



Richmond, California



Will Richmond be Riven in 2011?

**2010 Year End Review
Prediction and Wishes for 2011**

Tom Butt, Richmond City Council Member

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A Decade of TOM BUTT E-FORUMS



I started the E-FORUM in 2001 to provide primarily Richmond-related news, information and points of view not readily available in the mainstream media, although I have copied and shared a lot of articles from mainstream media over the years.

The first E-FORUM was dated January 13, 2001, and carried information about obtaining public records from the City of Richmond.

In 2002, I published 180 E-FORUMs, but by 2009, I was up to 460. In 2010, it was 506.

E-FORUMS typically fall into three categories:

1. Copies of content from other media, including emails from other people and organizations announcing events or providing information.
2. Copies of content from other media with some preliminary editorializing by me.
3. Pieces that are primarily editorial or personal reports.

I have 1,400 people and about 40 media contacts on my current list, but I understand a lot more people get it through secondary distribution from primary addressees.

In addition to email distribution, all E-FORUMS since 2002 are accessible on my website <http://www.tombutt.com/e-forum/e-forum.htm>.

- In the past 12 months 209,768 visitors logged 1,124,788 hits.
- There are typically 500-600 visitors a day with an average of 3,090 hits per day.
- The five most visited E-FORUMs in the last 12 months were:
 - o [Being Business Friendly in Richmond](#), March 5, 2010 (5,258 hits)
 - o [City Manager Bill Lindsay Featured in CalBusiness](#), August 4, 2010 (3,465 hits)
 - o [Life After Chevron?](#) December 29, 2009 (2,255 hits)
 - o [Governor Visits SunPower in Richmond. Touts Green Business.](#) January 27, 2010 (1,273 hits)
 - o [California's Business Tax Burden No Heavier Than Average](#), November 7, 2010 (1,030 hits)
- The five most downloaded files in 2010 were an eclectic assortment. Two related to Rosie the Riveter WW II Home Front National Historical Park. One was a paper I wrote in 1998 about Richmond's image challenges. One was this year's New Year's edition, and the fifth one was a travelogue.
 - o [Mapping Richmond's WW II Home Front](#) (3,259 hits)
 - o [Moving Whirley Crane CW 3204 to Shipyard 3](#) (2,575 hits)
 - o [2009 Year End Review - Predictions and Wishes for 2010](#) (961 hits)
 - o [Negative Perceptions of Richmond, California. Image Problem or Vision Problem?](#) (929 hits)
 - o [Exploring the Eastern Sierra](#) (888 hits)

I get a lot of responses. I read and appreciate all of them. Sometimes on a controversial subject I will create and send a digest of responses. I respond to a few, but I just don't have time to respond to all of them all of the time.

I have no staff, other than two people in my office who help me a lot, but only by entering and deleting email addresses and transferring E-FORUM's to my website.

2010 – A Remarkable Year in Richmond

2010 was a remarkable year in Richmond – truly a watershed moment. While cities all over California are fighting fiscal disaster, including bankruptcy, scandals, police layoffs and even disincorporation, Richmond remains lean but healthy. We are hiring cops that other cities are laying off. For the fourth year in a row, violent crime is down again, this year approximately 11% compared to last year, and we have had 21 homicides to date this year compared to 47 last year.

The election results stunned those who had always counted on the traditional Richmond power Establishment to deliver a compliant City Council.

Key to our balanced budget was a \$114 million settlement with Chevron over tax issues that would not have been possible without the pressure that both voters and politicians continued to bring for an equitable share of Chevron profits made possible by our city's continued forbearance of the unhealthy byproducts of hosting a refinery.

Finally, more and more people began to grow both weary and wary of the Point Molate casino project that promised so much when it was fresh and exciting six years ago but has made no substantive progress and now seems doomed.

Since 2002, I have prepared some kind of year-end evaluation of City of Richmond services, problems challenges and wishes. Originally, these were conveyed to my City Council colleagues and the city manager as a way of providing input into the annual city manager performance evaluation and establishing my priorities and legislative objectives for the coming year. I have invited public participation, and I have shared the results on my E-FORUM.

- **2003**, I shared one of these priorities on the E-FORUM in [New Year's Resolution - A Full Court Press on Blight](#), January 3, 2003.
- **2004**, I went whimsical and authored [Out With The Old – In With The New](#), January 1, 2004, providing a number of awards and multiple choice predictions.
- **2005**, I decided to expand the New Year's Day, [2004 Year-End Review](#), December 31, 2004, to become a broader evaluation of the City of Richmond and to give E-FORUM readers an opportunity not only to participate but to also play the principal role.
- **2006** was [What Can We Fix in 2006?](#), January 1, 2006.
- **2007**, it was [Will Richmond be Heaven in 2007?](#) January 1, 2007.
- At the beginning of 2008 I wrote [Year 2007 Review and Will Richmond be Great in 2008?](#)
- **2009**: [Will Richmond be Fine in 2009?](#)
- **2010**: [2009 Year End Review - Predictions and Wishes for 2010](#)

I recommend you take a look at these previous E-Forums. You will be amazed at how many challenges have persisted unabated, how many predictions have been fulfilled and how one year's top stories became distant memory a year later.

What follows is not based on a scientific poll or survey by any standard. The only public input quoted herein is from readers of the E-FORUM, which is a self-limiting sample. *Comments from E-FORUM readers are in italics to distinguish them from my own.*

This summary is 99% uncensored. I did not publish some criticisms of City staff that seemed more personal than objective, and I was forced by a court order to avoid discussion of one topic widely covered in the media. Other than that, this is an equal opportunity forum, and I welcome responses, comments, arguments and debates. I especially solicit corrections.

I extend special thanks to all those citizens and City employees who keep me informed of both problems and solutions all year long. Your input is invaluable. Please keep it up. My [E-FORUM](#) is my best tool for dispensing with my own frustrations, and I hope it provides useful information for those who subscribe.

Top Three Richmond Stories of 2010

2010 RICHMOND ELECTION RESULTS							
As of 11/30/2010							
MAYOR							
CANDIDATE	MAIL-IN	% of Total	POLL	% of Total	VOTES	DELTA	PERCENTAGE
Gayle McLaughlin	4,713	47.9	5,128	52.1	9,841	—	41.58%
Nat Bates	3,712	44.0	4,727	56.0	8,439	1,402	35.65%
John Z	2,676	50.1	2,662	49.9	5,338	3,101	22.55%
TOTAL	11,101	47.0	12,517	53.0	23,618		
CITY COUNCIL							
CANDIDATE	MAIL-IN	% of Total	POLL	% of Total	VOTES	DELTA	PERCENTAGE
Corky Booze	4,242	48.4	4,597	51.6	8,839	—	14.51%
Jim Rogers	4,272	49.1	4,423	50.9	8,695	144	14.28%
Jovanka Beckles	3,798	46.7	4,337	53.3	8,135	560	13.36%
Myrna Lopez	3,555	49.5	3,623	50.5	7,178	957	11.79%
Maria Viramontes	3,466	50.9	3,347	49.9	6,813	365	11.19%
Eduardo Martinez	2,987	45.5	3,577	54.5	6,564	249	10.78%
Rhonda Harris	2,617	45.9	3,088	54.1	5,705	859	9.37%
Gary Bell	2,333	51.3	2,218	48.7	4,551	1154	7.47%
Virginia Finlay	1,557	52.5	1,409	47.5	2,966	1,585	4.87%
Harry Singh	648	46.7	739	53.3	1,387	1,579	2.28%
TOTAL	29,475	48.5	31,358	51.5	60,833		
As of 11/30/2010							
Totals do not include 51 Mayoral and 72 Council Write-In Votes							
The delta is the difference between a candidate and the next highest candidate							

1. Independent Progressives Sweep City Council Race



In a seismic political event, old school politics was swept out of Richmond for perhaps the first time in history. Mayor McLaughlin, who squeaked to only a 279 vote win over Irma Anderson in 2006, posted a 1,402 vote win in 2010 over runner-up Nat Bates when all the ballots were counted.

2008 runner-up Jovanka Beckles climbed into third place to beat out incumbents Maria Viramontes and Ludmyrna Lopez, and perennial challenger Corky Booze proved persistence pays by vaulting into first place. The only incumbent city council member to return was Jim Rogers, who pulled up in second place.

What happened?

The campaign was remarkably slow to start, but once warmed up was marked by the largest expenditures in Richmond history and an unprecedented hail Mary political fusillade against the mayor by the public safety unions that left a bitter taste in almost everyone's mouth.

McLaughlin's win was not a surprise to pollsters, but they actually expected an even larger margin. Despite her vilification by Establishment powers including the Chamber of Commerce, Chevron, the construction trades and the fire and police unions, she remained a popular figure for voters. She also benefitted from a three-way race where the opposition was split by two candidates who appealed to the same conservative political base. And finally, the state of the City was generally economically sound with lots of accomplishments, including a dramatic reduction in homicides, completion of high profile public works projects and sustained public services in the face of declining revenues. Her opposition ran almost exclusively on the "jobs" issue, but their anti-business claims failed to get enough traction to make a difference. A number of people tried to persuade either Bates or Ziesenhenné to drop out, but in the end, their egos prevailed -- as well as McLaughlin.

Chevron bet the bank on Bates, Viramontes and Lopez, dropping over a million dollars on what turned out to be a very bad investment. Over all, these three losing candidates benefitted from nearly \$2 million of independent committee spending. The baggage they carried from their unmitigated support of the Chevron project and their recent key votes for the Point Molate casino hurt them at a time when the vote on Measure U indicated the public had soured on a casino as the cure for whatever ailed Richmond. What probably finished them off was a half million dollars in independent committee expenditures by card clubs that pointed out their weaknesses and promoted their opponents.

The biggest surprise was Corky Booze, who not only won after nine unsuccessful campaigns tries but got the highest number of votes. After never missing a City Council meeting in decades and speaking on almost every agenda item, Corky had better name recognition than some sitting councilmembers, and he was on the right side of the casino issue. Support by the card clubs bolstered his already established familiarity with voters with a succession of compelling and well-designed mailers.

Jovanka was able to build on her previous success in 2008 when she almost beat me and was the beneficiary of \$30,000 spent by Jim Rogers promoting her campaign. She also ran as part of the Richmond Progressive Alliance, which counts Gayle McLaughlin and Jeff Ritterman as past successes. She ran with only a modest \$26,000 in her campaign chest.

