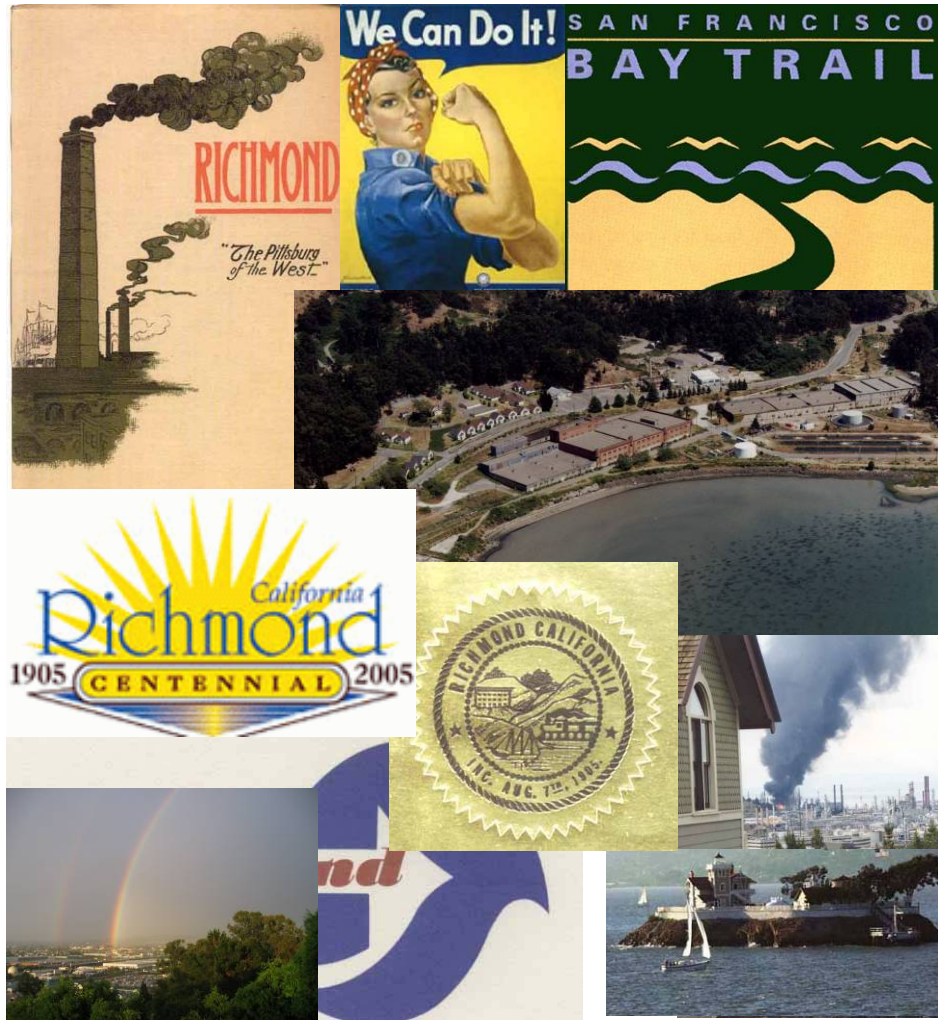


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# Richmond, California

## What Can We **FIX** in 2006?



## 2005 Year End Review

Tom Butt, Richmond City Council Member  
January 1, 2006

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# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Top Three Richmond Issues of 2005.....	1
No. 1 – Massive Reconstruction of City Leadership .....	1
No. 2 – The Budget Crisis Goes Poof.....	2
No 3 – Most Dangerous City in California .....	3
Richmond Advances and Stumbles in 2005 .....	3
Tom Butt Nominations for 2005 Advances .....	3
Tom Butt Nominations for 2005 Stumbles .....	5
E-FORUM Reader Nominations for 2005 Advances .....	6
E-FORUM Reader Nominations for 2005 Stumbles .....	7
Development Projects During 2005.....	8
E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best 2005 Development Projects.....	8
E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Worst 2005 Development Projects .....	8
Organizations in 2005.....	8
E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best 2005 Organizations.....	8
Tom Butt Nominations for Best 2005 Organizations .....	8
City Employees .....	9
City Employees Nominated by E-FORUM Readers for Roses .....	10
City Employees Nominated by E-FORUM Readers for Garlic.....	11
Roses from Tom Butt for City Employees .....	11
Garlic from Tom Butt for City Employees .....	12
City Departments, Policies and Services .....	13
City Departments, Policies and Services Nominated by E-FORUM Readers for Roses .....	13
Library .....	13
Tom Butt E-FORUM.....	13
Veolia.....	13
Planning Department .....	13
Police Department.....	13
City Departments, Policies and Services Nominated by E-FORUM Readers for Garlic .....	13
Police Department.....	13
Fire Department .....	14
Planning Department .....	14
Building Department.....	14
Recreation and parks.....	15
Emergency Services.....	15
Other .....	15
2006 Predictions from E-FORUM Readers.....	15
How did E-FORUM Readers 2005 Predictions turn out? .....	15
Fate of Tom Butt Wishes for 2005 .....	16
Tom Butt 2006 Wishes for 2006 .....	17

## 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.

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. Unfortunately, the City is as much challenged by blight now as it was then.

Following 2003, I went whimsical and authored [Out With The Old – In With The New](#), E-FORUM, 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 E-FORUM, [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.

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 a scientific poll or survey by any standard. Some of it reflects my personal opinions, and some of it reflects the opinions of people who live or do business in Richmond, including some City employees. 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 quotation marks and italics to distinguish them from my own.

As before, I have censored almost 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.

Although I made the same appeal this year as last, the volume and intensity of responses was substantially diminished. I hope this is due to a higher level of optimism and a lower level of frustration among City employees and residents. I, too, am less cynical about Richmond government than I have been in years. On the other hand, this reduced response may be simply because people are getting tired of complaining without results.

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.

## Top Three Richmond Issues of 2005

### ***No. 1 – Massive Reconstruction of City Leadership***

Although it generated few headlines in the conventional media, the incremental change wrought in 2005 as Richmond City Government continued a massive leadership rebuilding process is like nothing the City has seen in recent memory.

During 2005, the City Council replaced 75% of its Council-appointed officers, including the city manager.

Although appointed in late 2004, City Manager **Bill Lindsay** took over from Interim City Manager **Phil Batchelor** in February 2005, after Batchelor did us all a favor by candidly assessing the City's challenges

and beginning to change a culture of entitlement and process to a culture of service and performance. Lindsay's selection was particularly remarkable because it lacked the political intrigue and back room high-powered deal making typical of other Richmond city manager selections over the last two decades. Lindsay is the first city manager in a long time to be truly selected unanimously. During 2005, Lindsay proceeded to select four outsiders for key department head positions and promoted another half-dozen insiders as department directors, some with multiple responsibilities.

