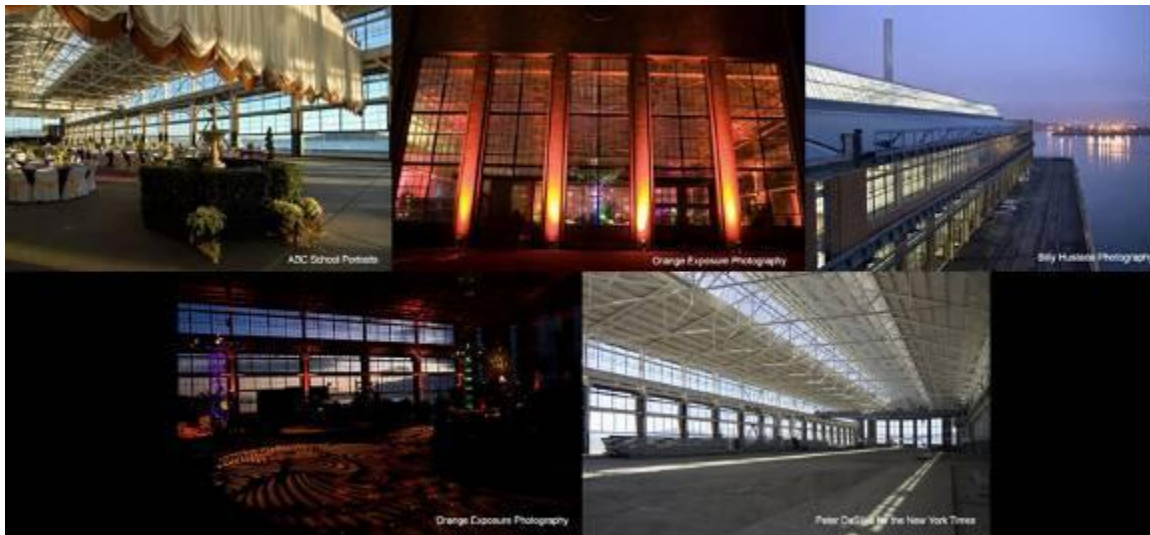

Richmond, California

Will Richmond Be Fine in 2009?



*Craneway Pavilion at Ford Point
Rehabilitation of the Ford Assembly Plant
Winner of 2008 National Trust for Historic Preservation Honor Award*

2008 Year End Review

Tom Butt, Richmond City Council Member
January 1, 2009

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Introduction

For several years, I have prepared detailed year-end evaluations 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. Since 2002, I have invited public participation, and I have shared the results on my E-FORUM.

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- At the end of 2002, I shared one of these priorities on the E-FORUM in [New Year's Resolution - A Full Court Press on Blight](#), January 3, 2003.
 - Following 2003, 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.
 - At the beginning of 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.
 - At the beginning of 2006 was [What Can We Fix in 2006?](#), January 1, 2006.
 - Next, 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?](#) January 1, 2008

I recommend you take a look at these previous E-Forums, and 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.](#)*

As before, I have censored nothing, which will surely offend some people. However, I value my reputation as an objective and equal opportunity critic, and I welcome responses, comments, arguments and debates. I especially solicit corrections.

One thing of particular note in 2008 is that two City Council members I served with, Richard Griffin and Charles Belcher, died within days of each other. See [Two Former Richmond City Council Members Die Within Days](#), August 13, 2008.

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 2008

Election Rebuffs Chevron, Shakes Up City Council

The November 4, 2008, election brought a sea change to Richmond politics. With the city Council shrinking from nine to seven members and five incumbents' terms up, it was bound to be a scramble. Tony Thurmond opted out to successfully run for the school board instead, leaving four incumbents and six newbies vying for three seats.

No one really knows what ultimately inspires Richmond voters, but Chevron and Measure T were the focus of the campaign. Nat Bates, John Marquez and Harpreet Sandhu were labeled as part of the "Chevron 5" who provided the majority vote to beat back the unsuccessful appeal of the Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project and pass the secretive Community Benefits Agreement.





Despite being outspent with Chevron money by an estimated factor of 200 to 1, Measure T and candidates Tom Butt and Jeff Ritterman prevailed. Only the durable Nat Bates kept the election from being an anti-Chevron rout.

Richmond always tends to be mixed bag, but it's interesting to look at how some of the endorsing media and organizations fared. This year's winners were the Sierra Club, *East Bay Express* and the *West County Times*. Although they agreed on the candidates, the *West County Times* split from the other two by opposing Measure T.



November 4, 2008, Richmond Campaign Endorsement Scores

Endorser	Endorsed Candidates	Endorsed Winners	Score
<i>The Richmond Globe</i>	Bates Marquez Sandhu Beckles	Bates	25%
<i>West County Times</i>	Butt Beckles Ritterman	Butt Ritterman	67%
<i>East Bay Express</i>	Butt Beckles Ritterman	Butt Ritterman	67%
Richmond Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee	Bates Marquez Sandhu	Bates	33%
Contra Costa County Democratic Party	Bates Marquez Sandhu	Bates	33%
Contra Costa Building and Construction Trades Council	Bates Marquez Sandhu Butt	Bates Butt	50%
Sierra Club	Butt Beckles Ritterman	Butt Ritterman	67%

For more information on the November 4, 2008, election and the campaign leading up to it, particularly Chevron and Measure T, see the following E-FORUMs, which also include virtually all of the print media coverage.

