



**Richmond Serene in 2014?
2013 Year End Review
Predictions and Wishes for 2014**

[Tom Butt, Richmond City Councilmember](#), January 1, 2014

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About the E-FORUM

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

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

In 2002, I published 180 E-FORUMs, but by 2009, I was up to 460. In 2010, it was 506. In 2011, I dropped to 340, but in 2012 there were over 500 and in 2013 about 600.

E-FORUMS typically fall into three categories:

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

I have over 2,000 people and about 40 media contacts on my current list, but I understand a lot more people get it through secondary distribution from primary addressees.

In addition to email distribution, all E-FORUMS beginning in 2001 are accessible on my website at <http://www.tombutt.com/archives.htm>.

The website, www.tombutt.com gets a lot of traffic:

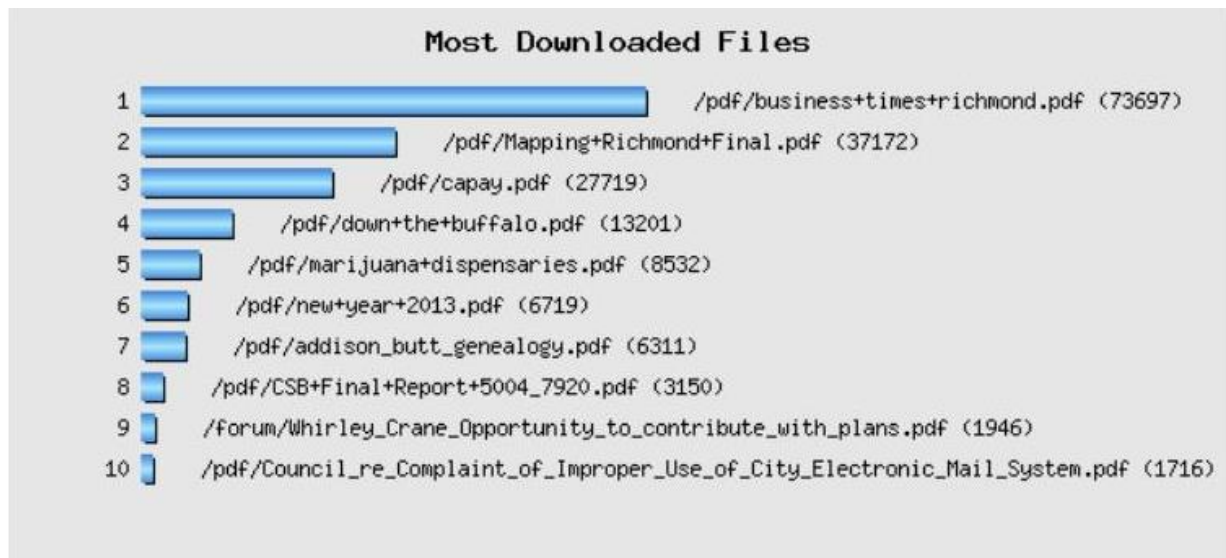
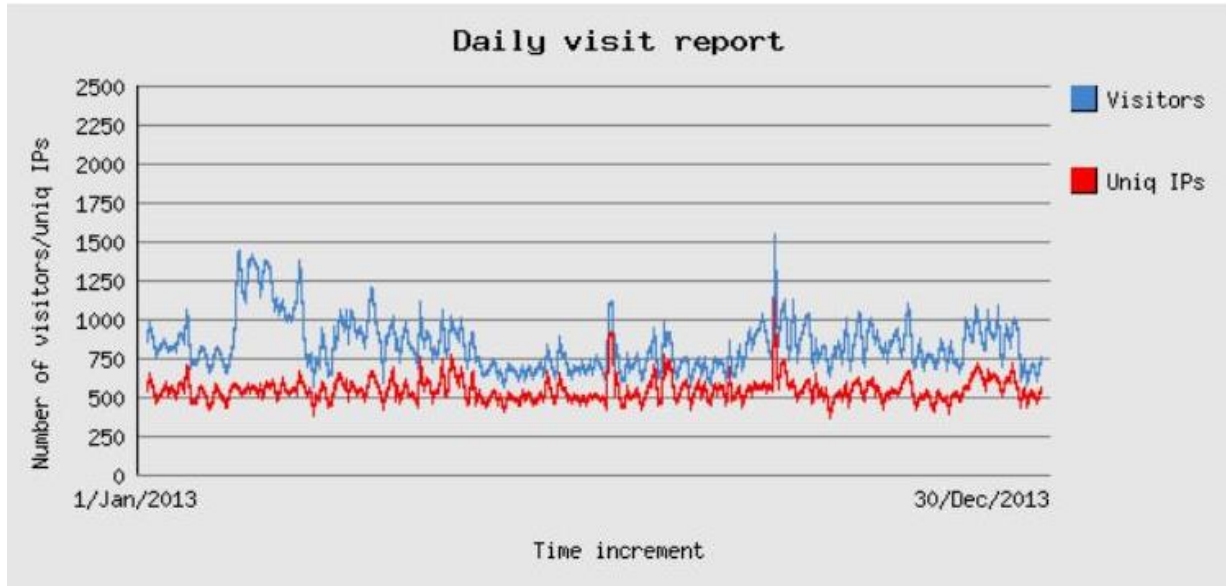
- In the past 12 months, there were 301,384 visitors, up 20% from last year, and 1,537,303 hits.
- Visitors average 827 a day with an average of 4,223 hits per day. The biggest days in 2013 were September 13-14, with 26,045 hits from 1,533 visitors and 26,224 hits from 1,060 visitors, respectively. The likely source were several eminent domain-related items:
 - [Peter Dreier: Richmond, California Defies Wall Street to Help Homeowners](#), September 13, 2013
 - [Judge: Wall Street Suit Against Richmond's Eminent Domain Plan is Premature](#), September 12, 2013
 - [NEWSFLASH: Wells Fargo vs City of Richmond](#), September 12, 2013
 - [Richmond: Divided City Council Votes to Stay on Course With Plan to Use Eminent Domain to Seize Mortgages](#), September 11, 2013
- 33,011 visitors bookmarked www.tombutt.com, up 7% from last year.
- Although most of the hits were overwhelmingly from the U.S., there were also visitors from dozens of countries, with Australia coming in second with 2,573 visitors.

The five most visited E-FORUMs in the last 12 months were:

- [Final Richmond Election Results - E-Mail Forum](#)
- [Fear and Loathing in Point Richmond](#)
- [Bringing the Richmond Greenway to Life](#)
- [Toxics Linger After Chevron Fire](#)
- [Richmond Mothball Fleet Scrapping Proposal makes Daily Kos](#)

The five most downloaded files were:

- <http://www.tombutt.com/pdf/business%20times%20richmond.pdf>
- <http://www.tombutt.com/pdf/Mapping%20Richmond%20Final.pdf>
- <http://www.tombutt.com/pdf/down%20the%20buffalo.pdf>
- <http://www.tombutt.com/pdf/marijuana%20dispensaries.pdf>
- <http://www.tombutt.com/pdf/new%20year%202013.pdf>



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

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

Since 2002, I have prepared some kind of year-end evaluation of City of Richmond services, problems, challenges and wishes. Originally, these were conveyed to my City Council colleagues and the city manager as a way of providing input into the annual city manager performance evaluation and establishing my priorities and legislative

objectives for the coming year. Since 2005, I have invited public participation, and I have shared the results on my E-FORUM.