About the same time Lindsay arrived, former Assistant City Manager Jay Corey retired. Later, Rich McCoy rode away in the sunset. Both were former assistant city managers, perhaps the last with that title for a while. Lindsay also reorganized city government, eliminating the previously highly-paid assistant city manager positions and creating five new positions: Library and Community Services Director, Planning and Building Regulations Director, City Engineer, Public Works Operations and Maintenance Director and Information Technology Director. In eliminating the assistant city manager positions, Lindsay tightened the reigns of city government by increasing the number of department heads reporting directly to the city manager.

Following is a chronological summary of key appointments during 2005:

- In April, "Lightning-Rod Richmond Planning Chief" (*West County Times* description, not mine) quit and was replaced by **Richard Mitchell**, who Bill Lindsay plucked from his own Redevelopment Agency. Later, Lindsay expanded Mitchell's responsibilities to oversee Building Regulations. Also in April, the City Council selected **Don Casimere** to return from Sacramento and take up his old job again as Confidential Investigative and Appeals Officer.
- In July, Lindsay found his new finance director, **James Goins Sr.**, in Compton, where Goins once held the top job as city manager but more recently had been working in the private sector.
- The City Council selected a new city attorney in September, **John Eastman** of Redondo Beach, where he held the No.2 job under an elected city attorney. Also in September, Lindsay brought in **Tim Jones** from Oakland to head the Housing Authority.
- Insider promotions announced in September included **Monique Le Conge** as Library and Community Services Director, **Richard Mitchell** as Planning and Building Regulations Director, **Rich Davidson** as City Engineer, **Willie Haywood** as Public Works Operations and Maintenance Director and **Sue Hartman** as Interim Information Technology Director.
- October brought Lindsay's announcement that he had selected **Janet Schneider**, the executive director of the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority, to fill a newly created position, administrative chief.
- November brought the selection of **Chris Magnus** of Fargo, North Dakota, as Richmond's long-awaited permanent police chief. Magnus will start on January 17, 2006.

Not to be outdone, the City Council experienced a 22% turnover, seating two new councilmembers. **Gayle McLaughlin** was elected in November 2004, and **Tony Thurmond** was selected by the City Council to replace **Mindell Penn**, who resigned to be closer to her aging mother in Michigan.

## ***No. 2 – The Budget Crisis Goes Poof***

The top story of 2004 became a footnote in 2005. On January 19, 2005, the City's top management announced publicly that the City's "cumulative deficit," estimated at \$18 million to \$28 million just seven months previously, no longer existed. Just twelve months after being hit by a fiscal train wreck, the City was once again pronounced solvent with a balanced budget, no structural deficit and no cumulative deficit.

In response to the City's actions to improve and stabilize its financial position, Moody's Investors Service upgraded the City's ratings by four notches to Baa2.

In June, the City Council adopted a balanced budget for FY 2005-2006. See [The Sun Comes Out](#) January 19, 2005

### ***No 3 – Most Dangerous City in California***

Although based on 2004 statistics, Richmond's designation as California's most dangerous city fueled local outrage over a homicide rate that, although starting no higher than previous years, zoomed to a near record high by year's end.

When several City Council members moved to declare a "State of Emergency" in June, the homicide rate was still lower than last year. See [Homicide Rate Falls, State of Emergency Declared](#), June 17, 2005. Later this year, a spate of homicides sent the number up to 40 (as of December 31, 2005), higher than any year since 1994 when there were 52 homicides. See [Murder and Violence in Richmond](#), October 16, 2004. There were 38 homicides in 2003 and 35 homicides in 2004.

Despite all the hype and bad publicity for Richmond, no tangible steps were taken by the Richmond City Council or City leadership to address the violence. There was lots of talk but little action. See [Follow-Through and Accountability for Violence Reduction](#), November 20, 2005.

## **Richmond Advances and Stumbles in 2005**

### ***Tom Butt Nominations for 2005 Advances***

As a general observation, I sense that there has been a subtle but fundamental change in Richmond politics during 2005, with the traditional bases of power and money losing clout. Issues have become more important than loyalties, votes more important than money and the City's health more important than that of special interests. In my book, this is progress.

My choice for the list of the best for the City of Richmond in 2005 include the following, not in any particular order:

- Adopting a balanced budget for FY 2005-2006 that included substantial funds for rebuilding reserves.
- Replacing the City's top management (see Richmond No. 1 Issue of the year, above)
- Advancing a number of initiatives that will change the image of Richmond and attract visitors, new residents and businesses, including management reorganization and increased funding for Rosie the Riveter WW II Home Front National Historical Park ([National Park Service Reorganizes Contra Costa County Units with Headquarters in Richmond – and Other Rosie News](#), May 29, 2005), moving the Whirley crane to Shipyard 3 ([Whirley Crane Docks](#), November 10, 2005), completing and securing funding for more Bay Trail segments ([Richmond's Bay Trail Gets Christmas Gift from EBRPD](#), December 23, 2005), moving the Santa Fe Reading Room to start the Point Richmond Gateway Project([Point Richmond Gateway](#)), reorganizing and revitalizing the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee ([City Council Comes Through During National Preservation Month](#), May 19, 2005), getting the [Richmond Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) up and running, the [Point Richmond Music and Arts Festival](#), the [Main Street Initiative](#) and getting the Richmond Greenway Phase 1 project out to bid. Let me also use this opportunity to thank the many donors, most of them Richmond businesses, who contributed to the successful Whirley Crane move. Among them was Fred Glueck of Plant Reclamation, who earned a share of my Attila the Hun Historic

Preservation Award in 2004. Fred, you have redeemed yourself, and I offer the public apology you once requested.