- [Chevron Offensive Continues into 2008](#)
January 1, 2008
- [Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project and Solar Energy](#), January 27, 2008
- [Trees and the Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project](#)
January 27, 2008
- [Whitewashing and Greenwashing the Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project](#), January 26, 2008



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- [Chevron Project Goes to Design Review Board Without Final EIR](#), January 24, 2008
 - [Air Board Community Meeting on the Chevron Energy & Hydrogen Renewal Project](#), January 30, 2008
 - [Design Review Board Scolds Chevron](#), February 6, 2008
 - [Chevron Reaps Massive Record Profits in 2007](#), February 2, 2008
 - [One Hand Giveth; the Other Taketh Away](#), February 2, 2008
 - [Design Review Board Conditionally Approves Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project](#), February 2, 2008
 - ["Roll On, Big Oil", from Chip Johnson in Today's Chronicle](#), February 8, 2008
 - [Those Who Ignore History Are Doomed to Repeat It](#), February 11, 2008
 - [AT 1.2 Million Pounds, Chevron is Region's Third Largest Polluter](#), February 22, 2008
 - [Mitigating Greenhouse Gases from the Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project](#), February 23, 2008
 - [Petition Drive for Refinery Tax Apparently Successful](#), March 1, 2008
 - [Richmond on the Precipice?](#) March 2, 2008
 - [Jerry Brown Remains Skeptical of Chevron EIR](#), March 8, 2008
 - [Who is Telling the Truth?](#) March 6, 2008
 - [SF Chronicle Blasts Chevron Project](#), March 18, 2008
 - [Richmond Chamber of Commerce Rolls Over for Chevron](#), March 17, 2008
 - [Staff Embarrasses Itself with Chevron CUP Recommendations](#), March 16, 2008
 - [Chevron Protest on March 15](#), March 13, 2008
 - [Leadership and Responsibility in the Chevron CUP](#), March 11, 2008
 - [Response to Chamber of Commerce Endorsement for Chevron Project](#), March 18, 2008
 - [Chevron Packs Council Chamber, Leaving Detractors Out in the Cold](#), March 22, 2008
 - [Comments on This \(Early\) Morning's Planning Commission Hearing on Chevron](#), March 21, 2008
 - [Planning Commission Continues Chevron Hearing Until April 10](#), March 21, 2008
 - [Chevron Project to Planning Commission Tonight](#), March 20, 2008
 - [Attorney General Letter to City Dated March 19, 2008](#), March 26, 2008
 - [Manufacturing Tax Qualifies for November Ballot](#), April 8, 2008
 - [Planning Commission Sends Project Back to have Holes Patched](#), April 11, 2008
 - [Chevron Hearing Continued Until June 5](#), April 10, 2008
 - [CBE Responds to City of Richmond Staff Report](#), April 9, 2008
 - [Richmond Staff Advises Quick and Dirty Approval of Chevron Project](#), April 8, 2008
 - [Myth of Pixar Loss Exploded](#), April 22, 2008
 - [See Steve Jobs Complain About Chevron](#), April 22, 2008
 - [Negotiating With Chevron](#), April 21, 2008
 - [Richmond Wants to Share in Chevron Profits](#), May 3, 2008
 - [Chevron Permit Will Be Based on Secret Information Inaccessible to Public](#), May 9, 2008
 - [No One Happy With Planning Commission Chevron Decision](#), June 21, 2008
 - [Torture Lawyer Lands at Chevron](#), June 20, 2008
 - [Planning Commission Approves Conditional Use Permit for Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project](#), June 20, 2008
 - [Chevron EIR Certification Appealed to City Council](#), June 19, 2008
 - [Response to Murphy Oil Company Scholarship Story](#), June 18, 2008
 - [If Chevron Could Only Emulate Murphy Oil Company](#), June 18, 2008



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- [Chevron Richmond Proposal Moves on to City Council](#), July 4, 2008
 - [Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project Agenda Report for July 15, 2008 City Council Appeal Hearing](#), July 11, 2008
 - [Prepping for the Chevron Appeal Hearing](#), July 10, 2008
 - [Council Members Defend Secret Chevron Consultant](#), July 9, 2008
 - [Richmond Could Face Lawsuit in Approval of Chevron Retrofit Plan](#), July 18, 2008
 - [Readers Respond to City Council Sellout](#), July 17, 2008
 - [City Council Replay Schedule on KCRT-28 and Media Coverage](#), July 17, 2008
 - [The Fix Is In - Viramontes Five Sell Richmond Down the River](#), July 17, 2008
 - [Chevron Proposed Community Benefits Agreement](#), July 16, 2008
 - [Chevron Appeal - A Report From The Front](#), July 16, 2008
 - [Poll Indicates Widespread Suspicion of Chevron Project Approval](#), July 14, 2008
 - [Ladies and Gentlemen, Start Your \(Political\) Engines](#), July 14, 2008
 - [Where's the Beef?](#) July 23, 2008
 - [Potential City Council Race Includes Ten](#), July 26, 2008
 - [McLaughlin and Butt Fire Back](#), July 26, 2008
 - [KOED: "This Week in Northern California" Profiles Chevron Decision](#), July 24, 2008
 - [V5 to Seize Control of Chevron Community Benefit Fund](#), July 27, 2008
 - [Public Outrage at Power Grab by Viramontes \(Chevron\) Five](#), July 31, 2008
 - ["It's a very bad situation when elected officials do not listen to the people they represent"](#), August 3, 2008
 - [Mayor Endorses Three For City Council](#), August 6, 2008
 - [Potential Council Candidate Pool Increase to 13](#), August 6, 2008
 - [Local Real Estate Newsletter Blasts the Viramontes 5 for Selling Out to Chevron](#)
August 10, 2008, [Still Time to Join the Party](#), August 11, 2008
 - [Contra Costa Times Skewers Viramontes Five For Chevron Agreement](#), August 22, 2008
 - [Opposition Research Firm Hired to Dig Up Dirt on Butt](#), August 25, 2008
 - [Butt, Beckles and Ritterman for City Council](#), August 25, 2008
 - [Opposition Research Firm Hired to Dig Up Dirt on Butt](#), August 25, 2008
 - [Bates Plays the Economic Development Card](#), August 25, 2008
 - [Chevron 5 Backpeddles From Control of Chevron Fund; City Attorney Concedes Brown Act Violation](#), August 30, 2008
 - [Opponents Sue Richmond, Chevron Over Plan to Replace Equipment at Refinery](#), September 4, 2008
 - [Chevron Agreement Draws Lawsuit - But Not From Chevron](#), September 4, 2008
 - [Council Rescinds Controversial Appointments and Ratifies Chevron Community Benefit Agreement](#), September 3, 2008
 - [Smoke Stacks Spew Green in Richmond](#), September 8, 2008
 - [More on Chevron Project Lawsuit](#), September 6, 2008
 - [Chevron Complicit in Corruption of Oil Regulatory Agency](#), September 11, 2008
 - [Candidates "Recumbant" for Chevron](#), September 10, 2008
 - [Audio Interview With Tom Butt by the Globe](#), September 11, 2008
 - [Bates Piggybacks on Obama](#), September 11, 2008
 - [Mythbusting Measure T](#), September 17, 2008