Jim Rogers defies analysis. He was also on the wrong side of the Chevron project and the Point Molate casino, but his pronouncements carried sufficient equivocation that the voters may have concluded he agreed with them regardless of their position on the issues. He was neither the target nor the beneficiary of most of the vast amounts of independent committee expenditures, so that storm essentially passed him by. It's clear to me that Rogers has a solid base who will always turn out for him. Perhaps someone can reverse engineer him and decode the political DNA that seems to always triumph.



The result is a City Council that perhaps for the first time ever has a majority, and maybe even a super majority, that is not predictably tied to the traditional political interests of the Richmond Establishment,

which includes developers, the Chamber of Commerce, the construction trades, public safety unions and Chevron.

What does it all mean? I predict that those who preached that Richmond would sink into some anti-business and experimental socialistic miasma will be disappointed. I believe the new Council majority will pursue policies that make Richmond even more attractive for business as well as residents, and our city will emerge from the great recession a safer, cleaner and healthier place to live and work.

To follow the 2010 election on the E-FORUM, see the 62 posts below:

1. [Who's "In" in 2010?](#) January 10, 2010
2. [Richmond Confidential Probes Council Race](#), January 15, 2010
3. [Mystery of Mayoral Candidate Solved](#), January 15, 2010
4. [From Richmond Confidential - A Look Ahead at November's Mayoral Prospects](#), January 18, 2010
5. [Being Business Friendly in Richmond](#), March 5, 2010
6. [Chamber Just Can't Let Go](#), March 15, 2010
7. [First Richmond Campaign Mailer of 2010](#), March 25, 2010
8. [Guest Editorial From Vice Mayor Ritterman - Unemployed Laborers MISDIRECT Frustration and Anger at Richmond Mayor](#), April 7, 2010
9. [Richmond Confidential - The Curious Case of Nat Bates](#), May 25, 2010
10. [From Richmond Confidential - Richmond's Green Party Mayor: Still Feeling Like the Underdog](#), June 12, 2010
11. [Filing Period for November 2, 2010, Richmond Election](#), July 3, 2010
12. [Ballot Set for November City Council Race](#), August 13, 2010
13. [Richmond Mayor's Race Looks Like a Trifecta](#), July 14, 2010
14. [Richmond Election News](#), September 1, 2010
15. [Richmond Election News: Bell Drops Out; Judge Rebuts Casino Argument Challenge](#), August 31, 2010
16. [New York Times - Race for Richmond Mayor Focuses on Jobs, Casino and Class](#), September 10, 2010
17. [Endorsements and More for the Richmond 2010 Campaign](#), September 10, 2010
18. [Campaign Events I Have Been Invited To](#), September 12, 2010
19. [Candidates Forum Tomorrow](#), September 15, 2010
20. [Reports on September 27 Candidates' Night and Future Campaign Events](#), September 18, 2010
21. [Chamber of Commerce and RichPAC Identify Establishment Candidates](#), September 20, 2010
22. [Hilltop Candidates Forum](#), September 22, 2010
23. [Voters Can Meet the Candidates Running for Richmond City Council and Mayor at Two Town Hall Forums This Month](#), September 22, 2010
24. [Richmond Election News and Comments](#), September 25, 2010
25. [Youth Show Their Interest, Influence in Richmond Politics](#), September 22, 2010
26. [Jobs, and What Type, at Center of Richmond Mayoral Race](#), September 27, 2010
27. [Richmond Mayor and City Council Campaign News](#), September 30, 2010
28. [CC Times Publishes Mayoral Candidates Q & A](#), September 30, 2010
29. [Deconstructing Today's Campaign Mailers](#), September 30, 2010
30. [Another Chevron Violation of Richmond Election Law](#), October 2, 2010
31. [Casino Backers and Chevron Violate Richmond's Fair Elections Ordinance](#), October 2, 2010
32. [Desperate Mayoral Challengers Get Personal](#), October 5, 2010
33. [Recommendations for November 2 Election](#), October 5, 2010
34. [McLaughlin Comes Out Swinging](#), October 5, 2010
35. [Police and Fire Unions Also Investigated Beckles](#), October 9, 2010
36. [Catching Up On Richmond Election News](#), October 13, 2010
37. [Follow the Money](#), October 17, 2010

38. [Press Comments on Richmond Dirty Politics](#), October 18, 2010
39. [Richmond Confidential Profiles Mayor McLaughlin](#), October 20, 2010
40. [Richmond Campaign News From CC Times and Chronicle](#), October 20, 2010
41. [Richmond Confidential Profile for Nat Bates](#), October 19, 2010
42. [Recommendations for November 2 Election](#), October 19, 2010
43. [Political Ghost of Gary Bell Rises to Haunt Richmond Council Contenders](#), October 19, 2010
44. [More Election Law Violations by "Independent Committees"](#), October 18, 2010
45. [Could it Be Corky Time?](#), October 24, 2010
46. [Election News from RPA](#), October 26, 2010
47. [Thinking Outside the Box, Beckles Rallies for Change](#), October 26, 2010
48. [Jim Rogers Vies for a Third Term](#), October 27, 2010
49. [Longtime Teacher Seeks Council Spot](#), October 27, 2010
50. [Contra Costa Times Endorses McLaughlin for Mayor](#), October 28, 2010
51. [Final Recommendations for November 2 Election](#), October 28, 2010
52. [About the Times Endorsement - a Letter from the Mayor](#), October 28, 2010
53. [Debunking Chamber of Commerce Propaganda](#), October 28, 2010
54. [The Political Endorsement Game - Winners and Losers](#), November 4, 2010
55. [Digest of Richmond Election Media Commentary](#), November 4, 2010
56. [Clean Sweep for E-FORUM Endorsements](#), November 3, 2010
57. [Richmond Confidential - BAPAC Attacks Two Council Candidates](#), November 1, 2010
58. ["Both Ways Viramontes" Conveniently Omits Critical Casino Vote in Final Mailer](#), November 1, 2010
59. [East Bay Express on Richmond Election](#), November 10, 2010
60. [Updated Richmond Election Results](#), November 14, 2010
61. [Election Total Likely Tops \\$3 Million](#), November 17, 2010
62. [Chronicle's Chip Johnson on Corky Booze](#), December 3, 2010

2. Point Molate Casino a Poor Bet?

After six years of support by the City Council, the proposed Point Molate project featuring a casino as its anchor attraction not only lost its City Council majority but also sustained a life threatening defeat at the ballot box.

What happened?



Some of us who initially supported the project did so because it offered so much: shoreline parks, open space, the Bay Trail, rehabilitation of historic buildings, cultural venues and events, money for the City treasury and jobs – lots of jobs -- for Richmond residents. The developer was supposed to be politically connected in Washington, ensuring an on ramp to the fast track. We all thought it would be open in a couple of years – five at the most.

But nothing much has actually happened, other than transfer of the property to the City of Richmond and a check from the Navy to pay for cleanup.

Six years later, we don't even have a completed EIR. None of the federal approvals have been forthcoming. The financial backing has changed, but no one has actually seen the money. Bait and switch appears to be the modus operandi of the developer who promised historic preservation but planned to remove over 30% of the historic buildings, described a world-class resort but really intended only a casino, a 4,000 space parking structure and a modest hotel and talked about jobs in numbers almost beyond belief but was unwilling to guarantee a single one.



It also became clear that even if approved, the project and the jobs it promised were years away, maybe as much as a decade. Although proponents talked as if thousands of jobs were right around the corner, residents were losing patience, and the public perception of the developer's integrity was dropping like a rock.

There had always been a core of Richmond residents opposed to the casino, maybe as much as 50%, but those numbers increased as confidence faded. To bolster public support from previously vocal critics, the developer purchased Contra Costa County support with a promise of \$8 to \$12 million annually and environmental community support for a reported \$40 million, more than even the City of Richmond would net. But it didn't cost the developer a cent, since it was all triggered by opening of the casino. It was too little, too late; however, and the voters of Richmond made it clear that the casino's luck had run out.

Politically, the project had been running on life support with a bare four-vote margin on the City Council for months. Two of those votes, Lopez and Viramontes, were thrown out in the November election.

The only thing left is to see what kind of death ends the misery. Will it be quick and merciful, or will it drag out with years of painful litigation? We'll see.

Follow the project's 2010 progress, or lack thereof, on the E-FORUM with 58 posts:

1. [Point Molate Unraveling?](#) January 6, 2010
2. [Don't Gamble with Point Molate](#), January 8, 2010
3. [Show Me The Money](#), January 10, 2010
4. [With Sale Closing Date Near, Richmond Casino Financing Questions Linger](#), January 8, 2010
5. [New CEQA Lawsuit Challenges Contra Costa County Support of Point Molate Project](#), January 8, 2010
6. [Don't Gamble with Point Molate](#), January 8, 2010
7. [Richmond Extends Deadline on Point Molate Casino Deal](#), January 11, 2010
8. [Council Approves Extension for Point Molate Developer](#), January 12, 2010
9. [Urban Ambles Tours Point San Pablo \(Pre-Casino\)](#), January 16, 2010
10. [From Richmond Confidential - Broker Claims City Owes \\$1.5 Million for Point Molate](#), January 18, 2010
11. [Opposition to Point Molate Project Grows](#), January 30, 2010
12. [Pomo Bands Split on Point Molate](#), January 31, 2010
13. [New York Times - Plan for Casino in Richmond Raises Fears of a Bad Precedent](#), February 12, 2010
14. [Pomos Split Over Richmond Casino](#), February 21, 2010
15. [Debate Over Point Molate Hotel-Casino Proposal Intensifies](#), March 4, 2010
16. [Prospective Point Molate Builders Secure Fresh Extension](#), March 8, 2010
17. [Card Clubs' Secret Dealings](#), March 8, 2010
18. [Richmond Grapples with Spread of Anti-Casino Signs](#), March 29, 2010
19. [Poll Purports to Show Casino Opposition and Shoreline Open Space Support](#) April 15, 2010
20. [Casino Plan Numbers Battled About](#), April 25, 2010
21. [Point Molate Casino Polls Mirror Bias of Sponsors but Otherwise Close](#), May 11, 2010
22. [Tuesday - Decision Point on Point Molate's Future](#), May 16, 2010
23. [More on Point Molate Extension from Richmond Confidential](#), May 19, 2010
24. [Casino Four Hands Out 11-Month Extension of Point Molate Casino LDA](#), May 19, 2010
25. [Card Clubs Appeal to Community in Campaign to Stop Richmond Casino](#), May 22, 2010
26. [Roger's Response to Critics of His Point Molate Vote](#), May 22, 2010
27. [City Soliciting a Few Good Land Use Proposals for Point Molate](#), June 18, 2010
28. [Anti-Casino Group Claims Brown Act Violation](#), June 24, 2010
29. [Richmond May Give Voters Say on Point Molate Casino](#), July 15, 2010