- Establishing Internet based service request and tracking capability. See [New Customer Service Internet Access Debuts at City of Richmond](#), December 14, 2005.
- Putting on a respectable [Centennial](#) celebration. See [Hats Off to the Richmond Centennial Committee](#), August 8, 2005.
- Although it was bad news in a way, 2005 was a time to celebrate the lives of two of Richmond's long-time champions of good government, parks for the people and good planning -- Jay Vincent and Lucretia Edwards. Both leave parks at Marina Bay to remember them by. See [Jay Vincent - Sharing Richmond's Shorelines](#), May 10, 2005 and [The Passing of a Richmond Legend - Lucretia Edwards 1916-2005](#), October 15, 2005
- Repealing the Certified Inspection Program. See [Chevron and Richmond](#) November 19, 2005
- Restarting Richmond's historic preservation program. See [City Council Comes Through During National Preservation Month](#), May 19, 2005. Richmond has always been so preoccupied with its problems and seeking instant solutions that we often ignore our most valuable assets and the roots of an image change right under our noses.
- Embracing the effort for better oversight and expansion of the cleanup at the former Zeneca and future Campus Bay site. See [DTSC Takes Control of Richmond Shoreline Cleanups at Two Sites](#), May 13, 2005.
- Implementing business license fees for owners of rental property, bringing nearly \$1 million in additional revenue to the City. See [More Business License Questions and Answers](#), October 11, 2005; [More on Business Licenses](#), October 6, 2005 and [Business License Fees for Rental Properties](#), October 5, 2005.
- Averting a [Planning Crisis at Marina Bay](#) (April 5, 2005) by not flooding the Ford Peninsula with Toyotas and perhaps torpedo Richmond's shot at a future ferry terminal. Also see [Toyota Bypasses Richmond](#), June 29, 2005 and [Of Cars, Ferries, Long Trains, Grade Separations and Transit Oriented Development](#), May 28, 2005.
- Making some positive steps towards a future grade separation in Marina Bay to mitigate the long train problem. Approval of the Pulte Homes project carried a \$3.5 million down payment on a grade separation, and the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency retained a consultant for a feasibility study, due in January 2006. See [Marina Bay on the Wrong Side of the Tracks?](#), February 26, 2005.
- Continuing to attract unusual and niche businesses, many of them with artistic foundations. See [Under the Radar Businesses in Richmond](#), October 14, 2005. Art and history are thriving as components Richmond's new economy and new image. See [Three Richmond Locations Chosen for Best of the East Bay](#), April 6, 2005, [Richmond Company is Top Events Planner](#), May 31, 2005, [Beyond Oil and Violence](#), February 13, 2005 and [Some Good News From the Waterfront](#), June 27, 2005.
- Stanching harassment by some staff of City Council members just trying to do their job. See [Cromartie Harassment Complaint Evaporates](#), June 5, 2005 and [Attorney General Opines on Alleged Conflict of Interest](#), April 1, 2005.
- Adopting a revised Residential Dwelling Unit Inspection and Maintenance Ordinance, finally, on August 2, 2005, after a several-year enforcement hiatus. See [Richmond Ignores its Rental Unit Inspection Ordinance](#), May 4, 2005. We haven't heard much about it since then. I wonder what happened to it?
- With the departure of Barry Cromartie, a move to further gut citizen review and participation in the review of development projects was stopped in its tracks. See [Silence Will Give Consent on Proposed Planning Changes](#), January 28, 2005.
- Adoption of a detailed procedure for fielding public records requests.
- Continued progress on smart growth projects, such as beginning construction of the rail station at Richmond's transit village and the selection of a developer for the Macdonald Avenue mixed use project.



- Veolia continues to provide a level of sewer maintenance response and service Richmonders never dreamed possible, based on their former miserable experience with City crews who previously had the job.
- A consulting team was selected for the General Plan update, which will ramp up in 2006.

## ***Tom Butt Nominations for 2005 Stumbles***

My nominations for worst stumbles of the City of Richmond for 2005 include the following, not in any particular order:

- Although **Veolia** is making great strides with a great attitude in maintaining the sewer collection system of Richmond Sanitary District No. 1, Richmond continues to pay out millions of dollars for damages caused in the past by blocked sewers overflowing into buildings. The City continues to scramble to resolve a threat by Baykeeper to sue the City for millions for failing to meet water quality standards. See [Crumbling Sewers?](#) January 10, 2005. Richmond continues to procrastinate on grease trap inspection and sewer lateral upgrade programs that account for a lot of sewer problems and damage claims.
- In January 2005, Richmond was found to have the worst stormwater management record in Contra Costa County. See [Water Board Finds Richmond's Stormwater Program Worst in County](#), January 8, 2005.
- The Planning Department has never completed the survey of Richmond's illegally high fences. See [One Year Later - A Review of Enforcement of Richmond Residential Fence Zoning Requirements](#), January 23, 2005.
- Richmond continues to struggle with implementing an effective code enforcement effort. Not that the will and motivation is lacking; it just seems like interdepartmental collaboration among the City Attorney's office, the Police Department, Public Works, Building Regulations and Planning has not yet come together. See [Code Enforcement and Dumping Update](#), February 3, 2005
- After a 2004 success, Richmond's second try for a local sales tax increase went down to a 65% - 34% defeat. Perhaps a balanced budget and cynicism over the City's failure to show tangible results from the first increase diminished the public's appetite to give until it hurts.
- Richmond still hasn't come to grips with its money-losing Memorial Auditorium. See [Convention Center - Profit Center or Indulgence?](#) February 24, 2005.
- In September 2005, the City Council majority agreed that Richmond had too many parks and too few homes and voted to oppose, with litigation if necessary, the East Bay Regional Park District plan to purchase the Breuner property. See [Future of Richmond's Undeveloped Shoreline](#), September 18, 2005.
- After purchasing a run down apartment building at an extravagant price with the objective of creating supplementary cash flow to support low income public housing, the Richmond Housing Authority found itself unable to even pay the mortgage and had to come crawling back to the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency for a loan. See [Real Estate Speculation Scheme Bites Back at City](#), December 2, 2005.
- At the end of the year, Richmond had 40 homicides, the second worst in a decade, and made headlines all over for being the most dangerous city in California (based on 2004 statistics). You couldn't buy that kind of negative publicity. See [Richmond Retains Title](#), November 22, 2005.
- The commercial property owners of Point Richmond missed an opportunity to band together to revitalize Richmond's oldest business district. Instead, they punted. See ["They Could Ask Themselves, What am I Giving Back to my Community?"](#), September 2, 2005 and [Not Nice](#), August 28, 2005.
- Once again, Richmond City Council failed to find a way to possibly increase Chevron's utility user tax. Now please understand that contrary to popular opinion, I really love Chevron. I simply want to get more of their profits into Richmond. To their credit, Chevron has upped

their donations to the City of Richmond and to Richmond non-profits in 2005. Thank you Dean O'Hair, particularly, for the generous contribution to the Whirley crane project. Chevron reported a \$3.6 billion 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2005, up 12 percent from the same period last year, with much of the money coming from an enormous leap in oil and natural gas prices caused in part by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The company pulled in \$54.5 billion in revenue during the third quarter, compared with \$40.7 billion in the same period last year. Chevron's job is to hang onto as much as that as possible for their shareholders and my job is to divert as much as possible into Richmond. I think a new Richmond Dave O'Reilly Library funded by a generous \$45 million would be about right. Besides, what would I write about without Chevron? See [Collective Amnesia Plagues Chevron Related Actions](#), June 28, 2005; [Have They No Shame?](#) March 24, 2005; [Chevron and Richmond](#), November 19, 2005; [Chevron Steps up to the Plate](#), May 22, 2005; [ChevronTexaco to Acquire Unocal](#), April 4, 2005 and [Chevron Cogeneration Project Generates More than Energy](#), July 12, 2005.