- **2003**, I shared one of these priorities on the E-FORUM in [New Year's Resolution - A Full Court Press on Blight](#), January 3, 2003.
- **2004**, I went whimsical and authored [Out With The Old – In With The New](#), January 1, 2004, providing a number of awards and multiple choice predictions.
- **2005**, I decided to expand the New Year's Day, [2004 Year-End Review](#), December 31, 2004, to become a broader evaluation of the City of Richmond and to give E-FORUM readers an opportunity not only to participate but to also play the principal role.
- **2006** was [What Can We Fix in 2006?](#), January 1, 2006.
- **2007**, it was [Will Richmond be Heaven in 2007?](#) January 1, 2007.
- At the beginning of 2008 I wrote [Year 2007 Review and Will Richmond be Great in 2008?](#)
- **2009**: [Will Richmond be Fine in 2009?](#)
- **2010**: [2009 Year End Review – Who Will Win in 2010?](#)
- **2011**: [2010 Year End Review – Will Richmond be Riven in 2011?](#)
- **2012**: [In What Will We Delve in 2012?](#)
- **2013**: [What is Foreseen in 2013?](#)

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



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

This summary is uncensored. This is an equal opportunity forum, and I welcome responses, comments, arguments and debates. I especially solicit corrections.

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

2013 – Good Year for Richmond Despite Miserable City Council Meetings



Like 2012, the Year 2013 continued to see too many late-night city council meetings roiled by spectator demonstrations, ejections from the chamber and incessant interruptions, harangues, race-baiting and soliloquies by Corky Booze.

Little changed politically from last year where 4-3 and 5-2 votes were the norm, with Nat Bates and Corky Booze on the losing side of most controversial issues.

It's hard to tell whether Bates and Booze have strong feelings about issues related to the environment and climate change or whether they eschew their support simply to set themselves apart from the RPA and more progressive Council members.

Bates and Booze, for example have an almost obsessive aversion towards bike lanes, traffic calming and Marin Clean Energy.

You don't know whether to laugh or cry when they accuse Myrick and Beckles of not being or acting black or black enough, as if black is a political party rather than a skin color.

The miserable conditions typical of city council meetings are in stark contrast to the actual accomplishments of the City Council and the City of Richmond, which were largely successful and productive with a number of remarkable achievements.

- The fight over Chevron's property tax appeals and lawsuits were settled largely in Richmond's favor.
- Richmond's homicide rate in 2013 is the lowest in at least 33 years.¹
- Construction began on the Moody Underpass project.
- Richmond's biannual Community Survey showed continued confidence in the direction Richmond is heading.
- Betty Soskin brought Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park national publicity and a boost in visitation during the government shutdown.
- Richmond came on line with Marin Clean Energy with an 85% subscription rate, higher than Marin County.
- Point Molate Park opened for public use for the first time in over ten years, and Richmond substantially prevailed in the first court test of the lawsuit against the city by Upstream and the Guidiville Rancheria.
- The City of Richmond has prevailed in every major litigation challenge, including Point Molate, eminent domain and Chevron property tax issues.
- Despite a significant property tax revenue drop triggered by the Chevron fire, the City Council adopted a two-year budget that was technically unbalanced but fully funded.

¹ From Chief Magnus: I know you are putting together your Review of 2013 and I just wanted to mention that as of now (with 2 days left in the year), it is looking like Richmond will have had 16 homicides for the year, which is the lowest number in 33 years. It's too bad the Bay Area News Group (CC Times, etc.) reprinted the Richmond Confidential article that highlighted our homicide closure rate for the year as 25% without further clarification. The reality is that we either know or have a pretty good idea of who committed many more of these homicides than the 4 of 16 specified as "solved" in the article. What happens virtually every year is that in the following year we get crime lab analysis, other evidence, or witness statements that help us close additional cases from the prior year. Last year (2012), for example, we ended up with a clearance rate of 55%--a significant improvement for Richmond from the past. I have confidence our clearance rate for this year will also increase as we get into 2014. At any rate, our rate of violent crime continues to decrease. We'll have all the numbers once the year closes out which I'll look forward to sharing with you. In the meantime, we are pleased that working with the community on such programs as Ceasefire and doing smart, strategic enforcement with our law enforcement partners has definitely made our city safer in the past year. Regards, Chris

While those surveyed in 2013 continue to rate almost everything in Richmond lower than those surveyed in other cities, they have also acknowledged steady improvement. The Executive Summary of the 2013 National Citizen Survey (Richmond) states:²

- This report of the City of Richmond survey provides the opinions of a representative sample of residents about community quality of life, service delivery, civic participation and unique issues of local interest. Periodic sounding of resident opinion offers staff, elected officials and other stakeholders an opportunity to identify challenges and to plan for and evaluate improvements and to sustain services and amenities for long-term success.
- Some residents experienced a good quality of life in the City of Richmond and believed the City was a good place to live. The overall quality of life in the City of Richmond was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 30% of respondents. A majority reported they plan on staying in the City of Richmond for the next five years.
- A variety of characteristics of the community was evaluated by those participating in the study. The three characteristics receiving the most favorable ratings were ease of car travel, opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual activities and opportunities to volunteer
- Compared to the 2011 survey, the only community feature whose ratings decreased was the overall quality of new development; also, the number of respondents using the bus and the number of respondents watching a meeting of local elected officials decreased
- Many ratings increased from 2011 to 2013, including the ratings for overall quality of life, ease of car travel, recreation centers or facilities, opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual activities, Richmond as a place to retire, and the value of services for taxes paid. Ratings also increased for city services such as street cleaning, street lighting, sidewalk maintenance, emergency preparedness, storm drainage, services to youth, and services to low-income people.
- Those residents who had interacted with an employee of the City of Richmond in the previous 12 months gave high marks to those employees. Most rated their overall impression of employees as “excellent” or “good.”

On the other hand, those surveyed in Richmond continue to hold a rather dismal view of the city compared to those surveyed in other cities:

- Ratings of community characteristics were compared to the benchmark database. Of the 32 characteristics for which comparisons were available, none were above the national benchmark comparison, one was similar to the national benchmark comparison and 31 were below.
- The three characteristics receiving the least positive ratings were educational opportunities, employment opportunities and the overall image or reputation of Richmond. In general, survey respondents demonstrated mild trust in local government. Less than half rated the overall direction being taken
- City services rated were able to be compared to the benchmark database. Of the 31 services for which comparisons were available, all 31 were below the national benchmark rating

Richmond remains a challenging City to manage and govern, and opinions on how to best move the city forward are deepened and divisiveness exacerbated by these challenges, nowhere better demonstrated by the City Council itself.

Compared to other cities in the Bay Area, Richmond has a relatively low income population with greater needs. Fighting to divide a pie that is not big enough to provide everyone all they need is a constant struggle.

² <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=2745>

Some comments on the City Council of 2014:

- [Richmond Deserves Better City Council Behavior](#), April 24, 2013
- [Welcome to the New Richmond City Council](#), April 24, 2013
- [Infighting a Challenge for City Council](#), May 9, 2013
- [Hate Speech at Richmond City Council](#), July 14, 2013
- [Richmond Council Meeting Cleared by Police Amid Chaos](#), July 24, 2013
- [Richmond Councilman Films Latest Meeting Disruption](#), July 24, 2
- [Raucous Protesters Disrupt Richmond City Council Meeting](#), July 24, 2013
- [Stirring the Disruption Pot](#), July 30, 2013
- [East Bay Express - Homophobic Group Disrupts Richmond Council Meeting](#), August 13, 2013

Top Richmond Stories of 2013

Councilmember-Elect Gary Bell Dies after Seat Filled by Jael Myrick

In a tumultuous series of events beginning in 2102 that were both tragic and controversial, Jael Myrick was selected (elected) by the Richmond City Council in February 2013 to replace Gary Bell, who won the seat in November 2012, was struck immediately by a fatal illness and lapsed into a coma. Bell died on August 1, 2013.

