefits and operating costs. Incredible. Thanks to conservative financial planning, the RCRA has adequate reserves to weather the anticipated two to three year storm and is taking steps to eliminate non-essential expenditures.

The best news is that, in spite of the current financial climate, the RCRA has over \$100 million in capital projects and community programs to administer, which will keep staff very busy revitalizing the community over the next few years. This includes finishing the Downtown streetscapes on Macdonald Avenue from Garrard to 19th Street, building the BART parking garage, and moving forward with facade improvements and housing developments, such as Miraflores and Lillie Mae Jones Plaza, that are already funded or do not require Agency financial assistance. Richmond's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) is kicking off this spring with HUD funding and a strategic focus. In the next year, Agency staff will also be "setting the table" for new development that will come once the financial and housing markets stabilize. It takes two to three years of predevelopment work before most real estate projects actually begin construction, so there is much to do to continue the success we have enjoyed over the last few years.

Steve Bura

Bike To Work Day

(Continued from page 1)

for the participant drawing.

To assist the community in learning safe bicycling skills, the East Bay Bicycle Coalition is sponsoring FREE urban bike safety classes. Street Skills Class: This 3.5 hour classroom course teaches the basics of safe cycling, riding in traffic, equipment, crash avoidance, rights and responsibilities. This course is for Adults 14 and over and no bike is needed. Ten classes are scheduled. Richmond's class is scheduled for April 30th and a Spanish language class will be taught on June 13th at Fruitvale. On-Road Instruction Class: Three FREE classes will be offered in the Bay

Area. A bicycle is required for this on-road course class and will provide an opportunity to put into practice what was learned in the Street Skills Class. Tests include emergency maneuvers, riding in various traffic conditions, and checking your knowledge of vehicular cycling skills. This class will be offered in Alameda on May 16th. More information is available by calling 510-533-7433 or sign up online at www.ebbc.org/safety.

Richmond teams are now being formed to participate in the month long Team Bike Challenge during the month of May, 2009.

Teams of Five, with the most points going to Novice riders and their "Big Wheeler", participate throughout Contra Costa County by riding a bicycle as an alternative form of transportation. Many trips are less than 2 miles and team riders log in each day. More information on Bike to Work Day and the Team Bike Challenge can be found at www.511.org.

Richmond has also formed a Richmond Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (RBPAC). This committee meets on the first Monday of each Month at 330-25th Street. Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency Staff

is assisting this community based committee. RBPAC advances necessary bicycle and pedestrian improvements for Richmond. Further information can be found at <http://www.richmondbpac.org>.

For further information on bicycling in Richmond or participation in these events, please call the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency (RCRA) at 510-307-8140.