30. [Sacramento Bee - Tribe's East Bay Casino Plan Tests California, U.S. Policies](#), July 15, 2010
31. [Plan to Get Input on Planned Richmond Casino Will Be Fair, City Contends - RPA Calls it a Sham](#), August 13, 2010
32. [Contra Costa Times Urges No on Measure U \(Casino\)](#), September 21, 2010
33. [Casino Backers and Chevron Violate Richmond's Fair Elections Ordinance](#), October 2, 2010
34. [More On Point Molate Lawsuit Settlement From the Berkeley Daily Planet](#), October 20, 2010
35. [More on Environmental Sellout - Some Organizations Not for Sale](#), October 20, 2010 [Upstream Buys Environmental Organizations for \\$35 Million](#), October 20, 2010
36. [FLASH - Feinstein Opposes Indian Casino in Richmond](#), October 20, 2010
37. [CESP Point Molate Settlement - A Cynical Deal for Richmond](#), October 23, 2010
38. [The Play on Point Molate - "Bates, the Councilman and Mayoral Candidate, said he doesn't trust that voters can make an informed decision..."](#) October 24, 2010
39. [Casino Measure Political Spending Approaches \\$1 Million](#), October 25, 2010
40. [East Bay Express on Point Molate Casino](#), October 28, 2010
41. [Chronicle Urges No Vote on Casino](#), October 28, 2010
42. [Tribes, Card Clubs Weighing in on Richmond's Measure U Casino Measure](#), October 29, 2010
43. [Chronicle's Chip Johnson Slams Point Molate Casino](#), October 29, 2010
44. ["Both Ways Viramontes" Conveniently Omits Critical Casino Vote in Final Mailer](#), November 1, 2010
45. [An Open Letter to the Community on Measure U from California Native Plant Society](#), October 30, 2010
46. [Point Molate Casino Proposal Dead?](#) November 7, 2010
47. [Planned Richmond Casino at Point Molate in Danger](#), November 10, 2010
48. [Study of Alternatives - Point Molate Goes to Pot](#), November 10, 2010
49. [More on the Sham Point Molate Alternatives Study](#), November 12, 2010
50. [From the Chronicle - Let the People Decide Future of Point Molate](#), November 14, 2010
51. [How We Ended Up With A Casino - Part 1](#), November 15, 2010
52. [Contra Costa Times - No Point Molate Casino? How About a Pot Farm?](#) November 15, 2010
53. [Richmond Confidential - Don't Bet on Casino Alternatives](#), November 23, 2010
54. [Gambling on Gambling](#), November 30, 2010
55. [Capital Weekly - Feinstein Wades Into Urban Gaming Fight](#), December 3, 2010
56. [Contra Costa Times Editorial - Put a Stop to Reservation Shopping for Casinos](#), December 6, 2010
57. [CC Times - Future of Point Molate Will Rest in Hands of Incoming Richmond City Council](#), December 8, 2010
58. [Feinstein Casino Plan Draws Anger from Tribes](#), December 10, 2010

3. Chevron Business and Utility Tax Issue Settled

Although enough rancor between the City and Chevron lingers to last for years, one major issue was settled involving the City's efforts to wring more revenue from Chevron and Chevron's efforts to resist. Using the utility users tax and the business license tax as levers, Richmond entered the year 2010 with visions of lots of dollars from the 2008 Measure M and even more from a utility tax revision.



Chevron opened by playing its favorite and well-worn card, the one that says, "We are going to close the refinery, and won't you be sorry about how badly you have treated us?"

Chevron had already counterattacked with a Measure M lawsuit and threatened to place its own competing measure on the ballot to gut the utility tax. Risks were high all around, and the parties agreed to negotiate.

A settlement was reached that scuttled both Measure M and any utility tax revisions but gave Richmond \$114 million in additional revenue over the next 15 years. For the first time in decades, Chevron was not a key campaign issue except for those who lost despite Chevron's million dollar investment in their candidacy.

The two remaining unresolved issues are the fate of the Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project and Chevron's property tax appeals. Chevron continues its carrot and stick approach with Richmond, giving away a few million dollars to non-profits and using litigation to take away ten times that much.



The E-FORUM included 46 Chevron-related posts in 2010:

1. [A Contingency Plan for a Chevron Transition](#), January 6, 2010
2. ["End Chevron's Perk" campaign to start next week](#), January 8, 2010
3. [Chevron - Wounded or Rebounding? Take Your Pick](#), January 27, 2010
4. [This Week's Buzz on Chevron and Richmond](#), January 23, 2010
5. [Chevron Richmond Refinery to Close?](#) January 19, 2010
6. [Chronicle - "Chevron's Fight with Richmond Intensifies"](#) January 30, 2010
7. [Mike and the Mayor Make Nice Over Perceived Charity Snub](#), January 31, 2010
8. [Chevron Banking on the Courts](#), February 9, 2010
9. [Next Legal Battle Nears for Project at Chevron's Richmond Refinery](#), February 13, 2010
10. [Court Mulls Chevron Appeal - City Considers Contingency Plan for Refinery Closing](#), February 24, 2010
11. [Richmond to Prepare for Change in Refinery's Status](#), February 26, 2010
12. [Chevron Meeting Will Be Bellwether for Richmond](#), March 5, 2010
13. [Barnidge: Animus Bubbles to Surface Over Chevron Upgrade](#), March 5, 2010
14. [Chevron's Long Awaited Strategic Plan Appears to Preserve Richmond Refinery](#) March 9, 2010
15. [Chevron Ax Misses U.S. Refineries](#), March 9, 2010
16. [Refinery Manager Mike Coyle on Chevron Downstream Announcement 3/9/10](#), March 9, 2010
17. [Richmond Not on List of Chevron Cuts](#), March 10, 2010
18. [Fate of Richmond's Measure T Headed for State Court](#), March 11, 2010
19. [Bates Advocates Reaching Out to Chevron Homeboy](#), March 13, 2010
20. [Chevron Mounts It's Own Ballot Measure to Fight Utility Tax Fairness](#), March 25, 2010
21. [Hate and Greed - Chevron Sponsored Ballot Measure Hits the Streets](#), April 2, 2010
22. [New Peer Reviewed Study Proves Chevron Refinery is Hazardous to Your Health](#), April 1, 2010
23. [Chevron Mum on Plans for Competing Richmond Ballot Measure](#), April 1, 2010
24. [Chevron Files Intent to Petition in Richmond for Tax Measure to Counter City's Plan](#), April 4, 2010
25. [Will Chevron Come to the Table?](#) April 29, 2010
26. [Appeals Court Rejects Chevron Appeal](#), April 28, 2010
27. [Details of Chevron Tax Settlement](#), May 8, 2010
28. [Richmond Mediation Team Strikes 15-Year Proposed Deal with Chevron](#), May 7, 2010
29. [RPA on Proposed Chevron Settlement](#), May 9, 2010
30. [Richmond Reaches Tax Deal with Chevron Refinery](#), May 12, 2010
31. [Basking in the Afterglow of the Chevron Settlement](#), May 16, 2010
32. [Chevron, Richmond End Dispute Over Taxes](#), May 12, 2010
33. [Chevron Statement on Tax Settlement](#), May 12, 2010
34. [Critics' Annual Report Blasts Chevron](#), May 23, 2010
35. [Legislature Initiated Mediation Today Regarding Chevron Hydrogen Renewal Project](#), July 14, 2010
36. [Chevron Gives \\$10,000, Reaps \\$70 Million](#), July 24, 2010

37. [Chevron Posts Huge 2nd-quarter Profit](#), August 1, 2010
38. [Chevron in the News: CEOA End Run and Refinery Tours](#), September 9, 2010
39. [Chevron to Lay Off 95 in Richmond by End of Year](#), September 28, 2010
40. [Another Chevron Violation of Richmond Election Law](#), October 2, 2010
41. [Chevron Announces Request for Proposals for \\$1 Million Grants in Richmond](#), October 13, 2010
42. [Chevron Files Lawsuit to Take Up to \\$26 Million From Richmond](#), October 20, 2010
43. [City May Owe Chevron \\$26 Million](#), October 22, 2010
44. [Chevron Corp. Has Spent \\$1 Million This Election Season To Support Councilmembers Maria Viramontes, Ludmyrna Lopez and Nat Bates](#), October 24, 2010
45. [Chevron Corporation \(NYSE:CVX\) Backs Losing Politicians](#), November 6, 2010
46. [Vote for Best Chevron Spoof Ad](#), November 17, 2010

Most Controversial Issues of 2010

This category was added last year for two reasons: Unresolved issues aren't necessarily top stories because there is no outcome. Others are so petty that they simply don't rise to the top of the news. There are two that stand out this year.

1. Pot

In 2010, Richmond joined the growing number of California municipalities that embraced medicinal marijuana by regulating and taxing it. While a majority of City Council members wanted to move in that direction, the controversy was how far to move.

An onslaught of dispensary operators came back time and time again to plead the case of those thousands of ailing patients who would be inconvenienced without a neighborhood weed shop. They also contributed generously to the campaign chests of some candidates in the November election.

The number and location of dispensaries were the major issues as was how much tax to levy. After I introduced a ballot measure for a 10% tax, the City Council, showing its compassionate side, cut it in half.

The ballot measure passed with almost no opposition, and the dispensaries were limited to three in C-3 zones areas.