Gary Bell, who had previously served on the City Council from 2000 to 2005, ran unsuccessfully for reelection in 2005. He ran for mayor in 2006, losing in a tight three-way race with Gayle McLaughlin and incumbent Irma Anderson. In 2010, he ran for City Council again but dropped out for unknown personal reasons.

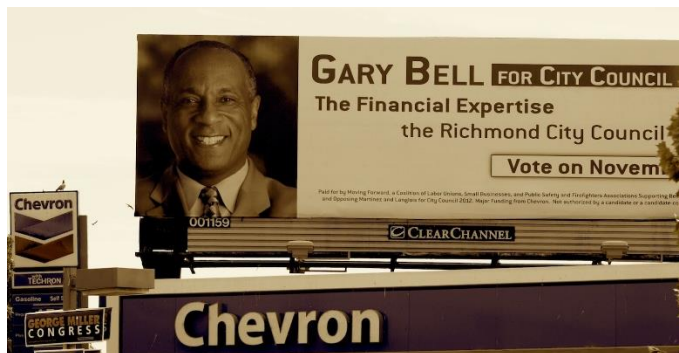
Bell's successful 2012 campaign generated controversy only because he was one of three candidates, including Nat Bates and Bea Roberson, who benefitted from \$1.2 million in financial backing from Chevron.³ Unlike Bates and Roberson, who embraced Chevron support, Bell declared his independence more than once. On October 22, 2012, he answered a critic:

I am independent. I am not a member of the RPA, nor have I taken contributions from Chevron or the Beverage people. You know I have no control over the negative flyers being sent out, including the one from Council Member Beckles who is a member of the RPA.

Both groups should be ashamed of how you are damaging the democratic process.

Being independent takes more courage than joining a group. But then what would know about being independent.

Gary Bell⁴



Although it will never be known how Bell would have voted on the City Council, there was a presumption by many that he would have tended to cleave more closely to the “pro-business” and pro-Chevron position of Bates and Booze than to that of the more progressive members of the Council.

Depending on how Jim Rogers would have played it, Bell probably would not have swung the Council significantly away from its predominantly progressive direction, but it clearly would have been a different council.

When it came time to fill Bell's vacant seat, the bitter rivalries and posturing of the 2012 election began all over again. The City Council had an opportunity to choose a replacement or call for an election. In February, the Council chose Jael Myrick, an unsuccessful candidate for City Council in the 2012 election.

³ <https://richmondconfidential.org/2012/11/05/citizens-outspent-inside-richmonds-4m-election-campaign/>,
http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_21726521/chevron-spends-big-richmond-elections_and
<http://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/big-oil-targets-little-richmond-again/Content?oid=3365389>

⁴ <http://richmondconfidential.org/2012/10/19/city-council-election-2012-gary-bell/comment-page-1/#comment-29479>

Myrick, who works as a field representative for progressive Assembly Member Nancy Skinner, was presumed to be of a similar political persuasion as Skinner, but nobody really knew. Myrick had been careful in the 2012 campaign not to offend anyone, and other than representing Skinner, he had little previous involvement in Richmond politics and had not aligned himself with any faction.

As has become tradition, the City Council skipped over runner-up Eduardo Martinez to look for a less partisan new member. The City Council ultimately supported Myrick unanimously, each council member probably for different reasons. The progressives hoped he would join them. Bates and Booze were skeptical, but opposing a credible African-American candidate could be politically damaging to them, and who knows, a little good will with Myrick may be useful in the future. Rogers saw his best chance at becoming the permanent swing vote fading away, but joined the rest of the council.⁵



The one thing Myrick campaigned on was “bringing the Council together,” an objective that sounds good but has proven to be next to impossible. He has maneuvered a few times looking for opportunities to show support for both factions in controversial issues, but with little success.

In the end, Myrick has shown himself to be mostly a solid progressive, but he continues to keep people guessing where he will land on individual issues.

The City Council has settled into routine 4-3 or 5-2 votes on controversial issues, with Myrick typically joining the majority.

Myrick will presumably be running for reelection in 2014, but whether he will declare for the 2-year seat that he now holds due to his appointment or will go for a 4-year seat is known only to him at this point.

For a blow by blow account, see:

- [Runner-Ups Get Short Shrift in Richmond](#), January 4, 2013
- [Richmond Councilmember-elect Unable to Assume Office](#), January 3, 2013
- [Richmond Councilman-elect Gary Bell's Illness Leaves Future of Council Seat Uncertain](#), January 4, 2013
- [Eduardo Martinez as Gary Bell's Replacement](#), January 7, 2013
- [SF Chronicle - Richmond Councilman III, Won't Take Office](#), January 8, 2013
- [Rogers and Bates Opine on Council Vacancy](#), January 10, 2013
- [Richmond African-American Leaders Back Sullivan as Replacement for Ill Councilman-elect Gary Bell](#), January 10, 2013

⁵ http://www.contracostatimes.com/ci_22521199/richmond-council-appoints-jael-myrick-fill-vacant-seat

- [Rift Emerges in Richmond as Bell Seat Falls Vacant](#), January 11, 2013
- [Don Gosney Announces for Gary Bell's Vacant Council Seat](#), January 11, 2013
- [Richmond City Council Fails to Announce Bell Vacancy as Meeting Ends in Stalemate](#), January 16, 2013
- [Division Over Vacant City Council Seat May Force Special Election in Richmond](#), January 18, 2013
- [Richmond City Council to Meet, Set Path for Filling Vacant Seat](#)
January 24, 2013
- [Oakland Tribune Editorial: Richmond City Council Should Let Voters Pick Replacement for Critical Seat](#),
January 24, 2013
- [It's Official: Richmond City Council Seeks New Member](#), January 25, 2013
- [Vorderbrueggen: Richmond Special Election is Worth the Money](#), January 27, 2013
- [Nat Bates Pontificates on Council Appointment](#), January 31, 2013
- [Applications for Council Appointments](#), January 31, 2013
- [Applicants for Open Richmond City Council Seat Will Speak Monday](#), February 1, 2013
- [A Dozen Declare Candidacy for Vacant Richmond City Council Seat](#), February 3, 2013
- [Jael Myrick Emerges from a Dozen Contenders to Take Richmond City Council Seat](#), February 5, 2013
- [Richmond Confidential - Jael Myrick Appointed to City Council](#), February 5, 2013
- [Jael Myrick Takes His Seat, Becomes a Part of City Council Antics](#), February 6, 2013
- [Media Comment on Myrick Appointment](#), February 10, 2013
- [Getting to Four Votes: The Political Math Behind the Appointment of Jael Myrick](#), February 19, 2013
- [Gary Bell](#), August 1, 2013
- [Former Richmond City Councilman Gary Bell Dies at 54](#), August 1, 2013
- [Gary Bell Services](#), August 3, 2013
- [Gary Bell Remembered in Richmond and Wichita](#), August 8, 2013

Chevron's Continuing Woes

It has been such a bad year for Chevron in Richmond that you almost feel sorry for them. There was early optimism following completion of repairs on the 2012 fire damage that a new era of cooperation with the City would emerge.

Instead, things just got worse. Every agency investigating the 2012 fire concluded that Chevron was negligent, or even grossly negligent, by not following its own technical advice and safety regulations and responded with record-breaking fines, sanctions and new regulatory requirements industry-wide.



For a corporate giant that maintains “[At Chevron, safety is our #1 priority](#),” it became abundantly clear that safety was not Chevron’s top priority, or if it was, they pursued it with consuming incompetence.

A Chevron that was at first contrite and apologetic immediately following the fire, eventually morphed back into its more traditional and comfortable personality, continuing to challenge property tax levies, trying to buy elections, appealing fines and sanctions and throwing money at sympathetic Richmond nonprofits to win the hearts and minds of the people.

