

October 1, 2023

RICHMOND CHAMBER

Stay up to date on what's happening in the Richmond Business Community.



Save Riggers Loft



Baltic Kiss Celebrates One-Year
Anniversary in Style



Baltic Kiss Celebrate One Year Party



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The Richmond Chamber of Commerce exists to provide services, resources and advocacy to foster growth in the business community and benefit West Contra Costa County. We believe a healthy community can only be maintained by a strong local economy. The Richmond Chamber represents and works for our members, which include businesses and organizations not only located in Richmond but those located elsewhere and doing business in Richmond



SAVE RIGGERS LOFT

City Pressures Historic Riggers Loft to Vacate for Potential Wind Industry



Riggers loft has long been a beacon for tourists and locals alike, offering a range of attractions including wine tastings, gastronomic delights, live music, weddings, and more.

RICHMOND – In a recent turn of events, the iconic Riggers Loft Wine Company is facing intense scrutiny from the Richmond City Council. Positioned adjacent to the historic Red Oak Victory, the loft has long been a beacon for tourists and locals alike, offering a range of attractions including wine tastings, gastronomic delights, live music, weddings, and more.

Such establishments are typically the pride and joy of cities, serving as key promotional points to boost tourism and local economy. However, Richmond's city officials seem to

have a different agenda. Their eyes are set on what could potentially be a booming wind industry, and the Riggers Loft has found itself caught in the crosshairs.

The fallout began when the pandemic hit. Like many businesses, the Riggers Loft grappled with financial challenges, making it tough to keep up with full rent payments. Rather than finding a middle ground, the City opted for a hard line, initiating court proceedings to evict the establishment. This was despite the winery's significant contributions over the years, which include hefty rent

payments, tax generation, and job creation.

In a twist of fortune, the eviction was momentarily halted. Both parties agreed upon a temporarily reduced rent scheme and a plan to recover the backlog of rent payments. Business rebounded, and both the City and Riggers Loft conceded to increased rent, coupled with a faster reimbursement of past dues.

However, the saga hasn't ended. The city's legal department seems adamant about ushering the Riggers Loft out of Richmond. Their hope? To make room for a surge of wind industry firms. This ambition comes without a confirmed contract from any wind company, and there's no concrete evidence that such a company is en route.

In essence, Richmond stands on the brink of losing a landmark winery—a place that has consistently drawn people to the heart of the city. Residents and supporters are rallying behind the Riggers Loft, urging everyone to spread the word and champion for its survival.

Richmond Takes Action on Unpermitted Street Food Vendor



The city of Richmond is raising concerns over certain street food set-ups that are not authorized within city limits, citing significant health and safety risks. These unauthorized vendors are not to be confused with the city-approved food trucks and carts, which adhere to strict health and safety guidelines.

Various makeshift arrangements, such as grocery carts repurposed as food stations, outdoor cooking tools, and sidewalk obstructions with tables and chairs, are among the prohibited set-ups. Such configurations have not been sanctioned by Public Health due to their potential to compromise food storage, preparation, and handling.

Residents should be cautious of these unregulated street food vendors. While the allure of a quick bite might be tempting, these unlicensed setups can jeopardize public health. Furthermore, they operate at an unfair advantage, evading taxes and sidestepping health regulations, which adversely affects legitimate local businesses.

The community is urged to report any sightings of unauthorized street food vendors to Public Health. We also encourage supporting our licensed local businesses that maintain the highest standards of health and safety for all.

WELCOME NEW CHAMBER MEMBERS



Young Golden Movers is becoming the #1 choice for moving services. We perform professional residential and commercial moving services. We have professionally trained employees that are prepared to move your belongings in a safe and efficient manner. Our rates are competitive and our services are astounding.