1. [Richmond Takes a Wait-and-See Approach on Pot Club Regulation](#), May 12, 2010
2. [Richmond Drafting Ordinance for Marijuana Dispensaries](#), July 16, 2010
3. [Media Coverage of Richmond's Bid to Become Pot Capital of California](#), July 21, 2010
4. [City Council Adopts Most Liberal Marijuana Ordinance in California](#), July 21, 2010
5. [Will Richmond Close Its Pot Clubs Before Its New Law Goes Into Effect?](#), July 23, 2010
6. [East Bay Express on Richmond Dispensaries](#), June 23, 2010
7. [More Responses to E-FORUM on Marijuana in Richmond](#), July 26, 2010
8. [San Jose Considers 10% Pot Tax](#), July 26, 2010
9. [Responses to "Ganga Surrealty"](#), July 26, 2010
10. [Ganga Surrealty](#), July 25, 2010
11. [Will Richmond Close Its Pot Clubs Before Its New Law Goes Into Effect?](#), July 23, 2010
12. [Council to Weigh Oakland-like Tax on Big Pot Growers](#), July 27, 2010
13. [Richmond Limits Number of Pot Clubs to Three, Puts Tax Measure on November Ballot](#), July 29, 2010
14. [City Council to Mull Lifting of Closure Order on Existing Dispensaries Today](#), August 2, 2010

2. Censored

Any discussion of this issue, which cannot be identified, has been squelched by a gag order from the court.



3. Flotilla

Mayor McLaughlin has a penchant from time to time to venture into international political waters, particularly on issues involving human rights. Supported by Jeff Ritterman, she agendized a condemnation of Israel for its violence in stopping the flotilla, organized by a Cyprus-based group called the Free Gaza Movement, which was to deliver food, medical supplies and construction supplies to Gaza City, where the group said 1.5 million people live in virtual isolation and are denied basic supplies by the Israeli government. The flotilla was stopped before it boarded by armed Israeli forces, who killed nine of the activists. One of those activists was a woman from Richmond.

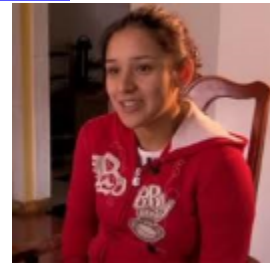


The issue drew as many emails and phone calls pro and con as I have ever received on any issue. Some pro-condemnation constituents even identified themselves as Jewish.

The murkiness of who was actually at fault for the violence and an unease of most City Council members with wading into foreign policy a-la-Berkeley made it clear the item would probably fail, and it was taken off the agenda. See [“Tempers Flare on Council as Pair of Flotilla Survivors Return Home.”](#)

4. Richmond High School Rape

This incident that involved the gang rape of a 15-year old girl behind Richmond High School during a school dance resulted in the worst national publicity for Richmond in years. Four of the six young men remanded for trial were from Richmond. The only hero was an 18-year old woman, Margarita Vargas, who was the only person to call the police, probably saving the victim's life.



Did My Wishes for 2010 Come True?

How did my wishes for 2010 fare? I batted 700, much better than last year's 500, with two more on the cusp. That leaves only one clear loss – the General Plan. Even it has an upside, with a new City Council promising a better chance for a better General Plan. Here are the results:



National Park Visitor Center

Wish: Eddie Orton will see the light, conclude a lease with the National Park Service for the Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park, and the facility will be funded and under construction, if not actually completed.

Outcome: After a year of bitter and protracted negotiation, a lease was signed on December 15, 2010, and the Visitor Center may be open by the 2011 Home Front Festival in October 2011.



Maritime Center

Wish: The Maritime Center rehabilitation will be funded and under construction.

Outcome: The Maritime Center is fully funded and about 60% complete, slated to be occupied in the spring of 2011.



Point Molate



Wish: The Point Molate project will be resolved favorably to the City. **Outcome:** The future of Point Molate remains murky, but there is a clear direction.

Plunge



Wish: The Richmond Plunge will reopen with a bulkhead and a swim team.

Outcome: The Plunge is open, even with a swim team. The bulkhead is assured, but in what year is still unclear.



General Plan



Wish: The General Plan will be adopted with provisions that include low intensity uses for the north Richmond Shoreline.

Outcome: The General Plan was not approved, and the future of the North Shoreline is murky.



City Council Election



Wish: The City Council race will conclude with a progressive majority that supports the issues that are important to me.

Outcome: Need I say more?



Chevron



Wish: Richmond's conflicts with Chevron will be globally resolved in a way that fundamentally changes the relationship over the long term in a way that is favorable to Richmond and fair for both parties.

Outcome: The local tax issues were resolved in a settlement that resulted in \$114 million for Richmond, but the future of the refinery upgrade project and property tax appeals remains unresolved.



State Government Theft



Wish: Fiscal conflicts between local and state government are resolved in a way that restores millions of dollars to Richmond.

Outcome: The passage of Proposition 21 severely limited what the state can take from local government in the future.



Homicides



Wish: Richmond's homicide rate finally responds to plans and programs adopted since 2004 and takes a nosedive.

Outcome: Homicide rates were less than half of 2009, and violent crime continues to drop.



Sustainability



Wish: Richmond continues to adopt legislation and implement programs that make it a leader in sustainability.

Outcome: With more solar photovoltaic installations per capita than any other California city, Richmond continues the green revolution. Other successful programs include expansion of the Bay Trail and Richmond



Greenway, Green Cities California membership, Tree City USA designation, the Seed Exchange and food scrap collection.

Best and Worst of 2010

My Nominations for the Best of 2010

You can get plenty of bad news in the traditional media, but I tend to gravitate toward good news involving Richmond, which is way underreported. The advent of [Richmond Confidential](#) in 2009 brought a welcome new source of news that often focused on the positive. Following is a digest of stories about positive events and happenings of interest in Richmond in 2010:

1. [Martin Luther King National Day of Service on the New Eastern Richmond Greenway](#), January 14, 2010
2. [Join US! - Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service on the Richmond Greenway: Monday, January 18, 2010 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM](#), January 14, 2010
3. [City Hails Progress of Local Nonprofit Urban Renewal Program](#), January 14, 2010
4. [Governor Visits SunPower in Richmond, Touts Green Business](#), January 27, 2010
5. [Gayle and the Gov Share the Sun](#), January 29, 2010
6. [2 Farms in 2 Days for Local High Schools](#), January 30, 2010
7. [Review: Richmond's Boiler House Offers Good Food, Great Views](#), February 3, 2010
8. [America's Oldest Park Ranger Alive and - Well - Kicking in Richmond](#), January 31, 2010
9. [Richmond 2, Railroad 0](#), February 15, 2010
10. [Potential Bounty Seen in Richmond High School Farm Plots](#), February 20, 2010
11. [Richmond Sweeps Up 425 Students in Truancy Abatement Efforts](#), March 16, 2010
12. [Maritime Center Groundbreaking March 24, 2010](#), March 17, 2010
13. [Richmond Designated Tree City USA for First Time](#), March 18, 2010
14. [Maritime Center Groundbreaking](#), March 25, 2010
15. [Solar Richmond Featured in Chronicle Article](#), March 25, 2010
16. [Taking Back the Iron Triangle](#), March 27, 2010
17. [News From East Brother Light Station](#), April 3, 2010
18. [Richmond Projects Grab SF AIA Design Awards](#), May 8, 2010
19. [Borrow a Seed at the Richmond Library](#), May 11, 2010
20. [Oakland Looks to Richmond's Successful Solution to Ending Foreclosure Blight](#), May 19, 2010
21. [Point Richmond Music 2010 Concert Series](#), May 25, 2010
22. [Lots of Richmond Shipyard History This Past Week](#), May 29, 2010
23. [The Craneway Pavilion & The Oakland East Bay Symphony Announce the July 3rd 'Target Independence Day Celebration'](#), June 5, 2010
24. [Community Adopts Solano Playlot](#), June 19, 2010
25. [Richmond Confidential - Developers, parks service close to deal at Ford Point](#), June 23, 2010
26. [Castaway for a Day at East Brother Light Station](#), June 23, 2010
27. [Richmond Confidential - Richmond Council OKs Plan for New Pipeline Fees](#), June 24, 2010
28. [Richmond Food Scrap Collection Program: Q&A Sessions and Free Food Scrap Pails](#), July 3, 2010
29. [Restaurant Review - Pt. Richmond's Up and Under: Pub Grub with California Flair](#), July 3, 2010
30. [Richmond Woman Energizes Neighborhood Park Program - Jefferson Award Winner: Toody Maher](#), July 7, 2010
31. [We're No. 1 - Richmond Grabs 2009 Solar Energy Victory](#), July 14, 2010
32. [World War II-era Maritime Center Due to Reopen Next Year](#), July 15, 2010
33. [More on Richmond Solar Dominance From Richmond Confidential](#), July 24, 2010
34. [Richmond Crime Rate Down Precipitously](#), July 31, 2010