- Despite substantial progress on the sweeping component, the parking enforcement component lags far behind and often leaves street sweepers cleaving a clean sweep right down the middle of the street. Chalk it up to a lack of interdepartmental collaboration. See [Street Sweeping Update](#), March 25, 2005.
- The City Council continues to find excuses for meeting behind closed doors in violation of the Brown Act to discuss matters they simply don't want the public to know about. See [City Council Routinely Violates Brown Act](#), March 22, 2005 and [Expert Says Planning Retreat Violated Brown Act](#), February 5, 2005.
- It drew the biggest public crowd ever to a City Council meeting, but the City Council's hard wrought resolution to front yard fencing went nowhere. Illegal fences continue to be constructed with impunity, and the survey of existing non-conforming fences remains incomplete. See [One Year Later - A Review of Enforcement of Richmond Residential Fence Zoning Requirements](#), January 23, 2005.
- Not only has Richmond's past mismanagement of the sewer collection system drained millions of dollars from taxpayers for sewer blockage-related damages, the City's storm water program is also in bad shape. See [Water Board Finds Richmond's Stormwater Program Worst in County](#), January 8, 2005.
- And if dysfunctional sewers weren't bad enough, Richmond has done nothing to solve its \$100 million plus shortfall for bringing streets up to even minimum standards in the next ten years. See [Richmond Streets - Bad and Getting Worse](#), December 4, 2004.
- There was another missed opportunity – this time irrevocable – to create a great village center for Marina Bay. Neighborhood angst about longer lines waiting at crossings for long trains was one excuse for the locals advocating lower density, a foot shot if you ask me. Staff and City Council followed by caving in to an unimaginative and timid developer.
- Instead of working with the community to find a common image, the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency became an apologist for and an ally of Toll Brothers for an unpopular design for Point Richmond Shores, perhaps delaying the project for years and ending up with another insult to one of Richmond's unique neighborhoods.

## ***E-FORUM Reader Nominations for 2005 Advances***

- *"Something that bugged me for a long time was the terrible state of the Richmond Parkway. I would constantly point it out to my husband. And then you wrote about it and you got RESULTS! What a pleasant surprise. Thank you for all you do for Richmond"*
- *"Best thing that's happened: the city's movement on establishment of quiet zones (2 so far, the one by us is supposed to be next, I hear). So please thank whoever is responsible (city attorneys?)."*
- *"Washington School remodel"*
- *"(Tom Butt still hanging in there to try to make this a better place."*
- *"A new City Attorney and Chief of Police."*



- Although the contributor intended the following to be in the “worst of 2005,” I decided it really belonged in the “Success” column to celebrate her life and pay tribute to the many years Lucretia gave to making Richmond a better place. *“(Passing of Lucretia Edwards, Richmond's patron saint.”*

## **E-FORUM Reader Nominations for 2005 Stumbles**

- *“The Annex Library is still closed, for lack of funds I gather - and of course staff, who was forced to find alternative jobs when laid off. Branch library services provide an educational "hammock" for our school children in my area that just can't be handled by the WCCC school district. When a library closes, it's our children's' education that suffers! The library is near me (within walking distance) and for what, nearly 2 years now, I've been forced to 1. Drive to the Richmond Main or 2. Use the El Cerrito Library. This latter option (closer to me than Richmond Main) may not be available much longer as it's scheduled to be torn down, expanded and rebuilt.”*
- *“The City has long-promised the Annex that Carlson Blvd, from the I-80 overpass to the City of El Cerrito line will be rebuilt. For more than 3 years now we have been waiting. The pot holes in this area only increase - and will get worse with the winter rains. This issue needs to be attended to - NOW, not 3 or 4 years from now.”*
- *“The speed limit on the Richmond stretch of Carlson is 35 mph - when it turns into El Cerrito the speed limit becomes 30mph. I believe 35mph on this heavily-traveled street should be reduced to 30mph. Drivers see this as one street - not 2 cities - and often drive 35mph in EC and 30mph in the Richmond section - all this does is serves to increase driver frustration!”*
- *“The murders.”*
- *“Closing of West Side Library branch.” “I know this is small potatoes but as a parent who is involved in my child's life and education.”*
- *We were so disappointed that the Richmond Sharks Swim Team was kicked out of the pool at the Richmond Swim Center near Kennedy High School. There were approximately 50 kids who had been swimming and practicing regularly for months through a program run by Coach Blythe. She did not do this as a profit making venture but because she wanted under privileged and under-served kids in Richmond to have a swim program. We paid \$75 per month for our kid to swim 5 days per week for 90 minutes per day. Even though we live closer to the El Cerrito pool and the cost was \$20 more per month than El Cerrito's swim team, we voluntarily paid more to support the Richmond Team because we are Richmond residents. I don't know what political hulabaloo took place (and frankly, I'm past caring) but our team was suddenly out with no notice and from what I heard a private team is now in. You know we just finally grew tired of the ineptness of the city of Richmond, the pool would be closed and no notice was given to our team. Several times the lifeguards did not show up or were late and we were just left standing and waiting at the door. If these were occasional occurrences it may be understandable but it just happened all the time! We now belong to the El Cerrito team at a lower cost and they have a much more organized program because they have been supporting kids for years. Richmond does not support their youth, it is no wonder our crime rate is so high. Our library services have been cut, making it even more difficult to improve themselves even if they want to. There are no programs for kids in Richmond and we now choose to avail ourselves of the services of El Cerrito at a higher cost because we are not residents. It is a shame that our city cannot provide services for our kids but that's just the way it is. Unfortunately we've grown used to it and just shake our heads in exasperation. Thank you for allowing me to vent, I appreciate your forum giving the residents of Richmond to have their voices heard.”*
- *“Sewer System needs to be repaired. My taxes got raised and I still see the big roto rooter city truck scraping out the sewer at the intersection of Lassen & McBride.”*
- *“Plunge fixed. Every other item that was rejected by the voters on Measure "H" has been done anyway. City has new radio system...not compatible with other towns but that is normal for Richmond. The workers are out of City Hall and in new, expensive digs and as usual, no plan to fix the old City Hall. We have our own Victory ship and a nice old crane...but the plunge, that is*

*older and built with dimes and nickels children collected sits rotting. Let's take care of what we have first before gathering new "projects". I have volunteered time and time again to help work on the plunge. I need to have the plunge fixed so I can do rehab on my knees. The pool at the high school won't do as I can not seem to "memorize" the ceiling as I can only swim on my back and not raise my arms above straight out horizontal."*

- *"Keep pool, museum and other places of interest open on Sunday! The workers are part time folks and Sunday duty can be rotated, like duty in the military. What good are these places if people can't use them when they are off work."*
- *"How long it takes to implement changes. The Batchelor report and Measure Q are a year old and much of it is still just promises."*

## **Development Projects During 2005**

### ***E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best 2005 Development Projects***

Although the City is not responsible for all development projects in Richmond, it always plays at least an entitlement and regulatory role that can shape the design, construction and even the location of all projects. Following are E-FORUM readers' nominations for best and worst:

- *"Best development: I live in Bayfront & I think in general the developments at Marina Bay have really been nicely done (except for the quality of the construction work, as we've all had to go through litigation to get problems fixed). I walk the Bay Trail every morning & count my blessings. I look forward to having the Bay Trail further extended."*

### ***E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Worst 2005 Development Projects***

- *"Rather than worst development projects, how about worst developer attitudes -- developers refuse to amend their projects in response to community concerns and the planning department and City Council let them get away with it."*

## **Organizations in 2005**

### ***E-FORUM Reader Nominations for Best 2005 Organizations***

- *"Good organization: Friends of the Richmond Public Library, for their fundraising efforts. This is such an important resource in our community."*

### ***Tom Butt Nominations for Best 2005 Organizations***

There are many worthy community organizations, and I have listed some previously. Rather than try to be exhaustive, I want to focus on those that work tirelessly to make Richmond a better place by monitoring planning and development. All of these organizations – I am sorry to say – do a lot of the work City staff should be doing. It seems like the public has to constantly remind government officials and the City Council that there are, in fact, laws that regulate what developers can do in our city.