After promising to work with the City of Richmond to fund various mitigations for damage, both tangible and intangible, from the fire, Chevron balked. Heaping insult on injury, the Contra Costa County Assessor significantly reduced Richmond property values, predominantly due to fire damage

to the refinery. In an unprecedented move, the City ended up filing a lawsuit against Chevron for recovery of damages.

Sometimes I think life would be simpler if Chevron would just tell it like it is and admonish its critics to “get over it.” Such a manifesto might look like this:

We are Chevron.

We are a business, not a charitable foundation. We extract non-renewable hydrocarbons from the earth, refine them and sell them as fuels because that is what people demand, and they are willing to pay dearly for it.

Our number one priority is earning our shareholders the highest profit possible on their investments.

We enthusiastically agree that the combustions of the fuels we contribution to greenhouse gases for others. We just provide a legal



extraction and refining process, as well as the produce, constitute the highest proportional and global warming. Fighting global warming is and government subsidized product.

If you want to know who is the mirror. If you want to do that SUV and buy a plug-in Prius. Stop eating oysters and lobsters from the East Coast and berries from South America; stop drinking wine from Chile. Stop buying electronics, cars and clothes made in Asia. Turn off the gas and put solar panels on your roof.

actually responsible for global warming, look in something about it, stop driving and flying. Sell

On behalf of our shareholders, we make significant strategic political contributions to protect our profits and our future. If you don't like what politicians do for us, talk to them; don't blame us.

Transporting and refining fossil fuels is inherently risky and periodically results in fires and explosions that cause property damage, injuries and death. They also produce air pollutants that are unhealthy and sometimes deadly. We are a highly regulated industry, which includes many safeguards, but in the end, we are responsible for our own safety. We try to balance our number one priority, profits, against the downsides of spills, fires and explosions, as well as adverse health impacts, all of which potentially can reduce profits if not controlled.

However, we are human and sometimes make expensive mistakes. But we always make a lot of money for our investors.

We are Chevron.

On the City Council, Chevron has enjoyed the almost unwavering support of Bates and Booze, but the other five members have adopted varying levels of suspicion and skepticism. What Chevron will do in the 2014 election is the subject of great speculation.

Will Chevron get involved as they have in the last few years with multi-million dollar campaigns? With a history of mixed results, they might do just as well to sit this one out and create a little good will.



Bates is not running for reelection but says he will run for mayor. Will Chevron support him, or will they evaluate his chance for success against challengers before committing?



Back in 2011, Chevron bought Booze's unwavering loyalty by allowing him to claim a \$200,000 Chevron donation to RichmondBuild as Booze's personal triumph to save the program from financial ruin. A grateful Booze has made sure no one forgets by bringing it up often, as he also does to remind Chevron of his undying loyalty.

Although Chevron has been trying to persuade Booze to clean up his act, he doesn't seem to be responding, as he has earned and continues to burnish a substantially degraded reputation for his performance over the last three years. He faces litigation with the City over his illegal junkyards, and he is being investigated by the Fair Political Practices Commission. Will Chevron value Booze's loyalty despite his baggage, or will they cut him loose and look for a more stable candidate?

Following is a digest of Chevron 2013 News in Richmond:

- [City/County Win Property Tax Allocation Lawsuit - City of Brentwood v. Contra Costa County](#), January 10, 2013
- [City/County Win Property Tax Allocation Lawsuit - City of Brentwood v. Contra Costa County - Judge Goode Decision](#), January 11, 2013
- [Contra Costa Board of Supervisors Votes Today on Chevron Property Tax Settlement](#), September 17, 2013
- [CSB Final Report on Chevron Pipe Failure](#), February 13, 2013
- [Media Coverage of Chevron Fire Pipe Failure CSB Report and Chevron Response](#), February 14, 2013
- [Chevron Challenges Contra Costa Property Tax Appeal Panelists](#), February 21, 2013
- [Richmond Confidential - Chevron Asks for New Tax Appeal Judges](#), March 11, 2013
- [Chevron Hit With Nearly \\$1 Million Fine For Richmond Refinery Fire](#), January 31, 2013
- [Chronicle's Chip Johnson - \\$1 Million Fine for Chevron Not Enough](#), January 31, 2013
- [Labor and Environmental Groups Join Forces on Refinery Issues](#), February 21, 2013
- [Chevron Findings and Discoveries Meeting](#), March 28, 2013
- [Richmond Chevron Refinery: Federal Officials Say Regulatory Overhaul Needed in Wake of Blaze](#), April 6, 2013
- [Chevron Releases Investigation Report to Community - Transmittal from Nigel Hearne](#), April 12, 2013
- [Chevron: Safety Oversights, Poor Record Keeping Contributed to Massive Richmond Refinery Blaze](#), April 13, 2013
- [Chevron Fire Report Shows Troubled History](#), April 13, 2013
- [Media Coverage of Chevron Fire Report](#), April 18, 2013
- [Federal Investigators Conclude Chevron Refinery Fire Should Trigger Regulatory Reform](#), April 20, 2013
- [Chevron Response to the US Chemical Safety Board Report and Recommendations](#), April 22, 2013
- [To Rebuild Richmond's Trust, Chevron Must Fully Acknowledge Breakdown](#), April 28, 2013
- [Richmond Confidential - Richmond Mulls Legal Action Against Chevron Corp. Over Refinery Fire](#), May 24, 2013
- [Richmond Leaders Want Chevron to Pay College Tuition for Local High School Grads to Atone for Refinery Fire](#), May 29, 2013
- [Chronicle's Chip Johnson - Chevron Scholarship an Idea to Gush Over](#), May 31, 2013
- [New Refinery Manager at Chevron](#), June 5, 2013
- [Chevron Announces Change in Leadership at Richmond Refinery](#), June 5, 2013
- [Chevron Refinery Blaze to Cost Richmond, School District Millions in Property Tax Revenue](#), July 3, 2013

- [State Panel Urges More Stringent Refinery Safety Oversight Following Major Blaze at Richmond, Chevron](#), July 13, 2013
- [Richmond to Sue Chevron](#), July 25, 2013
- [Chevron to Pay \\$190K Fine for Richmond Refinery Violations](#), July 31, 2013
- [Lack of Air Monitoring Near Chevron's Richmond Refinery Concern Residents](#), July 31, 2013
- [Protest Planned at Chevron's Richmond Refinery on Saturday](#), July 31, 2013
- [Chevron Lawsuit Press Conference Tomorrow at 11:00 AM](#), August 1, 2013
- [Chevron Blames Lawsuit on "City's Failed Leadership"](#) August 1, 2013
- [Read Chevron Lawsuit Complaint - Chevron Responds: City Council Dysfunctional, Failed Leadership](#), August 2, 2013
- [Oil Refinery Air Monitoring Delay is Unreasonable](#), August 3, 2013
- [Read Chevron Lawsuit Complaint - Chevron Responds: City Council Dysfunctional, Failed Leadership](#), August 2, 2013
- [Yesterday's March on Chevron](#), August 4, 2013
- [Chevron Pleads No Contest to Six Misdemeanor Criminal Charges - \\$2 Million Fine](#), August 5, 2013
- [Chevron Agrees to Pay \\$2M for Richmond Refinery Fire](#), August 5, 2013
- [The Rest of the Story on Air Monitoring in the City of Richmond](#), August 5, 2013
- [Fire Anniversary Media Coverage of Chevron Events](#), August 6, 2013
- [Chevron Refinery Fire One Year Later: Fallout, Impact Show No Signs of Waning](#), August 10, 2013
- [Richmond: Thousands More Sue Chevron Over Refinery Fire](#), August 13, 2013
- [Government Agencies at Odds in Probe of Fire at Chevron's Richmond Refinery](#), August 27, 2013
- [City Answers Chevron's Motion to Have Case Designated as Complex Litigation](#), August 29, 2013
- [Ritterman Challenges Judd to Debate](#), September 2, 2013
- [Richmond: Chevron to Invest \\$15.5 Million in Community Programs](#), October 1, 2013
- [Chevron's Billion Dollar Modernization Project Moves Forward](#), October 14, 2013
- [Chip Johnson - Richmond's Activist-Mayor Blurs Line Over Chevron](#), October 18, 2013
- [Richmond: Chevron to Try Again for Refinery Modernization Project](#), October 29, 2013
- [SF Chronicle - Richmond Nonprofit's Aid Seen as Front for Chevron](#), November 11, 2013
- [Federal Report Calls for Sweeping Reforms in Aftermath of Chevron Richmond Fire](#), December 16, 2013