35. [City Manager Bill Lindsay Featured in CalBusiness](#), August 4, 2010
36. [Rosie Superintendent Martha Lee Promoted to Deputy Regional Director, Public use Management](#), August 13, 2010
37. [Popular Richmond Plunge Pool Reopens After Nine-Year Closure](#), August 13, 2010
38. [Seed-Saver Library Sprouts in Richmond](#), August 15, 2010
39. [Plunge!](#) August 15, 2010
40. [East Brother Lighthouse Featured on Richmond Confidential](#), August 15, 2010
41. [Councilmember Jim Rogers Weds Kristin Rosekrans](#), August 15, 2010
42. [East Brother One of Ten Best Lighthouses to Sleep In](#), August 18, 2010
43. [Ferry Point Loop of San Francisco Bay Trail](#), August 18, 2010
44. [Richmond's Urban Tilt Segment on "Growing a Greener World"](#) August 18, 2010
45. [Our Neighbors: Richmond Yacht Club Keeps Charity Dollars Local August 20](#), August 17, 2010
46. [City of Richmond GETS Energy Services Information Session Flier - Free Upgrades](#), August 19, 2010
47. [New Nonprofit Has Big Plans to Transform Richmond Greenway](#), September 7, 2010
48. [Richmond Closer to Agreements on Underground Pipelines](#), September 9, 2010
49. [Blossoms & Thorns Exhibition](#), September 11, 2010
50. [Richmond Prosecutes Railroad for Blocking Intersections](#), September 10, 2010
51. [Home Front Festival October 1 and 2, 2010](#), September 14, 2010
52. [Murder Rate on the Decline](#), September 13, 2010
53. [Honda Returns to Port of Richmond](#), September 18, 2010
54. [Richmond Playground Makes Finals in National Contest](#), September 18, 2010
55. [Our Neighbors: Busy Times For National Park Service in Richmond](#), September 27, 2010
56. [Green is Gold Report Finds a Green Future for Richmond](#), September 28, 2010
57. [Richmond Residents Celebrate Rosie](#), October 4, 2010
58. [Richmond Preps for Millions in Health Funds](#), October 3, 2010
59. [Richmond Bike Plan Premier](#), October 12, 2010
60. [Mayor Welcomes Green Machines to Richmond](#), October 12, 2010
61. [Interior Secretary Ken Salazar Talks Renewable Energy in Richmond](#), October 16, 2010
62. [From Vacant City Lots to Food on the Table - Richmond's Urban Tilt](#), October 18, 2010
63. [Richmond Confidential Profiles Mayor McLaughlin](#), October 20, 2010
64. [Richmond Campaign News From CC Times and Chronicle](#), October 20, 2010
65. [Railroad Company Found Guilty of Crime in Richmond](#), October 22, 2010
66. [A City Enveloped in Blossoms and Thorns](#), October 23, 2010
67. [Richmond Wins \\$2M Grant to Turn Blighted Playlot into a "Neighborhood Jewel"](#) November 10, 2010
68. [Chronicle Profiles The Historic Ford Assembly Building](#), November 14, 2010
69. [Richmond's MBA Polymers Wins International Accolades for Green Innovation](#), November 22, 2010
70. [CC Times Editorial - Hiring Magnus Was a Stroke of Genius](#), December 30, 2010
71. [\\$1 Million Grant Will Help to Restore Breuner Marsh in Point Pinole Regional Shoreline](#), December 27, 2010
72. [Smoking Ban in and Around Richmond Multi-Unit Housing Goes Into Effect January 1, 2011](#), December 27, 2010
73. [Rosie the Riveter Visitor Center Could Open Next Fall](#), December 27, 2010
74. [Violence Prevention Grant Awarded to Richmond](#), December 27, 2010
75. [Bringing Jobs to Richmond](#), December 26, 2010
76. [Violent Crime Drops in Richmond](#), December 26, 2010
77. [Rosie the Riveter Visitor Center Coming in 2011](#), December 17, 2010
78. [Richmond Confidential - Greening the Triangle](#), December 12, 2010
79. [Richmond Offers Itself as Pre-San Francisco Interim Site for America's Cup Sailing Event](#), December 12, 2010
80. [Richmond City Manager to Stay for Five More Years](#), December 10, 2010



Wildflowers in the Richmond Parkway median added a lot of class

My Nominations for Worst of 2010

Vetrazzo

One of Richmond's flagship green businesses was [bought and moved to Florida](#) after a promised state grant failed to come through. The company, which employed 40 at its peak, closed its Richmond plant and laid off 22 people. See [So Long Vetrazzo](#), June 2, 2010.



Train Horns

After early successes in leading the state in establishing quiet zones, City staff let the latest ones languish for years, even though they were required to mitigate increased train activity associated with the Honda Port of Entry. The City Council required this work by a vote on November 18, 2008. On May 5, 2010, (over a year and a half later) it had not been started. City staff emailed me that it would be completed and the Quiet Zone established by the end of July, 2010. On August 16, City staff emailed me that the work would be completed the end of September. On October 1, City staff emailed me that the work would be completed the end of October. On October 27, City staff emailed me that the BNSF work was complete and the City work would be completed mid-November. It turned out that the City



hadn't even started its work and that anticipated completion was January 14, 2011. Meanwhile, hundreds of people continue to have their sleep disturbed night after night, and I continue to get complaints. This is callous. Sleep may not be important to some, but it is to residents who live near the RR tracks. I just can't believe that the City did not start its work in time to have it completed simultaneously with the BNSF work. More than two years after the City Council directed this work, its completion is still months away. See [Ear Aches: Noise Pollution Rattles Nerves, Harms Health](#), August 28, 2010.

Moving Money Out of Richmond

Millions of dollars in penalties extracted from polluters operating in Richmond has been moved to other locations for years by federal and state agencies responsible for enforcement. The latest is compensation for polluting Castro Cove. See [Moving Chevron Penalty Money to Sonoma County](#), September 9, 2010.



Code Enforcement

Richmond's Code Enforcement unit works hard, but there are just some things they cannot or will not deal with. These include violations by Chevron and the railroads. I don't know whether it is fear of these corporate giants, intimidation, professional courtesy, or what, but while ordinary property owners get busted every day for weeds, trash and other nuisances, Chevron and the railroads get a free pass. At one time, Richmond was recognized as a pioneer for incorporating control of invasive exotic plants into its weed abatement ordinance, but Code Enforcement and the city attorney are loath to implement when Chevron or a railroad is the violator. The Chevron refinery is host to acres of such plants, including French broom, fennel and Pampas grass. Pampas grass is one of the most harmful invasive exotic plants in California. It is listed in the [Food and Agriculture Code as a noxious weed and is defined as a public nuisance by the California Invasive Plant Council](#). Each plume produces up to 100,000 seeds that are widely dispersed by wind and develop without fertilization."



Pampas grass at the Chevron Refinery

The railroad rights of way through Richmond are targets for graffiti dumping and weeds, but nothing is done about it. The land over the BNSF tunnel in Point Richmond is overgrown with brush, including banned invasive exotics, but Code Enforcement ignores it despite years of complaints.

E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best of 2010

These are all verbatim as submitted by E-FORUM subscribers.

Mechanics Bank's Community Partners Program for non-profits

- *Mechanics Bank's Community Partners Program for non-profits @www.mechanicsbankcares.com*

Bill Lindsay

- *Bill Lindsay's contract extension*
- *Bill Lindsay for doing an excellent job.*



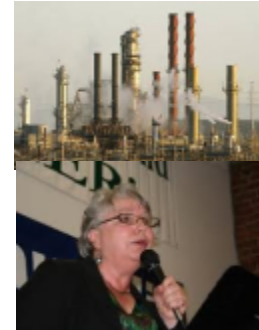
- *Bill Lindsay, our outstanding City Manager, signed on for another five years continuing his fine work to improve life in Richmond.*
- *Kudos to Bill Lindsay for his commitment (and smarts)*

The Chevron Settlement

- *The Chevron settlement*

Gayle McLaughlin

- *Gayle McLaughlin for taking the high road in the Mayor's race, not only with the mailings, but once again refusing financial donations from corporations. Yes, the people of Richmond do look at who you are sleeping with.*
- *GAYLE OUR MAYOR: While still learning how to play with the tough crowd of Richmond City Council, our mayor's vision shone brightly through all the mud slinging that tried to tarnish her reputation. She stood the test by fire, and the locals doused the shameful campaign slurs against her with their votes of support. Perhaps we are turning a corner.*



The Richmond Hilltop YMCA

- *The Richmond Hilltop YMCA brings together people of many ethnicities, many ages, many physical abilities, and many walks of life. It is the one Richmond site I visit several times a week, and it provides a vision of a Richmond to strive for in the future. It's heartwarming to walk into the building any day of the week and see people of all kinds socializing in the "café" area or talking to one another as they work out.*



The Watershed Project

- *The Watershed Project. I've attached our most recent annual report (which has plenty of concrete reasons why.)*



E-FORUM

- *E-FORUM itself!*

The Elections

- *The elections*
- *No on U*
- *The new council.*
- *AND, the best thing that happened is that Richmond voters were brilliant enough to re-elect Mayor McLaughlin and a city council almost free of members beholden to large corporate and other out-of-town donors creating a majority council opposed to the proposed Pt. Molate casino.*



- *The voters of Richmond voted out the rascals and elected two new council members who will work for the interests of those who live in Richmond, rather than those who stand to profit by being in business here.*
- *Voters of Richmond reelecting Mayor McLaughlin, electing new pro-resident Council members Booze' and Beckles, defeating pro business, pro-casino, anti parks and open space Viramontes and Lopez and turning thumbs down on a degrading gambling casino.*
- *...the point molate vote and the mayoral vote*

Shining the Light

- *The so called community meeting paid for by upstream was the worst, but the folks who shined the light on the lie were the best, including you.*

Progressives

- *The progressive organization that helped hire the mayor has helped Richmond a lot.*
- *The best thing that happened is the concerted Richmond Progressive Alliance effort to re-elect Mayor McLaughlin and to elect Jovanka Beckles and Eduardo Martinez.*

Taste of Richmond

- *The "Taste of Richmond" which was the opening event of the Richmond Rivera Regatta - Richmond Yacht Club. It raised \$6,600 which was given to four Richmond charities - Bay Area Rescue Mission - Rubicon - The Emergency Food Pantry and YES - (Youth Enrichment Strategies).*

Point Richmond Farmer's Market

- *The Pt. Richmond Farmer's Market.*
- *Kudos to whoever brought the quality Farmer's Market to Point Richmond - and at a decent hour.*

Blossoms & Thorns

- *Blossoms & Thorns: The Legacy of Richmond's Historic Japanese American Nurseries – the exhibition funded by the City's Neighborhood Public Art program that showed at the Richmond Art Center from 9/4 thru 11/20/2010. This extraordinary exhibition included contemporary (by Ken Osborn, Ellen Gailing, Matt Matsuoka, and Fletcher Oakes); historical photographs and text curated by Donna Graves; and artifacts contributed by the owners of the nurseries and crafts made in the internment camps loaned by Mrs. Jewel Okawachi. A beautiful print-on-demand book of the entire exhibition is available at www.blurb.com, search for Blossoms & Thorns. Blossoms & Thorns was one of the best attended exhibitions the Richmond Art Center has ever had, and we are now in negotiations with other cities to travel the show. The exhibition also*



included some fantastic free community events (see attached Event List) from film festivals, to bus tours by the National Park Services, to films and talks by authors and book lists of Japanese American recommended books for children and adults. The partners were the City of Richmond (Arts & Culture Division), National Park Services, El Cerrito Historical Society, and members of the Japanese American community. For seven months all these entities met regularly to plan the exhibition together.