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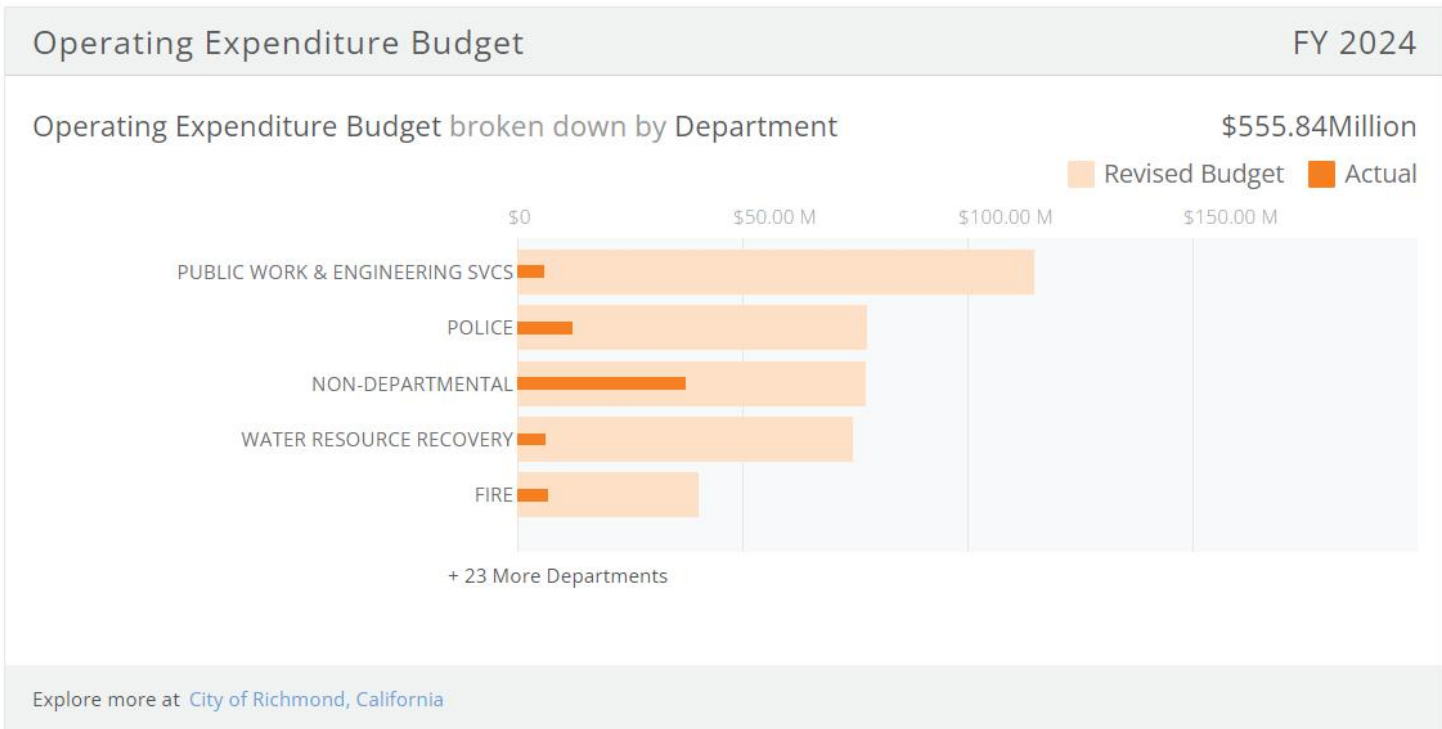
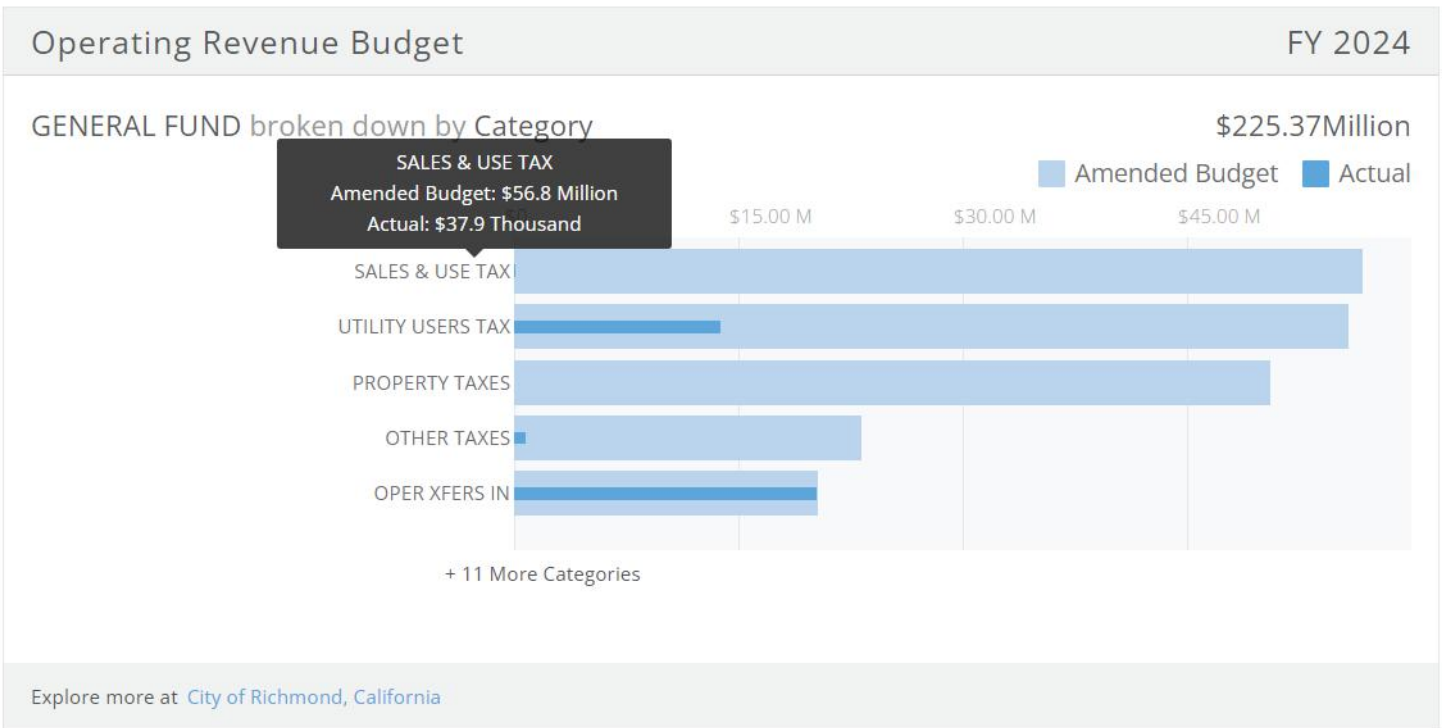