Active neighborhood councils continue to be the first responders to inappropriate development threats. I only wish they would be given more credit by the Design review Board, the Planning Commission and the

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City Council. Many have websites, including Point Richmond, Richmond Annex, North and East, Marina Bay. See below:

- <http://www.northandeast.org/>
- <http://www.pointrichmond.com/> (Special thanks to David Moore of Sincere Design)
- <http://www.ranc.org/who.html>
- <http://www.marinabaycouncil.com/>
- [www.eastrichmond.org](http://www.eastrichmond.org)

Other neighborhoods have newsletters distributed via email such as Jeannette Mahoney's *Valley Connection* that can be subscribed to by contacting her at [perfectpage@compuserve.com](mailto:perfectpage@compuserve.com).

Sometimes, individual projects attract such community outrage that dedicated organizations, often with their own websites, spring up to keep the community informed and to provide group clout in lobbying officials. Examples include:

- [www.soula.org/zeneca/](http://www.soula.org/zeneca/) and Bay Area Residents for Responsible Development for the Zeneca/Campus Bay project. Sherrie Padgett garnered a Jefferson Award for her untiring and largely successful effort to simply get government officials to do their jobs. See [Jefferson Award to Padgett](#), September 8, 2005.
- Coalition of Concerned Citizens of Point Richmond (CCCPR) formed to review the Toll Brothers Point Richmond Shores Project (<http://www.cccpointrichmond.com/>) and expanded to include the Seacliff Marina project.

There are also organizations for specific trails, parks or creeks, such as:

- North Richmond Open Space Alliance
- Trails for Richmond Action Committee (TRAC) dedicated to completing the Bay Trail in Richmond (<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/trac/>).
- Friends of Baxter Creek, dedicated to restoring and maintaining Baxter Creek as a community amenity and important San Francisco Bay ecosystem and watershed component (<http://www.creativedifferences.com/baxtercreek/>).

More broadly based organizations, such as Communities for a Better Environment (<http://www.cbecal.org/>) have had major impact on Richmond environmental issues, often bearing the laboring oar for costly litigation that no one else would undertake. The Sierra Club has also always been there on important environmental and planning policy debates. Before there was the Brickyard Cove based Coalition of Concerned Citizens, there was the Richmond Environmental Defense Fund (<http://www.pointrichmond.com/redf/index.html>), which cut its teeth on Seacliff Estates and the toxic mound (commonly known as the space alien landing pad) and then broadened to other local issues.

## City Employees

This is a touchy one. Clearly, City employees who have distinguished themselves should be recognized and held up as an inspiration to others. Unfortunately, those who have been nominated are typically those who have frequent exposure to or communication with the public because of the nature of their jobs. There may be others who are working just as hard or making just as much of a difference of whom the public has no knowledge or has no contact. Also, different people have different perceptions. Based on the responses I received, one person's hero is sometimes another person's bum.

Identifying employees held in low esteem is even more problematic. It may feel good to get it off your chest, but as my mother told me, "If you can't say anything good about someone, don't say anything at all." Some also perceive the public criticism of City employees as poor form that, as a matter of ethics, should be given only to the city manager and only in private.

Last year, I was chastised by one City employee for my own criticism using too broad a brush. An E-FORUM reader and City employee requested of me: *"One more item, please do not continue to blame everyone for the few that cannot do things correctly. Not all of us have trouble following rules, but when one department screws up all of us get penalized. How fair is that?"*

Trying to avoid being mean-spirited during the holidays, I have not weighed in on the garlic course for City employees, although I have pretty well made my thoughts known over the last year. Instead, I will register a hope that they will all see the true light and achieve redemption in 2005.

### **City Employees Nominated by E-FORUM Readers for Roses**

- *"I want to note the passing of a city employee, **Freddy Cortez**. Freddy worked with the Public Works department. He was most helpful with the [my]drainage problems.. I saw him many times on the job. He gave both the tenant and me his cell phone number so he was available to us 24/7 when more sand bags were needed. I just read in the paper that he died very young after only one year of retirement."*
- *"My compliments go to **Rich Davidson** for following up on the report Freddy made on the property before he left for his retirement. The drainage problem has been solved do the dedication of Freddy Cortez and the crew from Public Works. My compliments also to **Gina Delatore**, Administrative Assistant in the Public Works Department. She listened patiently to the problems and directed the calls to the proper people"*
- *"I was sorry to see that **Rich Davidson's** name was not on the [city manager's] list of Managers to be recognized. No matter how much work the City Manager piles on Rich, he manages to do it in a timely manner and with his usual good humor. He seems to give each task his full attention."*
- *Thanks also, to **Veretta Edwards**, the beleaguered person in the business license division who took the money and the complaints of the rental property owners in good humor and with great efficiency."*
- *[Regarding the city manager's recognition program]: "Some of the names on that list surprised me. Who chooses those nominees? And from that list, do they all get recognized?"*
- *"I have to say it again: **Sharon West** of Parks is one City staff person who always goes above and beyond. Also, she is doing a job way beyond what she gets paid for and has been doing that job for more than a year."*
- *"**Sharon West** is an outstanding employee. I wish I had been aware of the city nominee program. Maybe you said something, but I was too busy to notice. Her title is "assistant to the superintendent" and she is not trained in Parks & Landscaping issues, but does an amazing job of keeping the department on track".*
- *"I'd like to give Mr.**Carroll Holthaus** of the Parks & Landscaping Division a gold star. He was on my street to look at a problem a neighbor was having - I happened to be in my front yard - and when he'd completed his business with my neighbor I asked if I could obtain his advice about my 2 parkway Liquid Ambers. Though he had a scheduled appointment to keep, he stopped long enough to assess the trees, suggested why and how they should be trimmed, then gave me his card so I could call when the two of us could be available at the same time. He and an assistant returned a few days later, executed the trimming and my trees have been happy camper ever since. He wasn't just courteous, but knowledgeable and professional. I felt he enjoyed the work he did and was extremely professional about the job. In the 36 years I've lived in Richmond, I don't think*

*I've had the quality of service Mr. Holthaus provided. He is a jewel and should be rewarded/recognized by the City in some way!"*

## ***City Employees Nominated by E-FORUM Readers for Garlic***

I only received one nomination this year, and although I agree with it, I decided to exercise my only act of censorship, not because of the subject but because of the way it was phrased. Maybe I'm getting soft in my old age.

## ***Roses from Tom Butt for City Employees***

So far, I am impressed with City Manager **Bill Lindsay**. He is what I expected – a mechanic rather than a politician. He has a refreshingly candid perception of what needs to be done to right Richmond, and he seems to have made good choices as he rebuilds his top leadership. I haven't received a single complaint about Human Resources since Phil Batchelor brought **Leslie Knight** on board. She seems to combine a cheerful demeanor with a quiet competence, and she has served the city manager well as his second in charge.