Richmond Writes

- *While Blossoms & Thorns was showing, the Arts & Culture Commission ran a haiku contest called Richmond Writes! based on the exhibition, with themes prompted by the Japanese American experience during WWII...such as losing everything, starting over, keeping your culture alive, etc. 190 students wrote haikus and sent them in...some submitting several poems. A three-judge panel, including Chris Treadway from the WC Times, Susan Antolin from the National Haiku Association, and Dwayne Parish, Richmond poet – made up the judging panel. Awards were presented at a City Council meeting on 11/16 before a “standing room only” crowd, and the winners received certificates and cash awards. A scrapbook was printed that included with the winning entries and a list of every student who participated; each student received a book. This project also was a great collaboration between the Arts & Culture Commission and the WCCUSD. Its overwhelming success has prompted both students and teachers to ask the Art Commission to repeat it again next year. These two Richmond events have generated an amazing amount of press for Richmond, including a 2-page spread in the San Francisco Chronicle and articles in the WC Times, Japanese American publications, the El Cerrito Patch, and one that will be coming out in the January issue of The East Bay Monthly. Blossoms & Thorns and Richmond Writes! have given Richmond the kind of community involvement and press that we wish we had more of. It was positive, educational, and rich in arts and culture – things that those who truly know Richmond know are what we’re all about!*



Fragile Remnants
Roses still unveil
Work of gardeners who left
Shattered hearts and glass.
—Roger Li, Salesian High
School



Traffic Light

- *Best Stress Reliever: The new traffic lights at Carlson and I80 off ramp. Bless whoever did this. Now if they could just finish up the rest of the Carlson construction.....*

Corky Booze

- *CORKY BOOZE: In the spirit of never give up and never give in, Corky's eternal quest for city councilman status is a testament to a dedicated citizen that will not give up, even after being taken down many times. He needs to be congratulated on his determination.*



Virginia Finlay

- *Kudos to Virginia Finlay for running a clean campaign and, once and for all, for her devotion to all things Richmond.*

Keeping Schools Open

- *One of the biggest successes for Richmond is the vision to keep Kennedy High School, Grant Elementary and Olinda open! This was a huge policy move and showed that the Richmond City Council could act, and act decisively. Please add this council act to your list of accomplishments. I also want to commend Bill Lindsey for his leadership and vision. This was one of the biggest moves of the year in the City of Richmond.*

Groundwork Richmond

- *Creation of Groundwork Richmond*



Marina Bay Landscaping & Lighting District

- *The Marina Bay Landscaping & Lighting District with an active advisory committee*

Preservation of the City's High Credit Ratings

- *Preservation of the City's high credit ratings*

Parks Master Plan

- *Creation of the first ever Parks Master Plan*

Elm Play Lot

- *Elm Play Lot grant funding*

Urban Greening Grants

- *Urban Greening planning grant funding (that includes provision for funding more landscape district startups)*

“Sink Hole”

- *Timely ‘sink hole’ repair*

Hilltop Sign

- *Temporary Hilltop sign facing, other Hilltop committee driven projects,*

Shotspotter

- *Gun shot tracking system installation*



Street Paving

- *Repaving of many streets, improved coordination on projects between departments,*

Moody Underpass

- *The design process for the Moody Underpass*
- *-Kudos to the Redevelopment Dept. for keeping at it regarding the underpass at Marina Bay. Looks like it is going to happen.*

NURVE

- *Start of construction of several NURVE projects (like MLK Park phase 1),*

Bay Trail

- *Bay Trail design projects and TRAC support.*

Convention and Visitors Bureau

- *Kudos to the Richmond Convention & Visitors Bureau for staying on top of and publishing Richmond events*

Pow Wow

- *As one of the pow-wow planning committee members for the "First Annual Native American Pow Wow" held in Richmond at the Marina on June 26th, 2010 and co-sponsored by the City of Richmond and our mayor. I believe it was a positive event that spotlighted, if a person/people have a vision that helps communities in a positive way, the vision can be achieved and made into a reality. The Pow wow planning committee consisted of regular joes' so to speak, local Native Americans-most Richmond residents, that came together to help bring our true Traditional dance and customs to share with the public on June 26th, 2010 at the Richmond Marina. Many Native Americans came from far and wide across the country for one day, to carry on our traditional dance in a positive way and to remember and support our ways. Even though Native Americans live in an Urban setting, which can make it difficult to hold onto our traditions, it is possible as witnessed at the Richmond pow wow. We wanted to share the Traditional pow wow with the public and be able to show who we really are as a people and for everyone to have an enjoyable time at a free event. (it was an alcohol & substance free event also) We were very grateful for the support of the City of Richmond and Madame Mayor. We are in plans for the 2011 Richmond Pow-wow.*

E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best 2010 Development Project

The Plunge

- *Best thing for the year was the opening of the Natatorium, a beautiful landmark building. The water is not always warm however. Once it was just too cold and we got our money back. Also I used to take my husband to the West County Adult Day Center which the City contributes to. The people there are skilled and dedicated and provide a great service to caregivers and their family members afflicted with*



dementia. An affordable respite is worth a great deal to many citizens of Richmond and this facility should be publicized and supported.

- *The Plunge, The Plunge, The Plunge!*
- *...of course the natatorium*
- *The best two things that happened in Richmond in 2010 were the re-opening of the Plunge and the election.*

Honda Port of Entry

- *Honda Port of Entry with integration of Bay Trail in the project with access to Historic Kaiser Shipyard 3 and the Red Oak Victory.*



Ford Assembly Building

- *FORD ASSEMBLY BUILDING: The mass of people of every creed, color and nationality at the Ford Assembly Building Craneway on the pre 4th of July event was heartwarming and fulfilling. The city got this one right, and public use was at its pinnacle at that moment. The long term vision that has allowed the FAB to rise from the ashes is truly to the credit of those that saw its future, and pressed onwards until it came together.*



Macdonald Avenue

- *The streetlights and street "furniture" on Macdonald are beautiful.*

Point Molate

- *It appears a 'best' development option for Pt. Molate is still a long way off.*



E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best 2010

Organizations

TRAC

- *Bruce Beyaert and TRAC deserve kudos for continuing to make Richmond the #1 Bay Trail City.*
- *TRAC, the Trails for Richmond Action Committee, stands out for all that it has done toward completing the San Francisco Bay Trail in Richmond to provide free, safe & healthy walking and biking between Richmond's neighborhoods and shoreline parks.*
- *TRAC, the Trails for Richmond Action Committee for their strategic approach and positive actions in making Richmond the Bay Trail City.*



Pointrichmond.com

- *For more than fifteen years David Moore has maintained the Point Richmond On Line website, faithfully, ethically and with intelligent good taste, and essentially free to the citizenry. This, in spite of the fact that his own finances have never reached much beyond a subsistence level. In addition, his efforts had a significant effect on the progressive victories achieved in this last election. He and that service have never been publicly acknowledged or rewarded and I think it's time the city does so. I would like to see the council make a special presentation to him for that service.*



Ujima

- *Ujima deserves a big thank you for providing substance abuse treatment for women, for helping those who have lost their children to regain custody, and for teaching them how to stay sober and be responsible parents.*



SOLANOplay

- *'SOLANOplay' (see www.solanoplay.org) for their neighborhood based efforts to reinvent Solano Play Lot following upon support from the Parks Superintendent. They have brought life back into this awkwardly placed insular park and pursued grants for new equipment.*



Groundwork Richmond

- *Also, Nancy Baer and the Groundwork Richmond deserve credit for the projects and grants they have already embraced. This is only the third Groundwork Trust to be established on the west coast with support from the National Park Service, EPA, Groundwork USA and the local municipality. You can expect to hear a great deal more from Groundwork Richmond in the coming years (contact groundworkrichmond@gmail.com).*



E-Forum Reader Nominations for Best City Employees

Michelle Milam

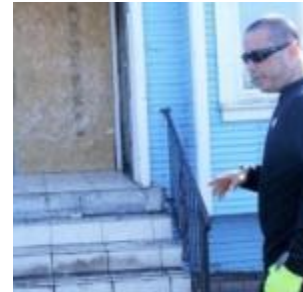
- *Our amazing Crime Prevention Manager and Tim Higare--our Code Enforcement Manager. Both of these folks go "above and beyond" the call of duty when it comes to doing their job. Michelle is an invaluable resource inside the PD and out in the community. She continually comes up with new and innovative approaches to crime prevention and then works incredibly*



hard to put those approaches into practice, involving residents, beat cops, community groups, neighborhood associations, and others. Michelle works closely with the Police Explorers (often on her own time) and she is a strong mentor and advocate for young people throughout the city. She coordinates our ever-growing volunteer program and chaplain program. She helps with numerous City events and takes a lead role in "National Night Out."

Tim Higaes

- *Tim has taken Code Enforcement and Blight Abatement in Richmond to a whole new level. He manages a unit that has grown by over 100% in the last several years, but still takes a personal interest in what all of his personnel are doing. He is extremely responsive to community complaints and concerns. He has attended dozens of neighborhood meetings, where he not only listens--he follows up on the issues that are raised. Richmond has become a model for cost-recovery related to irresponsible mortgage companies and others; the City looks better than ever thanks to aggressive graffiti and other blight abatement; and crime is down in no small part because of the improvement in Richmond's overall physical environment.*



Michelle Seville

- *Michele Seville-Richmond Arts and Culture Manage. As you may know I had the idea of having the Blossoms and Thorns Exhibit (although at the beginning it was called Ghost Roses, thanks to you) after seeing Ken Osborn's photos on your E- forum. I got nowhere with the idea until someone suggested that I call Michele. From the first moment she took the idea very seriously. She is the major reason why this marvelous exhibit happened and why it is going to travel to other venues in California. Michele is highly competent, very organized and extremely collaborative. She put that exhibit on her back and by her refusal to let any obstacle derail the project she brought the exhibit to fruition. She had to deal with big egos, budget problems, reluctant partners, territorial disputes and bureaucratic nonsense.. As Project Manager she handled it all with grace and good humor. She is a model of what a project manager should be. I hold Michele in high esteem. The city of Richmond is lucky to have her.*