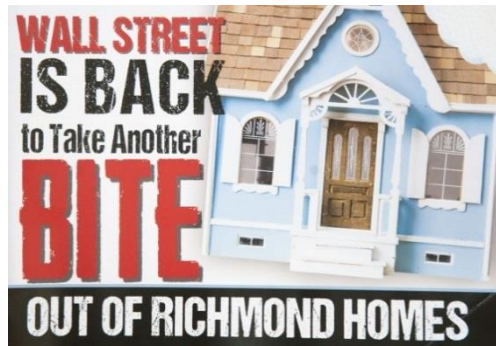
Eminent Domain



Although the eventual outcome remains unpredictable, Richmond's flirtation with the use of eminent domain to rescue the owners of a relatively small number of homes with significantly underwater mortgages has brought national publicity, both favorable and unfavorable, along with the unending and obsessive wrath of Wall Street.

It has also divided the community between its more progressive residents and the traditional "pro-business" interests represented by the Chamber of Commerce and the real estate industry, along with their usual supplicants.

So far, it has been mostly a war of words and political posturing. Although a Council majority has consistently supported the concept, Jim Rogers has joined the opposition, taking with him that critical fifth vote that would be required to actually initiate an eminent domain action.



The City has consistently prevailed in multiple court challenges, but on technicalities rather than substance, which has yet to be adjudicated.

While the level of risk the City faces should an actual taking action occur remains highly debated, it is the suspicion of potential future bond purchasers rather than the litigation brought by vindictive Wall Streeters, that is actually costing the City money and which will likely drive any retreat from the current position of the Council majority.

Follow the eminent domain debate from May 2013 until now:

- [Eminent Domain Could be Used in Battle Against Foreclosures in Richmond](#), May 27, 2013
- [To Rescue Local Economies, Cities Seize Underwater Mortgages Through Eminent Domain](#), July 13, 2013
- [A City Invokes Seizure Laws To Save Homes - NYTimes.com](#), July 30, 2013
- [Richmond Moves Ahead With Controversial Plan to Seize Underwater Mortgages From Investors](#), July 31, 2013
- [California Mayor Attacks 'Greed' With Eminent Domain Bid - Bloomberg Article](#), August 2, 2013
- [Interview of Richmond Mayor Gayle McLaughlin by MSNBC Chris Hayes](#), August 4, 2013
- [Mayor Appears on Democracy Now and Rachael Maddow Show](#), August 6, 2013
- [Banks File Suit Against City of Richmond and MRP for Eminent Domain Mortgage Plan](#), August 8, 2013
- [Banks Sue Richmond to Halt Plan to Seize Mortgages](#), August 8, 2013
- [Is Mortgage Seizure Plan a Win-Win or Lose-Win?](#) August 8, 2013
- [Finance World Piles on Richmond](#), August 10, 2013
- [Yet Another Perspective - City Uses Eminent Domain To Rescue Homeowners From Predatory Loans, Wall Street Freaks Out](#), August 12, 2013
- [I Hear You Knocking But You Can't Come In - Wells Fargo Hides From Richmond Mayor](#), August 16, 2013
- [News Updates on Richmond's Eminent Domain Plan](#), August 16, 2013
- [Wells Fargo vs. City of Richmond. Filed Ex Parte Motion to Take Preliminary Injunction off Calendar](#), August 16, 2013
- [Mayor McLaughlin Interviewed on CNBC](#), August 19, 2013
- [Media Rallies to Protect Wall Street from Predatory Richmond Politicians](#), August 20, 2013
- [Wells Fargo vs Richmond. Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction](#), August 25, 2013
- [Has Wall Street Conspired to Punish Richmond for Underwater Mortgage Rescue Plan?](#) August 30, 2013
- [Richmond Loan Reduction Plan Draws Wide and Disparate Media Coverage](#), August 31, 2013
- [The Banksters Push Back Against Richmond / Firedoglake](#), September 1, 2013
- [Fair Housing Groups Ask Courts to Squelch Investor Lawsuit Against Richmond](#), September 9, 2013
- [YES on Eminent Domain - from Richmond's Poet Laureate Janis Mara](#), September 10, 2013
- [Richmond: Divided City Council Votes to Stay on Course With Plan to Use Eminent Domain to Seize Mortgages](#), September 11, 2013
- [NEWSFLASH: Wells Fargo vs City of Richmond](#), September 12, 2013
- [Judge: Wall Street Suit Against Richmond's Eminent Domain Plan is Premature](#), September 12, 2013
- [Peter Dreier: Richmond, California Defies Wall Street to Help Homeowners](#), September 13, 2013
- [NEWSFLASH Wells Fargo v. City of Richmond](#), September 16, 2013
- [UPDATED NEWSFLASH Wells Fargo v. City of Richmond](#), September 16, 2013
- [Media Coverage of Eminent Domain Lawsuit Dismissal](#), September 17, 2013
- [Newshour - Richmond, CA Government Uses Eminent Domain to Solve Its Foreclosure Crisis](#), September 22, 2013
- [Bank of New York v. City of Richmond - Motion to Dismiss GRANTED](#), November 6, 2013

- [Meet the Mayor Who's Using Eminent Domain to Fight Foreclosure](#), December 2, 2013
- [Richmond Pushes Forward Eminent Domain Plan](#), December 18, 2013

E-FORUM Readers' Choices

E-FORUM Readers – The Best of 2013

Leslie Knight Retirement

- *Straightening out the problems with the deputy city clerk [Leslie Knight?] using staff for personal work. [See [Leslie Knight Investigation and Outcome](#), March 21, 2013, and [Personnel News: Leslie Knight's Retirement](#), May 18, 2013]*

Jael Myrick

- *Getting Jael Myrick elected to council.*

Moody Underpass

- *The Marina Parkway underpass getting started. Paving Cutting Blvd. Getting the trial of the police chief out of the way.*

Downtown Richmond

- *The look of downtown Richmond is also amazing. I don't know where the money came from to put in the streetlights but I enjoy them a lot.*
- *Richmond looks better. I feel safer biking to BART. The greenway is better although a true crossing signal is needed on MacDonald.*

Branch Library

- *I am very grateful that the branch library in Point Richmond is open. It is a community center and very much used and enjoyed.*

Bay Trail

- *I am grateful for the extension of walks and trails next to the water. We must keep them open, they make Richmond uniquely beautiful and enjoyable.*
- *New Bay Trail sections being built by City of Richmond between Shipyard 3 Trail and Dornan Drive*
- *Just came in from an 8-mile bike ride that began at the point at Miller-Knox Park, took us through the splendid new tunnel into Point Richmond, past the natatorium, down Cutting to Canal Road, and out to the Red Oak Victory -- then up over the hill, past the new housing developments, past Brickyard Cove, with a stop at the marina for lunch at All's Fare (which could really do with some more weekday business), and finally back to the point at Miller-Knox. Which reminded me of several Richmond features that I really love and get almost daily use of and pleasure from -- most notably the East Bay Regional Park's Miller-Knox Ridge and the Richmond sections of the Bay Trail. I think it was earlier this year that I biked that new section of Bay Trail out near what used to be the dump off Richmond Parkway. Oh, and come to think of it, I recently checked out the renovated and reopened park at Point Molate -- lovely. These open-space, recreational opportunities that Richmond has to offer are one of the main reasons I enjoy living here and, also, why I finally quit lobbying to sell our house and move elsewhere, now that my husband and I are both retired. It's a big compliment to Richmond that I have a hard time nowadays to think of a place I imagine would be better for us to live. Where we are seems just fine.*