- [Email Regarding Chevron Recalled](#), September 18, 2008
- [Election 2008 - Richmond's Political Armageddon?](#) September 20, 2008
- [How "Soft Money" Works in Richmond](#), September 23, 2008
- [Richmond Election Update](#), September 26, 2008
- [Controversial Endorsement by County Democrats](#), September 29, 2008
- [Political Mud Slinging Begins - Link Fixed](#), October 3, 2008
- [West County Times Series on Council Candidates](#), October 4, 2008
- [Tom Butt Campaign Update](#), October 8, 2008
- [Outcry Over Richmond Campaign Mailer](#), October 7, 2008
- [SF Chronicle on Richmond Measure T](#), October 9, 2008
- [New Political Newsletter Includes Surprising Measure T Supporter](#), October 9, 2008
- [Chevron and Revenue for Richmond - Pacific Institute Releases New Report](#), October 10, 2008
- [Former Mayor Rosemary Corbin Endorses Butt, Beckles and Ritterman](#), October 13, 2008
- [City Council to Take Up Veracity of Claims in Campaign Piece Authored by RPOA](#), October 11, 2008
- [Final Push for Tom Butt Campaign. Can you Help?](#) October 22, 2008
- [Richmond Pre-Election News from West County Times](#), October 22, 2008
- [Where We Belong - Or Not](#), October 22, 2008
- [Tallerico Drops Out of City Council Race](#), October 22, 2008
- [Contra Costa Times Endorses Butt, Beckles and Ritterman](#), October 22, 2008
- [Clarification Regarding CCDCC Meeting](#), October 21, 2008
- [Chronicle Columnist Questions Bates as Candidate for Change](#), October 21, 2008
- [Tension Grows Over Police Mailer](#), October 20, 2008
- [Measure T Rising](#), October 20, 2008
- [Debunking Richmond Campaign 2008](#), October 19, 2008
- [Scammed!](#), October 25, 2008
- [Even VP Nominee and Alaska Governor Sarah Palin Goes Where Richmond Chamber Fears to Tread](#), October 27, 2008
- [Chevron More Than Doubles Last Years' 3rd Quarter Profits](#), November 1, 2008
- [Yoga - Oddball or Hardball?](#) November 1, 2008
- [Bates, Marquez and Sandhu Lead in Campaign Spending](#), November 1, 2008
- [East Bay Express Endorses Butt, Beckles, Ritterman and Measure T](#), October 30, 2008
- [East Bay Express - This Election Is About Big Oil](#), October 29, 2008
- [Last Week for Tom Butt Campaign. Can you help?](#) October 29, 2008
- [Find Answers to Your Last-Minute Questions, and Even Find Your Polling Place or Vote-By-Mail Drop Off Location Using Your Cell/PDA](#), November 3, 2008
- [Associated Press Coverage of Richmond Election](#), November 3, 2008
- [Richmond Election Results](#), November 5, 2008
- [Updated Election Counts In](#), November 7, 2008
- [Vote Counts Will Continue to Thanksgiving](#), November 12, 2008
- [Updated Election Results](#), November 12, 2008
- [New Vote Totals Posted Today](#), November 14, 2008
- [From East Bay Express - Richmond Voters to Chevron: Enough!](#) November 14, 2008
- [Final Vote Counts Posted](#), November 25, 2008



Contra Costa Elections Division

2008 General Election
Website last updated 12/2/2008
5:18:40 PM PST

Registered Voters: 527,145
Ballots Cast: 456,876
Voter Turnout: 86.67 %

Precincts Completely Reported: 854 of 854

Official Results

Crime Plummets in Richmond

After an inauspicious start, Richmond ended 2008 with homicides down 40.4 percent compared to 2007, and violent crime overall down 14.3% as of December 29, 2008. All crimes are down 10.8%. I attribute this to the combination of law enforcement and crime prevention strategies provided by neighborhood policing and the programs of the Office of Neighborhood Safety.



Clearly, Richmond's crime is unacceptably high, and any homicide is too much, but it's nice to be heading the right direction.

- [Richmond Scores Nearly \\$1 Million on Violence Prevention Grants!](#) March 3, 2008
- [4/8/08 Boston Ceasefire Team Visit](#), April 6, 2008
- [Anti-Graffiti Training Session](#), May 5, 2008
- [All the Good News That's Fit to Print](#), May 10, 2008
- [Discrimination Claims Against Magnus Start to Break Up](#), June 7, 2008
- [Richmond Wins 2007 Murder Competition](#), June 11, 2008
- [KCBS On Richmond Crime Reduction](#), July 3, 2008
- [Summer 2008 Message from the Chief for RPD Personnel](#), July 24, 2008
- [Your RPD at Work](#), November 2, 2008
- [Summary of Today's "Deep C" Gang Operation in Richmond - Chief's Remarks](#), November 13, 2008
- [Most Dangerous City Rankings Deceptive](#), November 25, 2008

CITYWIDE PROFILE December 29, 2008 YTD			
CRIME STATISTICS			
VIOLENT CRIMES	YTD 2008	YTD 2007	% change
HOMICIDE	28	47	-40.43%
RAPE	35	32	9.38%
ROBBERY	531	571	-7.01%
AGGRAVATED ASSAULTS *	391	500	-21.80%
TOTAL VIOLENT	985	1150	-14.35%
PROPERTY CRIMES	YTD 2008	YTD 2007	% change
BURGLARY	1752	1762	-0.57%
AUTO THEFT	1835	2222	-17.42%
ARSON	40	39	2.56%
TOTAL PROPERTY	3627	4023	-9.84%
TOTAL PART I (VIOLENT+PROPERTY)	4612	5173	-10.84%

Richmond – A Cool Place to Live

Whether your mantra is economic development, jobs, tourism or education, Richmond's ability to attract businesses, residents and visitors to pay the bills for the services we expect is largely dependent on whether people want to be here or not. The image of our city and the amenities it offers are important. Setting Richmond apart, in a positive way from other Bay Area cities and making it a "[cool place to live](#)" may be the most important thing we do.