Bill Lindsay

- *Our excellent City Manager, Bill Lindsay, signing on for another five years.*

Jim Goins

- *Finance Director Jim Goins*



Lina Velasco

- *Lina Velasco has certainly distinguished herself as an employee who regularly exceeds the norm. In spite of being off on maternity leave for a few months in 2010, she assumed the duty of acting Planning Department head with great knowledge and grace. All of the projects that Lina tackles are completed with a great deal of research and attention to the various competing issues and personalities. She is a great asset to the City of Richmond.*



LaShonda Wilson

- *LaShonda Wilson in the City Manager's Office for her unwavering positive attitude and support for the NURVE partnership projects, working to obtain agreements with the school district, Friends of the Richmond Greenway and the new Groundwork Richmond.*

E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best City Department 2010

Parks and Landscaping

- *Parks & Landscaping*
- *Frank Gonzales and the rest of the Parks and Landscaping team who provide places of beauty and enjoyment not only in City parks, but also along Richmond's streets and trails.*
- *Also, deserving note for their continuing high quality of customer service are members of the tree crew; including Paul Hyman, Cruz Caldera, Lisa Graves and James Berry as well as Steve DeLucchi who almost single handedly tends to young trees and the Adopt-a-Tree program.*



Graffiti Abatement Team

- *Graffiti Abatement Team*
- *The hard-working, efficient Graffiti Removal Crew*



Code Enforcement

- *Kudos to the entire Code Enforcement unit for doing as much as they can with a limited amount of resources. There's so much work out there their staff could be tripled and they'd still be busy (hint hint)! A special shout-out to Tim Higaes for being an effective director, and to Eva Mann, Lorena Burciaga, and Nicole Ewing for providing great customer service!*



Police

- *Much praise, and congratulations, for Captain Mark Gagan and Deputy Chief Allwyn Brown for their excellent service and well*



deserved promotions. Many thanks also to Captain Anthony Williams for his congenial and responsive service to Beat 7 – we'll miss him as he begins his new assignment in the Southern District.

- *High praise for Chief of Police Chris Magnus! Under his leadership Richmond enjoys a progressive, responsive, and effective police department. Community policing has never been better. Our homicide rate is way down and RPD continues to push for gun violence reduction in many innovative ways. In addition to being an effective and forward-thinking commander, Chief Magnus is a very friendly, approachable individual who makes the time to talk to all residents and attend many community events.*
- *The Police Department deserves kudos for bringing down the crime rate.*
- *-Kudos to the RPD and particularly the Chief, for bringing down the crime rate, enforcing community policing, and for making sure there are "Beat Cops" at Neighborhood Council Meetings.*

Engineering

- *Kudos to Edric Kwan, Interim City Engineer, for making the Engineering Division more responsive to resident needs. There's a new stop sign in our neighborhood that wouldn't be there without his help. There are still changes that need to happen in Engineering and they really need more staff, but Edric's the right person to lead the department into the future.*



City Attorney

- *The City Attorney's Office would be best for the high volume of opinions, resolutions, conveyances, contracts, agreements and ordinances they ably and quickly review for other departments (Mary Renfro, Everett Jenkins and Bruce Goodmiller are particularly adept in this regard).*



E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Worst of 2010

Hit Pieces

- *I probably sent you a similar rant right after the election. I think one of the worst things that hit Richmond this year was the absolute bottom-feeding hit pieces put out by the police and fire unions aimed at taking down the mayor and the prospective green city council candidates. Whether you supported these candidates or not, the ugliness of the campaign literature put out by the unions reached a new low. It was a blight on the community and one for which the unions cannot recover in my humble opinion. They will be forever tarred with the brush of ugly hysteria.*
- *Off the top, I think one of the worst things that happened politically in Richmond this year was the disgraceful and reprehensible* personal attack on Mayor McLaughlin by the police and fire dept unions. I like to think it backfired by provoking a sympathy vote, by all of us fellow imperfect human beings, that helped her win. Another negative thing was the enormous amount of money spent and trees destroyed for the floods of campaign literature sent out to Richmond voters; our recycle bins overflowed.*



- *-Double Boo! Hiss! to the police and fire associations for that dirty - and expensive - campaign against Mayor Gayle. Ditto to any politician in the City of Richmond who run a dirty - and therefore full of lies, campaign for City Council. SHAME ON ALL of the above for running a DISGUSTING campaign!!! It was a low-point in the history of this city and I, among many others, were ashamed to be residents at that time.*

Political Polarization

- *One of the worst things that's happened in 2010 is the severity of the political polarization in our city. We already struggle with it on the state and national levels but this year's election set a new low. From the once-again vicious attacks ads by the Richmond Police and Firefighters unions, to the hypocrisy of a Progressive victory propped up by out-of-town card clubs, the voices of reason, sanity, and moderation seem to have been extinguished for good. When people want everything their way, and to hell with everyone else, I fear for the future of this city.*



Point Molate

- *Richmond has once again failed to work with developers in what may be considered an imbalance of needs and abilities for the land called Point Molate. This location was once a beach community for native Americans, later, along with Point Orient, it was a Chinese fishing and shrimp camp. After the 1906 earthquake, it became the largest winery in the world, but prohibition cut its business life short. The Navy took this site over and nearly destroyed it with the remains of oil soaked hillsides. When a developer had a vision to turn this into a money making resort, the City of Richmond was willing to take the first millions from them, but decided that gambling was a sin and decided against the notion of restoring the land to the brothers and sisters of the native Americans, though not necessarily to the same "tribe" is one way to make amends for our ancestor's sins. In addition, the income derived will not be directly from the local inhabitants but from travelers from around the world. Richmond can reshape itself into an attraction that brings visitors to the area and to spend money in more than just Point Molate.*



Surveys

- *Never have so many surveys been taken by so many to try to influence the actual attitude of the voters such that the survey was yellow journalism and slanted to not learn of people's opinion. It was abused to FORM people's opinion. The money behind this faux campaign was not well received by yours truly.*



Hostility

- *What doesn't work is the hostility that some government and community activists show to environmentalists and social activists who are interested in Bay Area conservation or lending a hand to struggling communities in Richmond. At times, it's so vitriolic that it smacks of xenophobia. And in terms of stemming violence, studies have shown*



that circling the wagons simply doesn't work. Rather, realization that one is part of a larger community, that promotes pride in Richmond as well as the entire Bay Area, that's what Richmond should strive for

West Contra Costa Unified School District

- *West Contra Costa School District, who “won” another building bond. Results: (a) “Richmond Unified School District” has indebtedness over one BILLION dollars, while 1990 debts remain unpaid, and (b) taxpayers were not subsequently willing to endorse the much more important parcel tax later in 2010. District can construct upgraded facilities, but can't keep schools open, maintained, or adequately staffed. Campaign donors: architects, contractors, designers, building trades. We need better teachers, not better buildings.*



Nat Bates

- *Nat Bates continuation to disrupt every council meeting, using his position as a bully pulpit.*

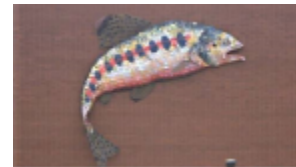


Maria Viramontes

- *Maria Viramontes for pushing to extend the Point Molate casino cause, again and again and again and....*

Fish

- *That hideous fish is still up on the art center building*



Sink Hole

- *The 'sink hole' occurrence,*



Hilltop Sign

- *Delay for complete reconstruction of the Hilltop pylon sign,*

Landscape Districts

- *Delay of funding a feasibility study for creation of more landscape district(s),*

State Theft

- *State garnishment of Redevelopment funding capacity, decline in other revenues,*

Staff Losses

- *Loss of capable staffing at all levels, ageing city facilities with deferred maintenance, vandalism and violence citywide.*

Chamber of Commerce

- *-Boo! Hiss! to Judy Morgan and attorney Josh whatever his name is for carrying on a very public and divisive threat campaign, in the name of the Chamber of Commerce, against the Mayor. (and no I did not vote for Gayle).*

E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Worst 2010 Projects

Carlson Boulevard

- *The almost worst thing that was done by the City this year was the Carlson Boulevard fence without any thought by the Staff as to the appearance, design, landscaping, trash, or how many trees and shrubs were removed. Surely, the idea of keeping folks off of the railroad tracks has merit, but also, clearly there could have been a better design and at least some minor public review before creating this "great wall of Richmond". Come on folks, let's do better!!!!*



City Departments, Policies and Services Nominated Worst by E-FORUM Readers

Some Top Managers

- *There are many good and able performers in all City departments (some of whom amazingly put up with a lot, while with use of fewer resources); so, the worst may be in how some very top managers too often flash to anger with a willingness to worry a crisis (perceived or real) rather than seek or adequately communicate positive support. The impulsive personality that tends to shoot the messenger, bayonet the aggrieved or starve the needy (for timely information, funding, staffing, or equipment needed to get the job done) is certainly not exhibiting 'leadership' and may be conducive of increased dysfunction in the organization for the long run.*



Street sweeping and parking enforcement

- *Both are totally arbitrary. I've emailed you before about how I put pine needles at the end of my driveway to see if they actually sweep and it's a tossup if they actually will. For parking enforcement, I actually watched a parking enforcement car on Shane last week on Tuesday when it was street sweeping day on the downhill direction. I go up and down that street a lot going back and forth to CCC and Transition (WCCUSD). Not a single car on the street got a ticket and the street is lined with parked cars every day. I knew that if they did ticket people, there would be a lot of screaming. I came home at the end of the day to find a parking ticket on my RV which was parked in my driveway for supposedly obstructing the sidewalk. The RV has been in the driveway for years except when I'm gone which is sometimes for a day and sometimes*



for months if I'm gone to Iowa. I know there are people who don't like RVs but I abide by the law. I tried to figure out HOW my RV was obstructing the sidewalk because the only thing going over the line between my property and the sidewalk was the fringe on the bottom at the back and possible the spare tire up higher. I should have had the girls take a picture to verify everything. I paid the ticket, which goes to Colorado and funds jobs for people who don't even live in the same state as I do. I went away for the weekend and now I will now park it in a neighbor's driveway that is a couple of feet longer or on the street and move it every 72 hours. I'll be gone most of January anyway. In Iowa, there's a saying for this kind of harassment but I won't say it in a public forum. I think those are very good examples of both things that I think SUCK about living in Richmond.