The Plunge

- *The Natatorium is amazing, and I love that it is called "natatorium" instead of ordinary "pool".*



Dornan Drive Tunnel

- *We are so happy the tunnel is open again. Will the Bay Trail be extended from the Red Oak Victory Ship? Wonderful bike lanes on the water's edge to the Brickyard Cove harbor road? Going up and over the hill on the road.*



Carlson Boulevard

- *Carlson looks fabulous and traffic seems to be aware that we are a neighborhood, not a freeway. I think bicyclists calm the roadway on this stretch that was never to be built completely bypasses the Red Oak.*

RPA

- *I have joined the Progressive Alliance. Anything glossy that comes to my door gets automatically tossed because I am certain it's from wealthy resources and for the same reason, I no longer spend time with the many surveys - it's a shame.*



Writing Coach

- *I am now a volunteer writing coach at Richmond High School. It saddened me that an event this past Thursday morning had to be cancelled because there were not enough people willing to give up an hour of their time to coach kids at the Ed Fund Scholars' Luncheon on December 19.*



Proud to Live in Richmond

- *I've been a resident of Richmond for 29 years, and now FINALLY I can say I am proud to live here. Thank you and happy holidays!*



Assemble

- *Immodestly, I have to say among the best is the new restaurant, Assemble, at the Craneway.*

Point Molate

- *State court decision upholding the City of Richmond's denial of the tribal gambling casino proposed at Point Molate*
- *Reopening of Point Molate Beach Park*



Eminent Domain

- *The best was the mayor and city council taking on Chevron and Wall Street to benefit the citizens of Richmond -- I have never been so proud to say where I live: in one of this nation's most progressive cities.*

Rosie the Riveter

- *And I should also mention how much enjoyment my husband and I have gotten from both the Craneway Pavilion and the Rosie the Riveter Visitor Center being right there on the Richmond shoreline. We often stop by the visitor center and talk with the rangers (my husband, is a docent at Fort Point in San Francisco, so they have some interests in common). As for the Craneway, we've been there to attend a hula tournament, a book fair, roller derby (2X), and a steampunk festival. Also, when the Hilltop YMCA had its 5K run at the recent waterfront celebration, I was there with my ukulele in the Y's band, H.U.L.A. (Hilltop Ukulele Lovers Academy), to help raise spirits on that chill morning. So it's great to have all that within reach.*



Barrett Avenue

- *One thing I really love is the re-doing of Barrett. It used to be such a difficult street for a pedestrian to cross or to ride a bike on. For the former, there were surprisingly so few crosswalks. For the latter, I refused to ride my bike in the past because, when I did, cars would zoom by me only (literally) inches away. It was too frightening to continue. But now it all feels so much safer and friendlier. Though I don't drive, I think it's ultimately safer for the cars as well - and with less hassle with the addition of the dedicated turn-lanes. So bravo!*
- *I can't help but applaud the recent lane reduction, bike lanes, and pedestrian crossing improvements on S 23rd Street and on Barrett Ave. I also want to acknowledge the tree planting efforts of Groundwork Richmond in Iron Triangle, Santa Fe, and Coronado neighborhoods (of course, I'm biased) and Richmond Trees in the N&E neighborhood.*



Salute

- *Richmond A Better Place: because of Menebre Aluli's free Thanksgiving dinner at Salute's for the homeless plus flu shots! (She deserves better treatment from the City because of losing so much business due to the underpass construction)*



Crime

- *Best thing that has happened to the City: A lower crime rate, and the title of one of the most progressive cities in the country.*

Murals

- *Best development project: The murals, the continued restoration and revitalization of the downtown area, the Richmond Greenway, Marina Bay underpass.*



Oyster Reef

- *I wanted to submit a brief description of our native oyster reef at Point Pinole. I think it's worthy of being included as one of the good projects of 2013. I've attached the description and a few pictures if you'd like to include one. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.*



E-FORUM

- *ur e.blasts have been so helpful all year, I don't know which was better.*

Gayle McLaughlin

- *I commend her for her courage. She has led the Richmond Cares project, and tried to be effective against Chevron. She may not have much political experience, but she is courageous and energetic, and learning. She puts herself out to meet with all of the City's people and groups. Bravo to her.*



Tom Butt

- *Tom: what category should I put you in? You are far and away the most informed, thoughtful, responsible Council member*

City Council Members

- *If I were to count the city council as employees, I would say Tom Butt, the Mayor, Jovanka Beckles, and Jael Myrick have distinguished themselves as outstanding in that you all listen to what the majority of what your constituents want, and you're not afraid to stand up to corporate bullying from Chevron, Simms, and other deep pockets.*



E-FORUM Readers – The Worst of 2013

Corky Booze

- *The worst thing that happened in Richmond is Corky Booze's constant grandstanding. Corky makes some good points, but his methods are so annoying and disruptive things don't get done that perhaps should be.*
- *I think City voters were entirely wrong to give Mr. Booze the sympathy vote that now has him wasting everyone's time and tying up processes.*
- *I nominate Corky Booze, for the worst person in the entire county. My reasons are as follows....*
 - *He recommended that the Red Oak Victory be shut down to save money.*
 - *He is loud, rude and verbally obnoxious.*
 - *He is a cheater. We all know his fingers are in the cookie jar with that junkyard of his...*
 - *He is anti gay...spoke loudly by his silence at the council meeting where that guy ranted on and on about gays.*
 - *He used to take advantage on that trip to China, with excess baggage fees, and his laundry...in essence I had to pay through my taxes for his shitty underwear. vomit.*
 - *Lastly, he plays his gaddamn black card too much.*
 - *He is a disgusting human being.*
 - *P.S. that a****e Nat Bates is a close second...*
- *Worst city leader: Corky Booze (demonizer of Point Richmond, not a very nice way to thank all of those here who voted for him).*
- *Corky Booze's disruptive diatribes & arrogant posturing, hateful attacks on Mayor & other City Council members and aggressive, racist behavior during City Council meetings*
- *The worst was Corky Booze and his vile, disruptive antics -- I have never been so ashamed and bitter with regret for ever having supported his bid for election.*
- ***WORST OF THE WORST: Corky Booze! He needs to be sanctioned or recalled or something to get him to shut up and stop disrupting City Council meetings...A TOTAL DISGRACE! An embarrassment to the city! Also, he needs to clean up his land and property issues and stop hiding behind legal maneuvers.***
- *Does Owning a Junkyard make you a Junkyard Dog? Once again Corky Booze's snarly presence at city council meetings embarrasses himself, the city council and, sadly, the misguided folks who voted for him. Mr. Booze has nothing to show for his time as a council member except headlines and public revulsion at his gutter tactics. No statesman he. We are sadly subjected to nasty, public harangues from this boastful braggart who consumes all of the oxygen in the room. And how does one incur a \$500+ laundry bill on a short trip? The excessive costs amassed by Mr. Booze and Mr. Bates on their China jaunt and presented to the city to pay are repulsive. But then, I guess when you have no regular income you have no problem having other people pay your way. Mr. Booze is a public embarrassment and obstructionist. I can't wait for his one term to be over.*
- *The worst must be the record of Corky Booze. His behavior at city council meetings is abhorrent and so disrespectful to everyone he lashes out to in the chamber. His waste of city money on the junket to China should be fully investigated and monies repaid where necessary. In future city council members and employees should stick to the mandated expense limit on these junkets, or even forego them altogether.*