Richmond made a lot of progress in 2008 toward being a cool place to live, leveraging its assets of 32 miles of shoreline, thousands of acres of regional parks, the Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park, arts and music festivals, a wealth of history and historic places and a "green" mayor. The following is an amazing amalgam of 109 interesting, upbeat and good news stories about Richmond places and events that play well regionally, attract people and make residents feel good.

1. [Lighthouse Baby Arrives](#), January 3, 2008
2. [Volunteer January 19 for Bay Trail and Greenway Improvement Projects](#), January 6, 2008
3. [Chronicle Watch Solicits Help for Greenway's Transformation](#), ; January 14, 2008
4. [New Home Front Oral Histories Available in Richmond and Bancroft Libraries](#), January 20, 2008
5. [Greenway Service Project Wildly Successful](#), January 23, 2008
6. [Historic Ford Plant Anchors Waterfront Economic Boom in Richmond](#), January 30, 2008 [Reception for New Rosie Chief of Interpretation](#), January 29, 2008



7. [Free Garden Tour Signups Now Open](#), February 6, 2008
8. [Martin Luther King Day of Service on the Richmond Greenway Wrap Up](#), February 7, 2008
9. [Day 2 at New Partners for Smart Growth Features Richmond General Plan Health Element](#), February 8, 2008
10. [Richmond Revives Historic Preservation Awards](#), February 15, 2008
11. [Richmond Reaps Millions in Bay Trail Grants](#), February 15, 2008
12. [Richmond's Ford Assembly Building Featured in International Architectural Journal](#), February 21, 2008
13. ["Rivets" Rosie the Riveter Musical at Local Theater](#), February 21, 2008
14. [Richmond Art Center's Acclaimed "The Art of Living Black and Emory Douglas"](#), February 22, 2008
15. [Black WWII History Play: \(Jovelyn Richard\) at THE MARSH through March 8](#), February 23, 2008
16. [War on Weeds Cleans Up Bay Trail](#), February 23, 2008
17. [SF Chronicle Article Features Richmond Greenway](#), February 22, 2008
18. [Study Recycling or Just Get On With It?](#) February 29, 2008
19. [Preserve WCCUSD Funding for Maritime Center](#), March 1, 2008
20. [Shaping Up the Shipyards](#), March 9, 2008
21. [Richmond Leads in Bay Trail Construction](#), March 23, 2008
22. [Greening \(or Groaning\) of Richmond](#), March 27, 2008
23. [The Light of Your Life - Volunteer at East Brother Lighthouse](#), April 2, 2008
24. [Public Input Meeting for Measure AA Extension - April 9 Richmond 7 PM](#), April 5, 2008
25. [Spring 08 National Park Service Newsletter](#), April 5, 2008
26. [Richmond Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meets April 7, 2008](#), April 6, 2008
27. [Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour Still Needs About 40 Volunteers](#), April 14, 2008



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28. [Richmond Closes the Green Gap](#), April 24, 2008
29. [Junior Ranger Day on the Richmond Greenway - Learn About Victory Gardens](#), April 27, 2008
30. [Bringing Back The Natives Garden Tour This Coming Sunday](#), April 28, 2008
31. ['3-Minute Success Story' on the Point Richmond Gateway](#), April 27, 2008
32. [KPIX PSA's and Clips About Richmond Nurseries](#), May 2, 2008
33. [Boat Ramp Street Grand Opening](#), May 5, 2008
34. [An Island in Time - Volunteer at East Brother Lighthouse May 10, 2008](#), May 5, 2008
35. [2008 City of Richmond Historic Preservation Awards](#), May 7, 2008
36. [Richmond Recognizes Efforts at Historic Preservation](#), May 14, 2008
37. [Point Richmond Stroll Thursday May 15](#), May 12, 2008
38. [Gardening to Victory](#), May 22, 2008
39. [City Receives Grant for Atchison Village Presentation](#), June 4, 2008
40. [June 14 Volunteer Day at East Brother Lighthouse](#), June 8, 2008
41. [Point Richmond Music Festival Kicks Off 8th Season This Friday, June 13](#), June 8, 2008
42. [A Richmond Weekend](#), June 15, 2008
43. [Ford Assembly Building Wins National Trust for Historic Preservation Honor Award](#), June 17, 2008
44. [Richmond As A Transformational Example](#), June 17, 2008
45. [Chronicle Profiles Richmond](#), June 30, 2008
46. [Attention Urban Farmers - Washington Elementary School Garden Work Day!](#) June 26, 2008
47. [Main Street's Free Summer Concert Series](#), June 24, 2008
48. [Fireworks Tomorrow Night - Rosie Summer 2008 Newsletter Posted](#), July 2, 2008
49. [Point Richmond Music Festival Returns on Friday, July 11](#), July 9, 2008
50. [Cool Off at East Brother Island This Weekend](#), July 9, 2008
51. [The Verdict is In - Get a new Logo and Slogan!](#) July 7, 2008
52. [Slogans and Logos - Time for a Change?](#) July 6, 2008
53. [Richmond's Bay Trail Continues to Expand](#), July 4, 2008
54. [National Park Service Job Opportunity for Youth](#), July 24, 2008
55. [Richmonders Star in Cabaret at the ASF Playhouse](#), July 27, 2008
56. [Richmond Garden Club Event August 2](#), July 31, 2008
57. [August Volunteer Saturday at East Brother Lighthouse](#), August 4, 2008
58. [Big Home Front Events Coming This Fall in Richmond](#), August 6, 2008
59. [Announcing Rosie's new Chief of Cultural Resources](#), August 5, 2008
60. [Miguel Dimas Joins Rosie Staff](#), August 13, 2008
61. ["Richmond at War" Exhibit Opens Today at Richmond Museum of History](#), August 24, 2008
62. [Immediate Job Openings for Young Richmond Women at Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park](#), August 25, 2008
63. [Community Supported Agriculture Coordinator Job Opportunity](#), August 27, 2008
64. [Rivets At Kaiser Shipyards on Red Oak World Premiere](#), September 6, 2008
65. [The Ford Building Takes Off](#), September 5, 2008
66. [Don't Miss Point Richmond Summer Music Festival Friday September 13](#), September 9, 2008
67. [Volunteer at East Brother Lighthouse Saturday, September 13](#), September 9, 2008