I'm still evaluating new City Attorney **John Eastman**. We've gotten off to a rocky start, but I remain optimistic we will find our stride. I do, however, appreciate Assistant City Attorney **Wayne Nishioka**, who continues his quest for Quiet Zones in Richmond amid an unbelievable complexity of government and railroad bureaucracy. I even have some good words for contract attorney **Trisha Aljoe** (after she replaced Adrianna Quintero in the midst of a knock-down-drag-out struggle with Everett Jenkins), who has begun the legal fight to clean up Spring Street (the toilets are gone!), a place no one from the City of Richmond has ever before dared to tread. Finally, despite years of conflicts with **Everett Jenkins**, I commend him for two legal opinions he issued as interim city attorney in 2005. One enabled the City to start collecting business license taxes from landlords and could be worth as much as \$1 million annually. The other set the stage for a possible new way of considering agreements with Chevron for the Utility Tax alternative payment method, called the "maximum tax payable."

I commend the "front office staff," **Sue Kadlec**, **Ursula Ulloa**, **Sandra Thompson**, **Trina Jackson** and **Rochelle Monk**, all of whom look after my City Council constituency, document request and scheduling needs cheerfully and effectively. After others failed, City Clerk **Diane Holmes** figured out how to actually get our City Council packets delivered to our homes promptly.

In the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency, I am developing an increasingly productive relationship with **Steve Duran**, who with a successful background in development himself sometimes gets a little too unabashedly developer-friendly for my sensibilities but has come a long way in supporting things that are important to me and others, such as smart growth principles, trails, historic preservation, our national park, creek restoration and community participation. I particularly appreciate his recent support of the Richmond Greenway, urban creek restoration and the Macdonald Avenue improvement and development projects. **Alan Wolken**, also from the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency, has almost always been there at the right time with the right stuff. His help in getting the Point Richmond Gateway project off the dime was appreciated by many.

I was ecstatic when Bill Lindsay appointed **Richard Mitchell** as planning director. In my opinion, he is the best qualified and most well-rounded planning director Richmond has had in the 32 years I have lived here. Thanks also to **Judy Battle** and **Morty Prisament**, who helped clear red tape away from the Point Richmond Gateway project and the Whirley Crane relocation. The Planning Department website continues to improve, and hats off to Victor Rojas and other Planning staff for a great quarterly newsletter ([Planning Goes Public](http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/~planning/information/newsletter/2005/fall.pdf), July 26, 2005) See <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/~planning/information/newsletter/2005/fall.pdf> for the latest issue.

In Building Regulations, I want to recognize **Habte Asfaha**, a plan checker who is also the only licensed structural engineer employed by Richmond and probably one of the few anywhere working as a municipal plan checker. We are lucky to have him. Habte came out last week to personally inspect the foundation for the Point Richmond Gateway project Santa Fe Reading Room historic building so that construction would not be delayed. Building Official and Architect **Fred Clement** has also been instrumental in moving projects along, both in the public and private sector. As far as I know, Fred is the only licensed architect employed by the City of Richmond.

In Finance, I am finding **Jim Goins** to be both personable and competent. Both he and **Dale Flynn** were really helpful to me as I worked through the city general fund budget comparison project recently. Jim seems to have a realistic view of the challenges facing the City in managing the budget, and he is committed to overcoming them.

Public Works Maintenance Director **Willie Haywood** is my hero. His vocabulary does not contain the word “no” or the phrase “it can’t be done.” I recently found out from my friend Martin McNair that Willie is a retired Navy master chief petty officer, an E-9 rank that compares to the sergeant major rank that I am familiar with from my own Army experience. That may help explain his “can do” attitude. City Engineer **Rich Davidson** got a well-deserved promotion this year, making him permanent in that position. No one works harder than Rich, and I want to specifically thank him for completing the Richmond Greenway design and getting it out to bid in 2005 – with help from contract Project Manager **Michael Glaser** of Vali Cooper Associates.

Willie’s counterpart in Parks and Recreation is **Sharon West**, who has earned everybody’s respect. I have also enjoyed working with **Monique Le Conge**, another one of those quietly competent new department heads who added the Recreation program this year to her responsibilities. If she survives that challenge, she can do anything. Monique is the only City employee to join the Richmond Rotary Club, which speaks well for her.

I haven’t heard a peep of criticism about **Don Casimere**, who took over the formerly embattled confidential investigative appeals officer position. Silence is golden.

**Jim Matzorkis**, Port Director, is another person I have differed with in the past over Port-related land use conflicts, but I have to say that the current uses in Shipyard 3 and Terminal 3 are both profitable and appropriate. He deserves a lot of credit for his vision and tenacity in negotiating these deals, although he did trod rough shod over a few niceties in the process. Maybe some day, I may even put Jim up for a historic preservation award some day. Thanks also goes to **Norman Chan** and **Tom Wilson**, who pitched in to make the Whirley Crane project successful.

I probably would not be enjoying the luxury of working on my computer at home with Internet access if it weren’t for Information Tech Director **Sue Hartman**, who managed to get the attention of top management at Comcast. I’ve had phalanxes of Comcast techies out here off and on for days this last year diagnosing and fixing my Comcast “high speed Internet” service. I don’t whether Comcast is picking on me or what, but I sure hope my difficulties are not typical. Thank you, **Terry Jacobson** of Comcast for keeping me on line – most of the time.

My colleagues on the **Richmond City Council** still take turns making my life miserable, but after making me suffer greatly, most of them seem to get it right most of the time in the end. We’ve made a lot of progress these last two years.

### ***Garlic from Tom Butt for City Employees***

In the spirit of a new beginning, no garlic will be awarded this year.



## City Departments, Policies and Services

### ***City Departments, Policies and Services Nominated by E-FORUM Readers for Roses***

#### **Library**

*"Library Staff who are always helpful."*

#### **Tom Butt E-FORUM**

- *"I think you should get an award for best communication with constituents. I have consistently appreciated getting informed about all kinds of things from the peach crisp at that little hole-in-the-wall out at Point Molate, to the hike recently led there where we got to enter the Castle, to announcements of community events, etc. Keep it up! (I also enjoyed visiting your house on the Native Gardens tour)."*

#### **Veolia**

- *"You need to know that the sub-contracting of the city sewer services to **Veolia** has been a great success. They found a manhole cover buried 2' deep and discovered by photo scan that the sewer was blocked. When they cleaned it in the spring, the lake in front of my house dried for the first time since 1993 when I moved in. Formerly the City Service Department spent many man hours to no avail."*
- *"I wasn't so lucky with the trouble at my property in the 700 block of Western, they couldn't find any reason why sewage was belching into the bath tub! It wasn't for lack of trying. **Veolia** responds to service request within a half an hour or less."*

#### **Planning Department**

- *"I have less experience with them but from what I've seen so far, **Lamont Thompson** and **Tanya Boyce** work well at Planning. However, it does no one an injustice to point out that **Judy Battle** stands above the Planning Crowd by a mile. I might find similar things to say about other planners but I don't know them well enough."*