- *Of course on the negative side, Corky's constant and outrageous shenanigans are not to be topped (or bottomed?). I can only look forward to getting rid of him in the November elections. Hope it's not too late to include these in your letter. I'm looking forward to seeing it.*

City Council Members

- *The worst are Rogers, Booze and Bates. Rogers is scared of his own shadow and it sickened me when he came up with the proposal to "honor" Chevron for their lousy \$3 million a year for five years. Talk about rolling over. How a debarred lawyer keeps getting elected is beyond me. I believe many people don't know about his past. He uses the schools and children to win over hearts and minds. Bates and Booze are completely bought by deep pockets. They defend Chevron to the "T", even though they voted for the lawsuit. I was told that Chevron gave them the go ahead to vote for the lawsuit so that they wouldn't look bad in the eyes of their constituents. And Corky used the progressives to get elected. Some of us even worked in his campaign office to get him elected. Little did we know what this man was really like.*

Train Horns

- *Having you reassemble the train horns versus quiet zone group has led to some interesting e.messages but no reduction in the vagaries of wandering train engineers, music they do not make with those horns.*

Nat Bates

- *Mr. Bates should be granted emeritus status and shown the door.*

Chevron

- *Worst large corporation: Chevron*
- *Worst thing: Chevron's latest "flare", and the fact that they place profits and big bonuses over the safety of residents and their employees.*

City Council

- *City Council meetings going on too long with continuous bickering*
- *City Council members' wasteful boondoggle trips to Sister Cities in China, Cuba and Japan.*
- *What on Earth do we citizens get from Council and City administrators journeying to Cuba and China? I think the picture of Tom and Shirley next to Hemingway(?) makes the point: It was a nice vacation but little else. At least Tom and Shirley paid their way.*

Eminent Domain

- *City Council diversion into eminent domain taking of underwater mortgages*
- *I think the worst blunder the city has made is the involvement in the eminent domain program. We have no*
- *Thumbs down on Eminent Domain! The partner the City has chosen seems a little shady and, worst of all, million dollar homes, or close to it, are on "the list!" I might change my mind if more every day and poor folks would benefit. I am very disturbed that the City cannot sell its bonds!!!*

Street Lights

- *No lights on road leading from Bayview exit to Regatta Blvd., now heavily used because of the underpass construction!*

Moody Underpass

- *Lack of signs for directions to shops and restaurants, especially Salute's,*



during underpass construction. NEED MANY MORE, especially for Salute's!

The Anchorage

- Worst development project: The condos right by the railroad track in Marina Bay (The Anchorage?). Lousy planning. Should have been open space with cafes, shops, restaurants and a food market. We need a decent food market out here. We have over 3,000 residents living in Marina Bay with no food market.

WCCUSD

- Debts continue to pile up, scores continue to drop. The writer-coach connection is now expanded and tasked to raise students' abilities in English. The program takes students out of classrooms and pairs them with poorly prepared (but well-intentioned) volunteers. Since it was instituted, scores have dropped. Professional teachers do not prepare appropriate assignments nor curriculum guides, so the unsupervised volunteers "teach" whatever they want (like politics or morality). They are trained to praise whatever the students present to raise their self-esteem. Volunteers like the program, but students do not benefit academically. UTR, supported by the Board, puts the lid on charter schools where students would be encouraged to excel. "Professional development" means teachers meeting with other teachers for extra pay—often the incompetent leading the stupid. Most of our teachers graduated in the bottom half of their college classes (and plenty in the bottom 10%). WCCUSD has an almost unbelievable absentee rate among employees, obfuscated by the Board. A higher percentage of students than teachers show up. The truancy program for kids does not extend to adults. (There are many good teachers who fight against the prevalent low standards.) Suspensions are kept down by tolerating disruptive behavior, so kids who don't want to learn remain in classrooms and prevent learning by more motivated students. Property values throughout the district are impacted by the notoriously terrible junior and senior high schools, and hundreds of parents transfer their children anywhere other than WCCUSD. WCCUSD costs more but is not getting better, alas.

Bill Lindsay

- Bill Lindsay is great, although I don't trust some of the things he does. I hear through the grapevine he has been showing Pt. Molate to certain developers (apparently he doesn't like our committee because we have other ideas), and he supports Nichols Consultants and Terra Phase for the cleanup at Pt. Molate. The two companies have been doing nothing except to milk the city to the tune of \$75K to \$100K per month! This should be put out for bid. I also didn't like it that he let his assistant, Leslie Knight, off with a full pension and a slap on the wrist!

E-FORUM Readers – Best City Employees and Departments

City Manager's Staff and Clerk

- I frequently interact with the City Manager's staff and the City Clerk. Without fail, they have been helpful, prompt in reply and courteous. In other words, they are professionals and we are lucky to have them.
- Our City Manager is fantastic and he must have a wonderful staff also. Chris Magnus
- Our chief of police is the best. Our mayor is amazing.



- *The PD. Not only has the Chief got us on the ball, the Officers I have come in contact with are not only courteous and pleasant, they are really fine human beings, whom it is a pleasure to meet and be helped with. Bravo.*
- *Chris Magnus, Chief RPD - for overall crime reduction.*

Bill Lindsay

- *Best city leaders and employees = Tom Butt and Bill Lindsay, for accomplishing miracles in an impossible situation.*

RPD

- *RPD has been doing a great job, very fast response time. More "tag readers" (cameras that read license plates) needed, on as many police patrol vehicles as possible, and at key intersections in Richmond (Castro & Tewksbury, Cutting & Canal, Cutting & Garrard are of most importance to me personally, as they would give complete coverage of Point Richmond, both to detect stolen vehicles immediately, and give leads after crimes are committed)*

Parks and Landscaping

- *Parks & Landscaping for their excellent work in maintaining and improving the City's parks and Bay Trail sections*

Orlando Johnson, and Gary Lewis

- *Crime-Free Housing Officers Orlando Johnson, and Gary Lewis worked closely with public and market rare housing properties throughout the city. Their work from both the enforcement and community policing standpoint was significant in reducing crime and keeping affordable housing safer. Officer Lewis in particular has worked with the youth in Crescent Park on a Straight A's Club to keep them focused on academic success instead of unwanted activity. This team is outstanding.*

David Rogowski

- *I nominate David Rogowski from the code enforcement unit for professional service. He is always efficient and pleasant in his work as a code enforcement officer. He goes the extra mile by working with residents who are having trouble to get their properties in compliance, and will even contact family members of seniors who are struggling to stage intervention.*

Explorer Post 110

- *The RPD Explorer Post 110 has and their advisors do a great job of working with young people thinking of a career in law enforcement. Explorer Post 110 serves the community with countless hours of community service. They also receive academy level training in law enforcement. The payoff? Three of the former graduates of the program are now Richmond Police Officers, or in the academy. Officer Carmen Santana was sworn in this month.*

Chad Smalley

- *Chad Smalley, for shepherding the underpass project so it could finally begin!*

Tod Opdyke

- *Distinguished Service: Sgt. Tod Opdyke, now retired - a leader in community policing; he actually did it!*



Chris Chamberlain

- *I like Chris Chamberlain, although he doesn't think outside the box. Case in point is Pt. Molate Beach Park. I had suggested (I'm on the Pt. Molate Citizens Advisory Committee) using crushed oyster shell for the parking area which would have cut down on runoff from cars to the bay, and its ADA compliant. He wouldn't listen to the idea, and paved the parking lot with asphalt. He also lined up the picnic tables like it's a cafeteria. But, he's very utilitarian. I appreciate he uses drought tolerant plants for the medians and other park.*