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68. [Celebrate 10 Years with the Red Oak Victory](#), September 11, 2008
69. [Vote for Vetrazzo: Boost Richmond Green Business](#), September 12, 2008
70. [Public Meeting to Kick Off Historic Survey of Richmond's Oldest Neighborhood](#), September 17, 2008
71. [Indian Statue Day Arts and Music Festival](#), September 19, 2008
72. [Music on the Main Finale](#), September 21, 2008
73. [HOME FRONT FESTIVAL - Coming Oct 3 - 5th](#), September 20, 2008
74. [Point Richmond Music's Season Finale This Friday](#), September 24, 2008
75. [Volunteer at the Home Front Festival by the Bay](#), September 24, 2008
76. [Taking Back Richmond One Park at a Time](#), September 28, 2008
77. [Butt Challenges City Council Members and Candidates to Run](#), September 27, 2008
78. [Home Front Festival by the Bay a Resounding Success, Free Homefront Festival This Weekend in Richmond](#), October 3, 2008
79. [Ghosts of Winehaven - Rare Opportunity to Party at Mysterious Point Molate and Promote Peace in Richmond](#), October 9, 2008
80. [Bay Trail Loop to be Previewed Saturday](#), October 16, 2008
81. [Grant to Connect Nystrom School With Richmond Greenway With Class I Trail](#), October 16, 2008
82. [Richmond Art Center - Fall Artists' Reception, featuring Neighborhood Public Art Projects](#), October 14, 2008
83. [Richmond Greenway and Lincoln School Garden](#), October 24, 2008
84. [Richmond's Ford Building Earns National Award](#), October 27, 2008
85. [Veterans' Day on the Red Oak Victory](#), November 2, 2008
86. [In Case You Missed the Fabulous Winehaven Fundraiser](#), November 3, 2008
87. [Lighthouse Seeking Volunteers](#), November 6, 2008
88. [Thanks For Supporting Regional Parks and Trails!](#) November 5, 2008
89. [Whitney Dotson Wins East Bay Regional Park District Ward 1 Board Seat](#), November 5, 2008
90. [Solar Richmond's Next Live Solar Install on Nov. 14th!](#) November 7, 2008
91. [Richmond's 'Industrial Chic' Ford Craneway Becomes Regional Draw](#), November 11, 2008
92. [Join Us to Help Plan the Future of Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front NHP!](#) November 10, 2008
93. [Upcoming Tours and Events at Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park](#), November 9, 2008
94. [The Watershed Project Upcoming Events!](#) November 13, 2008
95. [Help Bring National Recognition to a Local Green Business!](#) November 13, 2008
96. [World War II-era Housing Complex to be Transformed and Co-Developer for Richmond Prewar Nursery Named](#), November 16, 2008
97. [History Museum Showcases New Exhibits](#), November 15, 2008
98. [Pulitzer Prize-winning Author at Richmond Library](#), November 18, 2008
99. [Richmond BUILD Wins 2008 FBI Director's Community Leadership Award](#), November 17, 2008
100. [East Brother Lighthouse Innkeeper Position Available in 2009](#), November 25, 2008
101. [Richmond's Jason Becker on ABC TV](#), November 28, 2008
102. [A Point Richmond Thanksgiving on KGO](#), November 28, 2008
103. [Chronicle Covers Lighthouse Keeper Search](#), November 30, 2008
104. [Nonprofit Helps Richmond Students Learn of City's Natural Beauty, Environment](#), December 1, 2008



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105. [Applications Still Being Accepted for Lighthouse Keepers](#), December 7, 2008
 106. [Watershed Nursery Welcome to Richmond](#), December 17, 2008
 107. [Richmond Greenway News - Coordinator Job Announcement](#), December 17, 2008
 108. [Richmond Green Business Gets \\$1 Million Boost](#), December 13, 2008
 109. [Trash to Treasure in Richmond](#), December 29, 2008



Wishes Come True

At the beginning of 2008, I expressed hope that the following would occur and committed to work to see that they did. Some have been successful and are so noted. Others are still outstanding:

1. I hope to see a dramatic reduction in homicides. **28 homicides is nothing to be proud of, but I'll take a 40.4% reduction any day.**
2. I hope to see Planning and Building Regulations fully implement the recommendations of the Zucker Systems Report, do plan checks in two weeks, provide a usable set of Design Review Guidelines, actually do code enforcement and hire an architect to staff Design Review applications. I hope that Maria Viramontes' war on Design Review will find a workable resolution. **Not much improvement here except for adoption of Design Review Guidelines for Heritage Homes. The proposed merger of the Planning Commission and Design Review was a distraction, but I think with the new Council, the merger may be dead.**
3. I hope to see code enforcement become fully effective throughout the City and at least remove the [broken window syndrome](#) as a contributing cause of crime in Richmond. **A new assistant city attorney to focus on code enforcement and a new code enforcement manager were hired, both positive developments. OBAT (One Block at a Time Making a Difference, September 13, 2008), [Richmond Prosecutes Illegal Dumping Suspects](#), November 2, 2008; and [City Attorney to Crack Down on Railroads](#), November 26, 2008) are good signs. The effort seems to be ramping up.**
4. I hope that the City of Richmond prevails in the struggle with Chevron for dollars with an outcome that includes a failure of Chevron's property tax appeal, an audit that finds Chevron underpaid its utility user tax for the last two years, a provision for Chevron to build the Bay Trail across I-580 as part of the long wharf lease and a set of conditional use permit conditions for the Energy and Hydrogen Renewal project that includes \$300 million for environmental justice mitigations. **The property tax appeal is still ongoing as is the City's effort to collect unpaid utility user taxes. The Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project approval included \$61 million on paper, but the reality is about 20% of that. Despite the City Council sellout, a resolution to the Bay Trail route and construction seems to be within grasp.**
5. I hope to see construction start on rehabilitation of The Plunge, the Maritime Center and the historic buildings at Shipyard 3. **The Plunge is under construction, but the outgoing Council blocked the Shipyard 3 project. It looks promising, however, with the new Council.**
6. I hope to see the Richmond Greenway completed. **Phase 2 is under contract and scheduled for construction in the spring of 2009.**
7. I hope to see a progressive and community oriented City Council majority come out of the 2008 elections. **Done!**
8. I hope the petition drive for the manufacturing tax is successful and that it wins in the 2008 election. **Done!**
9. I hope the Home Front Festival is bigger and better than the successful 2007 event. **Done!**
10. I hope that a way is found to keep the North Richmond Shoreline as open space. **The general plan is still ongoing, but prospects for preserving the shoreline have risen with the new Council.**