Predictions and Wishes

2011 Predictions from E-FORUM Readers

Carlson Boulevard

- *I bet most people from the Annex have one holiday wish - Finish Carlson Blvd. My neighborhood has turned into a traffic nightmare. My street is now a dead end and has been for months with no end in sight. Parking is even more limited and there is not much space to turn around once you come down to our end of the street. My neighbors plants were destroyed by someone missing the driveway and taking out her plants. The fire truck that came down to the end of the street could not get turned around without people going out and moving their parked cars to give them enough room. That was kind of scary. It's more than just a hassle and it seems to be taking forever.*

Point Molate

- *I predict the EIR by Upstream will be more lies but the good folks of Richmond will call it for what it is.*
- *The Casino project will be rejected in favor of a Point Molate project that will be a source of pride and pleasure for all who live in Richmond.*
- *I am looking forward to a new direction for the development of Pt. Molate... one that will produce jobs, environmental protection, and recreation, and will NOT depend on the weaknesses of the population (gambling). I am also looking forward to the continuing reduction in crime.*
- *The current developer alliance with Upstream for Pt. Molate will 'fold their tents' and leave wholly or in parts.*



Parks

- *The City and EBRPD will work to create new public parks and open space with Bay Trail connections on Richmond's beautiful northern shoreline.*



National Park

- *As the National Park Visitor's Center becomes a reality at the shoreline this fall, I envision the city's more creative artists,*



- entrepreneurs, and most imaginative thinkers gathering over their drawing boards planning ways to capture those tourist dollars that will follow by enticing them off the shoreline with memorable events and sights that are only available here where it all happened.*
- *I can see special performances by the children and youth at the grand and glorious East Bay Center for the Performing Arts in their beautiful historic Winters Building.*
 - *I see private bus tours (staffed by NPS interpreters at no cost to the city) taking folks on culturally-specific tours of the scattered sites throughout the city which form this national park.*
 - *Early childhood educators who will visit the home of Head Start at the restored Maritime Child Development Centers for a look at where it all began with U.C.'s Dr. Katherine Landreth's inspiration.*
 - *I see tours for those in the medical profession who can find here both the original first aid station at Shipyard 3 and the impressive state-of-the-art Kaiser Permanente Medical Center only a few miles away on Nevin, or the KP training campus on Marina Way. Those who are studying the birth of pre-paid health insurance (HMO) will now have access to that change-producing and enduring history in medicine -- a role that KP continues to play as it continues to lead in the field of medicine.*
 - *Where the Japanese/American internment story of the families who led in the century-old cut flower industry in California that can be interpreted through a visit past what remains of their industry, plus a visit to Shimada Friendship park, Richmond's tribute to the contribution of those who lived that painful history.*
 - *and (hopefully) someday there will be restoration of the African American migration story as told through the North Richmond experience that brought black blues and jazz to the west and a restored-for-the-telling of the late Ethel Dotson's little International Hotel on South Street -- which housed the traveling Pullman porters, where there must surely have been union-organizing by the NAACP's C.L. Dellums and A. Philip Randolph -- men who figured prominently in that dark chapter in our history.*
 - *Where the resurrected story of women's emancipation into America's workplace and subsequent dismissal when men returned as told at the Rosie the Riveter Memorial to inspire today's young women into non-traditional roles that defy limitations.*
 - *All that, and more.*



Progressives

- *I predict the new progressive bloc on the City Council will punch hard for changes driven by the political ideology of their behind-the-scenes, hard core supporters (Richmond Progressive Alliance, Green Party, etc.). They will discreetly place key progressives on city commissions to influence public policy (which is unethical), and form public attack groups designed to pound their opposition on key issues into submission. The Council will need its moderates more than ever if it hopes to serve all Richmond residents in an equal and non-ideological manner.*



City Council

- *City Council sessions will become even longer drawn-out affairs at risk of delays in badly needed projects.*

General Plan

- I am looking forward to the new year with the new City Council. Hopefully we will get a new General Plan that respects the needs of the citizens of Richmond rather than those of developers whose interests are contrary to what is best for the future of Richmond.*



How did E-FORUM Readers 2010 Predictions turn out?

Layoffs



Prediction: More layoffs. Going to end up top heavy again just as we were in 2004. Thought this CM was smarter than I. Turner – guess I was wrong.

Outcome: There were no more layoffs.



Plunge



Prediction: The Plunge will finally open late.

Outcome: That's what happened.



General Plan



Prediction: A flawed general plan will be approved, and we won't get another crack at it for at least 10 years.

Outcome: The General Plan languishes.

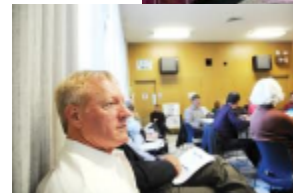


Casino



Prediction: The casino will continue to chug along thanks to the City Council's desire to take advantage of their citizens' weaknesses instead of helping them achieve their potential.

Outcome: The casino is more like sputtering than chugging.



Election



Prediction: The election will be a blood bath with most of the City Council Members running for something or other.

Outcome: That's pretty much what happened.

City Council Meetings



Prediction: City Council meetings will be even more insufferable with campaign speeches from both sides of the podium and attacks right and left. It is the last year the current majority on the City Council can accomplish anything, and if this year is any indication not much will get done, and everything will be politicized.

Outcome: There were a lot of politics, but a lot got done.



Unemployment

Prediction: Unemployment increases; taxpayers tired of paying corporate welfare: Richmond city officials will be forced to demand any company that does contract work for Richmond, CA will have to hire and use 90% local, legal residents instead of the 90% illegally imported labor that now makes up the workforces of such companies as Bay Cities Paving, the trenchless sewer company.

Outcome: Unemployment remained high, but no radical measures were adopted.



Revolution

Prediction: Revolution: against specifically Chevron and new better-written measure to supplant Measure T.

Out-spokenness, along with the other green corridor east bay cities against the Senate and any corporation, at Copenhagen, that has betrayed the future. The failure of Copenhagen politicizes green energy and therefore gives more of voice to green energy cities.

Outcome: No revolution (unless you want to call the November 2010 election a revolution) or new Measure T, but tax issues with Chevron were settled for \$114 million.



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Tom Butt Wishes for 2011

Visitor Center

When Rosie the Riveter WW II Home Front National Historical Park was created in 2000, its first superintendent, Judy Hart, told me that the National Park Service moved slowly and a Visitor Center was at least three years away. In the excitement of the moment, this delay was incomprehensible. Little did I know that it would be more than a decade, but it looks like it may actually happen in 2011. A combination of funding challenges and bureaucratic entanglements within the National Park Service and intransigence by the Ford Building's owner Eddie Orton are responsible for the delay, all of which seem to have finally been resolved in December of 2010. Look for an opening at the October 2011 Home Front Festival.



General Plan

It was May of 2005 when the City Council authorized an RFP to select a consultant for the new General Plan and selection of an advisory committee. Richard Mitchell had just been appointed Richmond's new planning director. It is now over 5 years later, and adoption of the General Plan is still a distant dream, now scheduled for sometime in 2011. We'll see.



Richmond General Plan Adoption Timeline
Richmond Planning Division – November 18, 2010

Date:	
State Department of Housing and Community Development Review CA HCD to review Draft Housing Element for compliance with State Housing Law (60 days)	Mid December, 2010
Draft Housing Element to Planning Commission (PC) for Comment Release Draft General Plan (DGP) Elements 1, 3-5, 7, 9, & 12	January 20, 2010
Release of DGP Elements 2, 6, 8, 10-11, 13-15 and Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)	February 7, 2011
45-Day Public Comment Period Public may provide comments on the DGP and DEIR	February 7, 2011 to March 24, 2011
Planning Commission Comment Hearing Public and Commissioners may provide comments on DEIR	March 17, 2011
Planning Commission Study Session 1 Public and Commissioners may provide comments on DGP Elements 1, 3-5, 7, 9 and 12	April 7, 2011
Planning Commission Study Session 2 Public and Commissioners may provide comments on DGP Elements 2, 6, 8, 10-11, and 13-15	April 21, 2011
Planning Commission Meeting Commission to provide a formal recommendation on the DGP and FEIR to City Council	May 5, 2011
City Council Meeting City Council to take action on FEIR and DGP	May 17, 2011
Optional City Council Meeting City Council to take action on FEIR and DGP	June 7, 2011

Quiet Zones

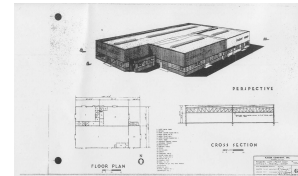
West 5 Quiet Zone extends from the BNSF grade crossing at Ohio Street to the grade crossing at Cutting Boulevard, and horn noise in this stretch probably affects more Richmond residents than any previous Quiet Zone. Its implementation was a mitigation measure for increased noise of rail traffic



serving the Honda Port of Entry, but it did not share the Port's sense of urgency. Hopefully, it will be completed and go into effect in 2011.

Shipyard 3 Buildings

Four of the six former Shipyard 3 historic buildings at Point Potrero Marine Terminal that are part of Rosie the Riveter WW II Home Front National Historical Park are empty and unused for any productive occupation. Although the Port has spent millions on high-tech Homeland security measures to prevent automobile theft (the Port's sole cargo), these national treasures have languished. 2011 will be their year.



Point Molate

The year 2011 will find some kind of resolution for Point Molate. It seems the casino plan has run out of steam. Plan B will either emerge and be embraced by the City, or the whole thing will become mired in litigation for years.



Maritime Center

Unless the rains never stop, the historic Maritime Center will be completed in the spring of 2011 and once again become a pre-school venue for a hundred kids, an office for Richmond Community Foundation and an interpretive center for Rosie the Riveter WW II Home Front National Historical Park



Crime

Maybe it's too much to ask for, but wouldn't it be great if Richmond's violent crime rate and its homicide rate continued to decline on 2011?

Chevron

Speaking of intransigence, the impasse between Chevron and CBE over permit conditions for the Hydrogen and Energy Renewal Project continues with the final negotiating session of 2010 bearing no edible fruit. No one really opposes the project for the increased efficiency and safety it brings to the refinery – not to mention the construction jobs. It's Chevron's future intentions with respect to processing heavier and dirtier crude that have this locked up. Maybe 2011 will deliver the key.



Happy New Year!

Tom Butt