E-FORUM Readers – Worst City Employees and Departments

Bill Lindsay

- Downgrade from Best City Manager: *Bill Lindsay didn't handle the personnel issue very well.*

Craig Murray

- *Craig Murray is leaving, but he was not to be trusted. Totally in bed with Terra Phase and Nicols Consulting.*

E-FORUM Readers Best Organizations of 2013

Saffron Strand

- *Organization? I nominate Saffron Strand. What an incredible org. founded thru the energy and caring of a couple women. Their presentation at RPA was very moving and very savvy. What a demonstration of people's caring and activism! Bravo!*
- *Saffron Strand - Incredible organization that helps the homeless. Yvonne Nair is totally committed to helping the disenfranchised of our society.*

North Richmond Network

- *I nominate Demetria Saunders, formerly of Youth Enrichment Strategies for her work in establishing the North Richmond Network, a wraparound community of service agencies in North Richmond. Demetria worked hard to get the community to support the parent and neighborhood activities at Verde School.*

Davis Chapel

- *I nominate Pastor Cassandry Keys of Davis Chapel for her work spearheading the North Richmond Community Cultural Celebration, an event that brought together neighbors in North Richmond, and her efforts to start a "Real Men Read" campaign at Verde School. Pastor Keys is kind, deliberate and hard working in the task to see neighborhoods transform.*

North Richmond Neighborhood Watch

- *I nominate the North Richmond Neighborhood Watch which has more block captains than any other group in the city (over 40). The group has increased the level of reporting in North Richmond.*

RPA

- *Richmond Progressive Alliance - Best thing that ever happened to Richmond. The corporate powers hate this organization because they have taken a lot of corporate power out of City government. Since the RPA has*



SAFFRON STRAND
Friends & Family Barbeque
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2012 / 11am-4pm
Miller Knox Park's Seagull Picnic Area, Pt. Richmond

Chit & Carlton BBQ Rib Throwdown
Musical Jam - Bring Instruments!
Poetry Collaboration with Christine

KID GAMES
Sack Race
Three-Legged Race
Egg & Spoon Race
Face Painting
Drawing Station
Bubble Blowing
Tug-of-War

ADULTS
Fish & Chicken
Steakburgers & Hot Dogs
Pasta Salad & Spring Rolls
Vegetarian & Chips
Coke & Soft Drinks
Fresh Fruit Kabobs
Punch & Lemonade
Jelly & Pops

TICKETS
\$10 Single / \$15 Couple
\$20 Family (two parents & two children)
\$25 per additional child

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Applebee's
SEE YOU TOMORROW!

For more information, please contact: Marketing@palcorp.com



been around, Richmond has enjoyed an influx of green businesses, a much lower crime rate, and the city has moved forward with populist and progressive ideas such as Richmond Cares, the soda tax (which was defeated because of lies and corporate money), the lawsuit against Chevron, no casino at Pt. Molate. A big feather in the city's cap was getting the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab which I give a lot of credit to progressive city council member Jeff Ritterman.

Urban Tilth

- *Urban Tilth is a wonderful organization that teaches kids, and adults, how to grow healthy organic food and how to prepare it. I truly believe it also gives inner city kids a purpose which keeps down crime. Urban Tilth has grown exponentially in the last few years. Doria Robinson deserves a lot of kudos for starting and running this organization.*



Rich City Rides

- *Rich City Rides is another great organization. Najari Smith has introduced cycling to inner city kids and adults, and he has shown them that cycling is a viable transportation vehicle, as well as good for the environment and personal health. His organization was instrumental in getting Richmond more bike lanes which makes it safer for bike riders, and therefore encourages more cycling.*



Fix Our Ferals

- *Fix Our Ferals—these folks, largely or entirely unpaid, I don't have the details on that, have been and continue to be responsible for the trapping, neutering, fostering, and placement of many feral cats in our community. It is an approach that is both humane and cost-effective. Cats that are not adoptable (born feral, some cats prefer living outdoors) are returned to their locale and many of us who volunteer are responsible for feeding them every day. (I personally have been "the Monday feeder" of a stable and adorable small colony of cats down at the Craneway Building for well over two years now.) This is *such* a worthwhile organization, improves our neighborhoods, and teaches humane treatment of all beings. So worthy of recognition!*



Richmond Trees

- *Richmond Trees—well, you know about Richmond Trees. After decades of residential areas where the main street landscaping consisted of power poles and streetlights, Richmond Trees has been an absolutely grass-roots organization that has worked tirelessly to obtain, place, and help to maintain street trees in our neighborhoods. I'm sure you've already read about the many studies that show the astonishing benefits of lining our streets with trees, from making oxygen, raising real estate values, and providing beauty to actually calming traffic, lowering crime rates (yes!!), and even slowing the deterioration of city pavements. These guys have worked their hearts out educating residents, looking for funding, and putting in time and muscle power—all for free—to bring [back] the enormous benefits of street trees to our city.*



E-FORUM Readers – Wishes and Predictions for 2014

Term Limits

- *I predict the city council will eliminate term limits on the mayor. All term limits do is to ensure that staff, who stay on the job for decades, have more power than the person we elect.*

Terminal 1

- *Would like to see the property at the south end of Dornan (near Ferry Park) turned into a park, with Bay Trail access adjacent to the shoreline, rather than becoming another housing development.*

Homicides

- *Predictions: 18 murders in Richmond in 2014, hundreds or thousands of burglaries and robberies.*

2014 Campaign

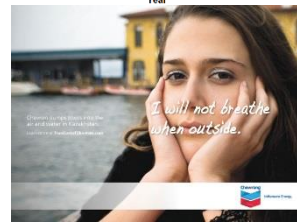
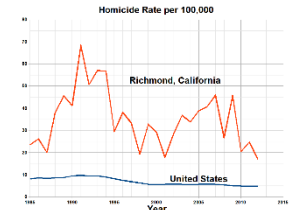
- *Voters will be deluged by the most and nastiest campaign mailers ever seen during a Mayoral and City Council election*
- *Corky Booze' will receive the fewest votes ever cast for a City Council incumbent running for reelection*
- *President Obama and Michelle will make weekly trips to Richmond to urge election of Nat Bates as Mayor*
- *Prediction: Booze indicted for fraud. Beckles drops out of race. Final: Ramsey, Butt, McLaughlin, Myrick, Martinez*
- *Can't predict anything. I'm worried Chevron is going to come out with their big guns and deceitful, lying fliers, billboards, and TV ads in November 2014. They can buy anyone, and they already have at least two bought individuals on the city council, with one trailing not far behind. Heaven help us if Nat Bates gets elected as mayor. It will be the decline of Richmond once again. All good progress will go down the drain, I can guarantee it.*

Greenway

- *Prediction: In 2014 we will close the Richmond Greenway gap with a "Unity Bridge" for bicycles and pedestrians. It will be built out of steel salvaged from the Bay Bridge.*

My Predictions for 2014

1. After a bitter and expensive campaign, the City Council will maintain a bare progressive majority after the 2014 election.
2. The City of Richmond litigation against Chevron will be settled.
3. The Chevron Refinery Hydrogen project will be permitted, and construction will resume.
4. The Point Molate Litigation with Upstream and Guidiville will be resolved, and Point Molate will begin to be developed using the "Presidio Trust" model.
5. Crime, including homicides will continue to drop.
6. The eminent domain initiative will not be implemented.
7. A City sales tax for street repair will win on the 2014 ballot.
8. Property tax revenue will rise.
9. Quiet Zones will be expanded.
10. Proposed shoreline development projects will falter due to community resistance and technical design flaws.



Happy New Year!

Tom Butt