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11. I hope the City can develop the capability to follow prevailing means and standards for evaluating the condition of its infrastructure, designing rehabilitation and maintenance projects, conducting public bids and providing appropriate management, oversight and inspection. **I think we are seeing some improvement, but it is difficult to pinpoint it.**
 12. I hope the City can adopt a plan to improve the condition of its streets over the next ten years to a minimum PCI of 60. See [Want Better Streets? Support Measure T](#), September 21, 2008. **“City leaders acknowledge the roads are a problem and say they are trying to pump more funds into improvements. Officials last year spent more than \$10 million, substantially more than the \$3 million or so they spent annually up until 2005. This year, they plan to spend about \$7 million. The city's average Pavement Condition Index rating has climbed from 46 in 2006, when Richmond ranked second to last in a Bay Area-wide streets assessment, to 58 this year, according to a preliminary report from a city consultant. The 12-point jump is expected to be enough to push the city out of the "poor" roads category into "fair."**

Best and Worst of 2008

Tom Butt Nominations for the Best of 2008

In addition to the Top Three Richmond Stories of 2008 and Wishes Come True, both of which include lots of good news, my choice for additional best of Richmond in 2008 includes the following, not in any particular order:

- Although the future may bring belt tightening, Richmond has survived the first year of the recession in remarkable fiscal condition, thanks to a good leadership team. A City Council and public employee unions that bit the bullet in 2004 and a uniquely diversified municipal revenue stream. See [Richmond Fiscal Strength Contrasts With Many Cities and Counties](#), February 22, 2008; [Richmond and Vallejo - Now and Then](#), May 20, 2008. The City Council adopted a balanced budget for FY 2008-2009. See <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.asp?NID=183> for all City budgets on line.
- Probably because of complexity and widespread opposition, the proposed move to merge the Planning Commission and Design Review Board did not happen in 2008. See [Planning Commission/Design Review Board Merger Vote Expected March 18, 2008](#), March 3, 2008; [Viramontes Responds on PC/DRB Merger](#), March 4, 2008; [City Council to Consider Enabling Diminished Design Review Board](#), July 4, 2008, [Design Review as we Know it About to Bite the Dust](#), July 27, 2008; [Tomorrow Night - Design Review Debate at 5:00 PM; Old Richmond Historic Building Survey at 7:00 PM](#), September 24, 2008; [Public Remains Skeptical of Design Review Board and Planning Commission Merger](#), September 28, 2008.
- A planned casino just outside the Richmond City limits may have hit a snag when litigation successfully overturned Richmond's conditional municipal services agreement. See [Planned Casino in N. Richmond Nears Hurdle](#); April 3, 2008; [Judge Finds City Council Action On Casino Illegal](#), August 22, 2008; [More on Casino Municipal Services Agreement](#), August 26, 2008; [Court's Richmond Casino Decision Awaited](#), August 30, 2008.
- Lt. Governor Garamendi crafted a proposed solution to the Bay Trail impasse at Chevron which will come back for another hearing before the State lands Commission in late January. See [Email State Lands Commission Re Bay Trail Mitigation for Chevron Lease](#), November 21, 2008; [Last Best Chance for Bay Trail at Chevron Long Wharf?](#) November 26, 2008; [Bay Trail Advocates Want State to Help Close Gap in Richmond](#), November 30, 2008; [Richmond Scores First Round Victory in Battle With Chevron Over Bay Trail at I-580](#), December 6, 2008.



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- After years of fighting the community, Toll Brothers has quietly slipped out of Richmond, relinquishing the land approved for an apartment complex at Marina Bay and abandoning any further progress on its Point Richmond Shores project. Hopefully when the real estate market heats up again, developers will be held to higher standards.
 - Although the General Plan process has completed most of the public participation process, it should be back, formalized for adoption in 2009. I think the new City Council will be more open than the old City Council to some of the more creative directions the planning process explored.
 - I still get mad every time I think about the inoperable window saga at the rehabilitated City Hall, but the project has proceeded within schedule and budget, and City staff and City Council will move back in March 2009. The Memorial Auditorium was completed in time for the Snowball and Senior Ball just before Christmas.
 - Whitney Dotson, a Richmond resident and champion of shoreline preservation was elected to the East Bay Regional Parks District Board of Directors.



"Islands of the Richmond San Rafael Bridge" – Red Rock, East Brother and West Brother

Tom Butt Nominations for Worst of 2008

My nominations for the worst of the City of Richmond in 2008 include the following, not in any particular order:

- After more than a year since I brought it to the attention of city staff that all pipeline franchise agreements in Richmond have expired, no resolution is in



sight. See [Richmond Still Searching for Franchise Agreements](#), January 10, 2008; [Updating Pipeline Franchises Stymies City Attorney](#), April 23, 2008

- After establishing several Quiet Zones in Richmond in previous years, activity for future Quiet Zones has slowed. While generally observing established Quiet Zones, BNSF continues to thumb its nose at residents with illegal and disrespectful horn blowing at crossing not yet within Quiet Zones. Union Pacific continues to maintain public nuisances on its lands in Richmond and refuses to abate graffiti. Railroads and people who work for them are, as MSNBC's Keith Olbermann says, "the worst people in the world." See [Railroad Kills Off Hope for Spring Flowers](#), January 10, 2008; [June 1 Increase in Long Trains Through South Richmond](#), May 29, 2008; [Long Trains to Increase in Richmond?](#) June 7, 2008.
- After an ambitious start intended to preserve historic buildings at former Shipyard 3 and turn a profit for the City, the City Council suspended an effort to find adaptive reuses. See [City of Richmond Seeks Development Partner for Prime Waterfront Historic Properties](#), February 15, 2008.
- A continuing string of bad EIR's that confound the review of projects. Notable in 2008 were the EIRs for the Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project and the Honda port of Entry Project. Both have drawn CEQA lawsuits that could have been avoided with accurate environmental impact analysis and appropriate mitigations.