#### **Police Department**

- *"The websites seem to be improving for both the City of Richmond and the Richmond Police Dept. The last time I checked it still wasn't as easy to report incidents via the Richmond Police Dept website as via the East Bay Parks website, but at least they had added something new that made it easier to give feedback over the internet. Hopefully the new police chief can get the website up to par with the park website. The park website is [www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org) at the bottom is a "report incidents" spot that one can click on to report incidents in the park to the park police. They have done an excellent job cleaning up Miller-Knox Park and Keller's Beach since I have been complaining so much to them that way."*

### ***City Departments, Policies and Services Nominated by E-FORUM Readers for Garlic***

#### **Police Department**

- *"This year, for the first time in the 31 years I've lived in my house, our block experienced an ARMED ENTRY BY 2 YOUTHS. They entered a home two doors from me, with guns drawn. They*

*robbed the occupants then sexually abused the women. If we had adequate police patrols/protection, I doubt this would have happened. The only cop I've seen "on the beat" in the last 3 months has been the beat cop who spoke at the November RANC meeting and two days ago I saw a police car parked on Tehama/Mariposa viewing the traffic on Tehama and Carlson Blvd."*

- *"The police coverage in the city is "thin" and I suspect the Department uses officers who used to cover "stable" communities (like the Annex) to the more troubled areas. But in the Annex, we are beginning to see that the opportunists are going afield, to areas where the police no longer have a significant presence. We in the Annex pay taxes for all city services - police included. The fact that we are being short sheeted regarding police protection is one of the demerits I assign to the City Council. I realize the Police Department is besieged with problems in other areas '.*

## **Fire Department.**

- *"This year my 36 (+ -) year stove literally blew up. A fire-ball nearly hit the ceiling. I called 911 as I was unable to determine I also had an electrical fire "brewing" behind the stove where I was unable to see. A fire truck arrived quickly - however it was an El Cerrito fire truck! Obviously the Annex Fire station was closed that day. RICHMOND NEEDS TO RESTORE EMERGENCY SERVICES to full staffing! I was lucky. Though my stove had died, there was no electrical fire."*

## **Planning Department**

- *"After experiencing the last Planning Commission meeting I realized that established "Plans", The Tiscornia Estate Specific Plan was the subject of the evening, are not respected. Architects design buildings with multiple variances with the staff's blessing, and then the Planning Commission and Council are put in the unenviable position of rejecting something that a property owner has paid good money for. That shouldn't happen. The Planning Staff should make it clear that established plans are there for a good reason, and that exceptions will only be tolerated in extraordinary circumstances. We have a situation at the Point where expectations are becoming the rule, because a small group of Yacht Club members have teamed up with a local architect to subvert the process, and they are trying to characterize the citizens of the Point as spoil-sports when the opposite is true. The staff needs to do its homework, and remember that it works for the public not the developers."*
- *"When there is little hope of a future with a good education/training and a well-paying job, the alternative is a future of crime. Somehow, the City Services haven't yet gotten that message. Building more homes but without the requirement that the Contractors must hire locals first, with a percentage of unskilled labor provided locally - with the possibility of on-the-job/apprenticeship training. This is not the job of the police chief (and how many have we had in the last 7 years?) but the City Fathers and Mothers to address. And just why can't the council/Planning Dep. REQUIRE of the owners/contractors who purchase and build here to hire locals first - for the unskilled jobs certainly - but also for some apprentice slots. We need a BALANCE of new homes and new industry here. If we build only new homes, the city will eventually die. This imbalance is one of the areas in which the City Council (individually and as a whole) has failed to address for a number of years."*

## **Building Department**

- *"Building Regulations Dept.--those who take hundreds of dollars and show up for a 2 minute inspection. I always insist on a City permit for any house repairs completed by contractors, many of whom are reluctant to get the permits in the first place. One inspector came, asked for the permit, signed it and was about to leave when I asked him if he wasn't required to see the job site! "*

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## Recreation and parks

- *"I don't know what category this fits in, but my nomination for longest running self-defeating practice is the Rec Department's habit of closing the swimming pools for weeks during December and January - just when the kids are out of school and looking for entertainment. Also, at this time of year the adult swimmers really need an indoor place to exercise because the weather is bad outside. If the department were more aware of their marketing opportunities, they would realize that many of their adult customers are medically unable to participate in other forms of exercise, and really need the pools to be open continually. Better awareness of the customers needs might generate more revenue from the pools."*

## Emergency Services

- *"Disaster Preparedness. Either un-staffed or unable to do an adequate job."*

## Other

- Regarding the city managers recognition nomination list: *"What criteria was used to be placed on the list? Why were not all the nominees listed? ( I personally know some where left off) Who is going to make the final decision? (The new people with no history?) Once again this smells like Richmond of Old. It is not what you do, or how you perform your job but who you know. And that is why so many of the long time employees that don't cause trouble, do not look for the lime light, just show up everyday and do a good job for the City will not participate in these circus shows. Make a show, shake a hand but just remember are you really shaking the hand of someone who is really deserving? I think not. It is just another case of Richmond just throwing something together to make a show and try to look like they are doing something for the staff. Blow smoke somewhere else. Do I sound disgruntled? Not really. I enjoy my job and the staff that I work with. But when I see some of the names on those lists, it makes the short hairs on the back of my neck stand up. Something stinks in Richmond!!!!!!!!!! "*

## 2006 Predictions from E-FORUM Readers

- *" I sincerely hope our wonderful library is opened for more hours in 2006."*
- *"The problem experienced by a number of blocks in the city of street-sweeping & garbage pickup occurring on the same day will continue unresolved in 2006, 2007, & beyond."*
- *"I predict a year in which the City of Richmond and the City of El Cerrito actually COOPERATE and form a redevelopment district on Richmond's southern end of San Pablo Ave, the southern gate to Richmond, from Portola to Central Ave., to get rid of blighted businesses along the area and encourage smart development of multi storied buildings with shops underneath (similar to Albany). These shops would be a benefit to the neighboring Annex and El Cerrito and could include restaurants, Acme Bakery, a Cheese Board, a Monterey Market and dare I say it? a Starbucks?? (I'm tired of driving to Berkeley to purchase these items) One has only to look at Babette's Bazaar in the area of SP and Burlingame to see what I mean by blight. The store has been abandoned/closed probably 20 years and has fallen into disrepair. ( Can't SOMETHING be done?) Many other storefronts are closed and empty and the buildings are underutilized, not to mention architecturally insignificant, and, er, ugly!"*

## How did E-FORUM Readers 2005 Predictions turn out?

Not too accurate, except maybe for a couple, shown in boldface below:

- ***"Things will probably be better than last year."***

- *“Unless the New City Manager comes in and with FULL cooperation of the City Council to make sweeping changes; hold ALL employee's accountable, without exception; it will be business as usual in the City of Richmond. It's time the City of Richmond is run like other Bay Area Cities (Concord, Walnut Creek, Vallejo, Marin) better yet, like a major corporation. . . This City should be run like a Fortune 500 firm, where services are provided, and revenue is generated and collected. . . If there is "dirty laundry" within these cities, it isn't broadcast on every major network EVERY night. . . Those other cities aren't on the list for MOST DANGEROUS place to live. . . Truly make us the City of Pride and Purpose and determine what the purpose will be.”*
- *“The City of Richmond will have an unprecedented increase in the budget coming from property taxes due to the increase in property values from new home and existing home sales. **The results will be a surplus of funds.**”* There is actually \$2 million in the FY 2005-2006 budget allocated to reserves.
- *“Chief Bennett will return from retirement and take the reins as permanent Chief of Police.”*
- *“Unaccounted for loss of jobs and knowledge will devastate the City departments as staff leaves for greener pasture, finally fed up with the losses and increased workload. Other cities will offer better packages with greater salaries.”*
- *“Prediction for next year: **how could it get any worse?**”* It didn't.