E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best of 2008

- *Removal of Marquez and Sandhu from City Council with reelection of Butt and election of Ritterman.*
- *In summary, I'm highly optimistic about Richmond's future. I'm most happy that you got back into office and one of your recommended folks replaced one of "5", and measure T will bring desperately funds into Richmond's future. I'm excited about the City Manager and Chief of Police.*
- *Tom Butt's continued support of Atchison Village. All community housing groups are imperiled by the fact that they are dependent on consensus to agree to pay for the upkeep of ever-aging buildings. Since AV has the advice and support of the National Park, which Butt was instrumental in acquiring, we can work with this situation better than most.*
- *We continue to be very intrigued and encouraged by the use of solar energy.*
- *The passage of Measure T.*
- *Richmond Little League baseball. Contact Larry Lewis at RPAL for more info.*
- *I must also include, however, that Richmond, overall, is slowly getting to be a better place in which to live. For one, I'm absolutely delighted that our beloved Standard Oil, will be donating some big bucks to the city's treasury (so some of these issues I'm raising may even be able to be addressed.) And that the overall reputation of the city seems slowly to be getting better, though we still have a way to go!.*
- *I should thank you so very much for your years of caring about our city - and communicating both the good and the not so good about our city, with members of the community! Probably should also thank your son, who's the major domo in your architect firm, thus allowing you the additional free time to do the research that's evident in many of your columns! I look forward to the addition of Jeff Ritterman on the council, and the reduction of it to 7 members. Should be an interesting 2009!*
- *Passage of the citizens' initiative Measure T, a.k.a. A Fair Share for Richmond. It sent a strong message that the democratic process works when people recognize where revenue can lawfully and fairly be obtained from a source that*



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- can clearly afford it, in order to uplift the lives of those who are in such great need.
 - Certainly one of the best things is the passage of Measure T! And getting you and Jeff Ritterman elected/re-elected is up there too.
 - Tom and Jeff win
 - Measure T wins
 - The huge numbers of residents who turned out for Chevron hearings
 - Large numbers who volunteered in the elections locally, even though it was a turning point election nationally
 - Citizens voted for Measure T and you and the doc



E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Worst of 2008

- Sell out to Chevron and its Renewal Project by Viramontes, Bates, Lopez, Marquez and Sandhu with their back room deal for a defective Community Benefits Agreement and their egregious attempt to anoint themselves to dole out funds to their supporters.
- Chevron tax is good, but due to economy may not be what you expect in the near future. Don't spend it yet!
- Trail across the Freeway is important. Richmond should get even more from Chevron instead of selling land for an inflated price to make their contribution look more generous.
- The corrupt majority of the City Council, which gave Chevron its pound of our flesh.
- The threat of a casino on Point Molate, promoted with the exact same promises that promoters always use, more jobs, more tax money to the City. As if Chevron has taught Richmond citizens nothing.
- Chevron expansion approval
- Nat Bates' racist, sleazy campaign; and especially that he got away with it!
- Racist RPD union hit piece mailer
- City departments and others on the council let Chevron expand to pollute Richmond more.
- As usual, the Staff pushes through another typical strip mall in the Target/MacDonald stuff. Someday, maybe we will get something with a better, more up-to-date land use pattern. But, to add icing to the cake, they also allow the strip mall folks to get their own red circular "Target" sign at the SP Avenue/Barrett off-ramp pointing west. Can I get one pointing east to my office? I suppose that this sign is symbolic in pointing west to City Hall. What is the real target? Might it be the building without windows that do not open?
- There were many worsts: Crippling of the Planning Commission, and almost killing the Design Review Board. Support for not only a casino at Pt. Molate, but one in North Richmond, too! Grovelling before Chevron. Refusing to require Chevron to provide the missing link in the Bay Trail. I just always expected the 2008 majority on the City Council to do the wrong thing... very depressing.



E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best 2008 Development Projects

- None nominated.

E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Worst 2008 Development Projects

Point Molate

- *Casino on Point Molate. It should be PARK. Read editorial in Chronicle Tuesday about Casinos. Levine is pitching lots of promises, but can he fulfill?*

E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best 2008 Organizations

TRAC

- *TRAC, the Trails for Richmond Action Committee for effective, steadfast work toward completing the San Francisco Bay Trail in Richmond.*

Neighborhood Councils

- *Organizations that do the most for Richmond: Neighborhood councils!*



E-Forum Reader Nominations for Best City Employees

Bill Lindsay

- *Bill Lindsay for everything that he does so well, including going to the State Lands Commission for help in requiring Chevron to help pay for building a safe Bay Trail connection with Point Molate.*



Jim Matzorkis

- *Port of Richmond and Port Director Jim Matzorkis for increasing port revenues by bringing auto imports to Point Potrero Marine Terminal while working to complete the Bay Trail and provide public access to Rosie The Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park sites.*



Tony Norris

- *Parks and Landscape Dept and Superintendent Tony Norris for making our parks and streets attractive.*



Chris Magnus

- *Police Chief Magnus, for the consistently outstanding job he's doing at busting criminals and gangs... and taking novel approaches to chronic problems.*

Rich Davidson

- *My pick for best employee is Rich Davidson. He always responds promptly, and in good humor, although I know that he is overworked. His shepherding of the Plunge reconstruction is worthy of praise.*



Tom Butt

- *Tom Butt, a world class City Councilman, who by an amazing turn of good fortune (for us Richmond residents) happens to be on the Richmond City Council*



City Employees Nominated as Worst by E-FORUM Readers

Janet Harbin

- *Janet Harbin Principal Current Planner in Planning Dept. for ignoring public input and never returning phone calls.*

Unnamed

- *Whoever dreamed up the revision of the General Plan, including trying to rezone Point Isabel area for high-density commercial. Don't any of you guys ever consider the negative impacts you are imposing on residents in the city and nearby areas?? Increased *traffic congestion* alone should make that Pt. Isabel scheme fall by the wayside. It's a wonder El Cerrito does not sue you all in court--maybe they haven't yet heard of all the proposed development that will increase gridlock on their already-gridlocked main arteries and city streets!!*

Best and Worst City Departments, Policies and Services

City Departments, Policies and Services Nominated Best by E-FORUM

Police

- *The department that tags derelict cars. Phone in, leave license number and address, the car is tagged. If owner doesn't move the car, a tow truck does within 72 hrs. Wow!*
- *Police officers of Beat 1 for an amazing job of cleaning up the street crime problems in the Point Richmond area. I won't mention particular officers because I believe that they prefer to be regarded as a team working together (but I could easily mention several exceptional officers)*



Public Works

- *Graffiti cleanup crew for cleaning up the horrible mess of graffiti that used to besmirch Point Richmond*

Parks and Landscaping

- *I have 2 mature liquid amber (trees) in front of my house - in the strip between the sidewalk and my street. Sometime - last year or the beginning of this - a large branch of one of the trees "hit" the curb, and blocked my drive. I called and someone from Richmond's Parks & Landscaping Division quickly came and removed the limb. And yes, I was very grateful!*



Tom Butt E-FORUM

- *Enjoy your e-mails!*

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

Business Licensing

- *Business licensing. Neighbor is running a business out of his home without a license--verified by Business Licensing office. That office does nothing. A few years back another neighbor ran an auto repair service out of his garage--reported and no City action. How much City revenue is missed with this inertia?*



Parks and Landscaping

- *I also asked that arborist Carroll Holthaus assess both liquid ambers, as he hasn't seen them for a number of years, and do a tree limb "trim," thus reducing the possibilities of another limb from falling, and possibly damaging a vehicle parked on the street, or even a person. To date, to my knowledge: he's never called, or "seen the trees." and there's not been any fresh "cuts" on either of these trees.*



Planning and Building Services

- *Planning and Building Services for advocacy of poorly conceived development projects at the expense of Richmond residents.*

Police

- *The speed limit increases on the Richmond portion of Carlson. The autos don't go 35 mph, but rack it up to sometimes 45 mph or greater; many in anticipation of accessing i-80 north. There are small children living on Carlson, who have no space to play except on the sidewalk. I've seen balls roll onto Carlson, and kids running onto the street. It's only a matter of time until some child may be maimed or killed.*



Public Works

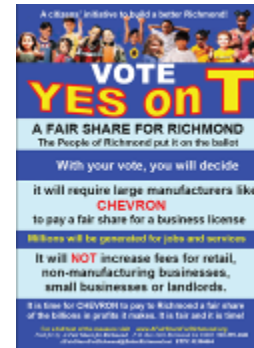
- *I live just off of Carlson Blvd. Though the city of El Cerrito keeps its portion of Carlson in v. Good condition, I know immediately when I reach the Richmond portion! It's the repetitive pot holes that repeatedly appear!*
- *I think it sucks that Richmond randomly tickets (not every month) cars which are parked on the street on street sweeping days but also randomly doesn't sweep the streets on the designated days. I'm not sitting here watching every month but I do sweep some twigs to the end of my driveway to check to see if they and the other debris nearby gets swept. Sometimes it does and sometimes it doesn't. Why is it so arbitrary?*



Predictions and Wishes

2009 Predictions from E-FORUM Readers

- Five to six miles of new Bay Trail will be built in Richmond during 2009 bringing the total to over 30 miles.
- Chevron will sue the city to wipe out Measure T, causing a prolonged court battle that the city can ill afford.
- City officials will tell Annex residents that Carlson Blvd will be fixed in the summer of 2009. Just like the summer of 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2008. Meanwhile Carlson crumbles into the bay and no one really cares.
- Chevron will spend \$26,000,000 on lawyers fighting implementation of Prop T rather than just paying their prop T assessment.
- Chevron will acquiesce to the Bay Trail over their long wharf pipeline but charge a \$3.00 toll to cross it for 'security reasons'.
- The City will sell itself to Upstream/Harrah's for \$1.00 for a massive casino city and make Nat Bates their Tribal Chief.
- One of the issues which I see that's absolutely needed, is a year-round school and after-school program for every minor child:- first grade thru high school + available summer sessions (also in all grades!) And then the availability of sustainable entry-level jobs! That would be heaven! But I'm a realist - and know this won't happen "over-night!"
- I have high hopes for the new majority on the City Council. For the first time in memory, a majority will listen to the people who actually live in Richmond, instead of those who come here to make a buck and then return to their own communities where they wouldn't put up with what they expect us to put up with. I am expecting a good Planning Commission, a good, separate, Design Review Board, and a new General Plan which reflects the principles of Smart Growth and protection of the environment. Too bad it's too late for openable windows for City Hall.



How did E-FORUM Readers 2008 Predictions turn out?

There were none

Tom Butt Wishes for 2009

1. The City of Richmond will weather the recession without any significant reductions in programs and services, and there will be no layoffs.
2. All of the potential revenue streams from Chevron, including Measure T, delinquent utility user tax proceeds and the Community Benefits Agreement will kick in, and Chevron will fail in their attempt to lower their property tax appraisal.
3. The organizations that brought the CEQA lawsuit on the Chevron Energy and Hydrogen Renewal Project will succeed in a settlement that brings significant additional environmental protections and mitigations.
4. Crime will continue to decrease.
5. The historic Civic Center will be successfully completed and reoccupied.
6. A plan to rehabilitate the historic buildings at Point Potrero Marine Terminal (former Shipyard 3) will be adopted and implemented.
7. The plan and funding to rehabilitate the historic Maritime Child Care Center will come together, and construction will begin.
8. The City of Richmond will adopt the recommended alternative for the Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park General Management Plan.
9. The Visitor Center for Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park will open.

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10. A new general plan will be adopted that provides for maximum feasible North Richmond and San Pablo Peninsula shoreline open space preservation, sustainable and smart growth development.
 11. The dispute over Design Review will be settled without a complete merger of the Planning Commission and Design Review Boards, and both bodies will be fully appointed with high quality and effective members. The Planning Division will continue to adopt design guidelines for various types of construction and specific geographic areas.
 12. The Pavement Condition Index for Richmond streets will continue to improve.

Happy New Year!

Tom Butt