## Fate of Tom Butt Wishes for 2005

Following, in no particular order, were my personal priorities for 2005. Those that are **boldfaced** were either **achieved or saw some progress**. Notes about progress are underlined.

- Get code enforcement and abatement functioning effectively and self-supporting.  
Progress report: Still struggling.
- Get SAP and its users operating sufficiently to actually keep track of revenues and expenditures, including tracking employee time and allocating it to projects and tasks, tracking fees and fines, and producing a budget document that a City Council member can understand.  
Progress report: Getting better but still lots of work to do.
- **Get the new General Plan and Zoning Ordinance off the ground along with new Design Review and Development guidelines.**  
Progress report: The City Council has selected a General Plan consultant and is negotiating a contract with work anticipated to begin in 2006. The Redevelopment Agency put out an RFP for a team to develop design guidelines for Macdonald Avenue and other redevelopment areas.
- **Resuscitate implementation of the City's historic preservation program.**  
Progress report: The City Council amended the Historic Structures Code to meet State of California requirements for designation of Richmond as a Certified Local Government. The mayor has appointed a new full Historic Preservation Advisory Committee, and the planning director has committed to staff it, with the first meeting to occur in early 2006.
- **Begin making progress in solving railroad problems, including horns at grade crossings and long trains blocking grade crossings.**  
Progress report: Assistant City Attorney Wayne Nishioka has been heading a working group to implement several Quiet Zones in Richmond under the new Federal Railroad

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Administration Regulations. It is a difficult and complicated process, but progress is being made. The City Council authorized the Redevelopment Agency to retain a consultant to perform a grade crossing study, and a preliminary report is due in early 2006. The City Council secured the first \$3.5 million in funding from Pulte Homes as a condition of approval for a residential development project in the Marina Bay area.

- **Complete the move and development of the Santa Fe Reading Room/Trainmaster Building.**  
Progress report: The building was moved in November 2005, and the foundation was completed in December. Rehabilitation will continue into 2006.
- **Initiate a plan for the rehabilitation and seismic upgrading of the City Hall and other Civic Center buildings.**  
Progress report: A development team was selected, and a contract for the first phase City Hall rehabilitation and addition is underway.
- Formulate a long-term plan for maintaining City infrastructure, particularly streets.  
Progress report: No progress
- Initiate an annual City-wide poll and survey on residents' perceptions of City services and priorities for resource allocation.  
Progress report: No progress.
- Implement a program for measuring productivity and performance of City departments and compare this data with other cities.  
Progress report: No progress by City government, but the E-FORUM published a general fund revenue and expense comparison.
- Achieve a reliable and steady revenue source for the Library and Parks and Recreation.  
Progress report: No significant progress, although the City Council did implement a modest Library impact fee.
- **Complete the first phase of the Central Richmond Greenway.**  
Progress report: Phase 1 went to bid in December 2005, and construction should begin about March 1, 2006.
- Adopt a plan for rehabilitation of the Plunge and a means of financing it.  
Progress report: No progress by City government, but Save the Plunge has hired yet another architect to design a rehabilitation (fourth one in about a decade).
- Change the culture of City government so that the City Council sets policy, and staff actually carries it out.  
Progress report: Still struggling.
- Capitalize on the City's centennial to spark an image change for Richmond, **complete with a new logo**, new slogan and new vision of the City's future.
- Progress report: The City started using a new Centennial Year logo, but it's only good for one year..

## Tom Butt 2006 Wishes for 2006

There are probably a hundred, but I stopped at 30

1. Achieve significant efficiencies to wring more services out of the same amount of municipal revenue.
2. Actually practice community-based policing in Richmond.
3. Find a way to reduce non-essential City Council meeting time to avoid 10-hour, post-midnight meetings.
4. A City Council that actually practices mutual respect and cooperation.
5. Successfully complete annual performance reviews of City Council appointed officers.
6. Complete installation of freeway signage for Richmond's historic sites, California historic landmarks and national park.
7. Institute a violence reduction coordinator position and begin making progress towards a homicide-free city in 2016 with substantial progress in 2006.
8. Secure funding for a Marina Bay railroad grade separation and begin design of the project.
9. Establish railroad grade crossing Quiet Zones.
10. Adopt a sustainable (green) policy or ordinance for public works projects in Richmond.
11. Adopt a plan to save and preserve for adaptive reuse the former Electrical Shop at Shipyard 3.
12. Turn responsibility for sewer collection system maintenance and liability 100% over to Veolia.
13. Find a way to achieve a Utility User Tax payment from Chevron that maximizes Richmond's potential revenue from that source.
14. Full and successful implementation of street sweeping, code enforcement, vacant lot management, weed abatement and residential rental unit inspection and abatement programs.
15. Implement a survey of Richmond residents and businesses to assess the effectiveness of City services, establish priorities and evaluate the willingness to fund additional levels of service where they cannot be achieved by improvements in efficiency.
16. Complete a Charter review in time to submit for the November 2006 ballot.
17. Either perfect the SAP system, or scrap it and select another enterprise system.
18. Devise a plan, perhaps with alternatives to be polled to City voters, to address Richmond's long-term infrastructure capital improvement and maintenance needs, including streets, parks, sewers and buildings
19. Truly streamline and internally integrate the project approval process in Planning and Building Regulations to provide efficient service while still accommodating maximum public participation in the entitlement process.
20. Adopt design guidelines applicable to Design Review.
21. Secure approval of Richmond as a Certified Local Government for historic preservation.
22. Adopt a comprehensive policy and procedures manual to guide activities of the mayor and City Council.
23. Implementing the use of electronic means for documenting and penalizing red light runners, illegal dumpers and other lawbreakers.
24. Make substantial progress toward the re-use of Point Molate and the San Pablo Peninsula Open Space project.
25. Complete construction of Phase 1 of the Richmond Greenway and secure funding for Phase 2.
26. Conclude commitments and entitlements for the Miraflores/Adachi project that include Richmond greenway construction and Baxter Creek restoration.
27. Find a way to more quickly monitor and service non-operational street lights.
28. Make substantial progress toward moving City government back to the Civic Center.
29. As the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency commitment nears the end, plan and implement benefit assessment districts for the Marina Bay area for infrastructure, landscaping and possibly a grade separation and for the Brickyard Cove area for infrastructure and landscaping.
30. Update the Internet accessible [Richmond Municipal Code](#) at least quarterly and update the minutes and agendas on the City's website at least weekly.