Peer Connections Centers is a curriculum based recovery program that is free to anyone ages 18 years and older.

We understand that everyone's journey to recovery is different. Our programs offer a variety of different ideas, subjects, and activities that allow members to choose the ones that best fit their interests.

<https://peerconnectionsca.org/>

Richmond Financial Transparency



Richmond Reports Fiscal Deficit of **-\$97,300,000** for 2023-2024

Richmond’s fiscal health is under scrutiny as the city reports a concerning loss of **-\$97,300,000** for the fiscal year spanning from July 2023 to June 30, 2024. With a general fund operating revenue of **\$458,540,000**, the city’s expenditures far outweigh its earnings, raising eyebrows and concerns among residents.

The general fund, central to any city’s financial health, derives its inflows from a broad spectrum of sources such as property tax, fees, charges for services, grants, operating transfers, sales taxes, and utility users taxes. These sources

collectively constitute nearly 80% of Richmond’s general fund revenue, underscoring their paramount importance in the city’s financial framework.

A spotlight on revenue measures showcases that Measure U, a business tax initiative, channeled \$11,025,000 into the city’s treasury. Yet, even with such revenue-generating instruments, Richmond found itself in a challenging fiscal position.

Total expenses for the fiscal year loomed at \$555,840,000. When this expenditure is matched against the city’s revenue, the sizable deficit of -\$97,300,000 becomes evident.

Diving deeper into expenditure patterns, 26% of the city’s outflows were shouldered by Public Works & Engineering Svcs expense of \$114,821,696. This metric further emphasizes the role of the general fund in Richmond’s overall fiscal narrative.

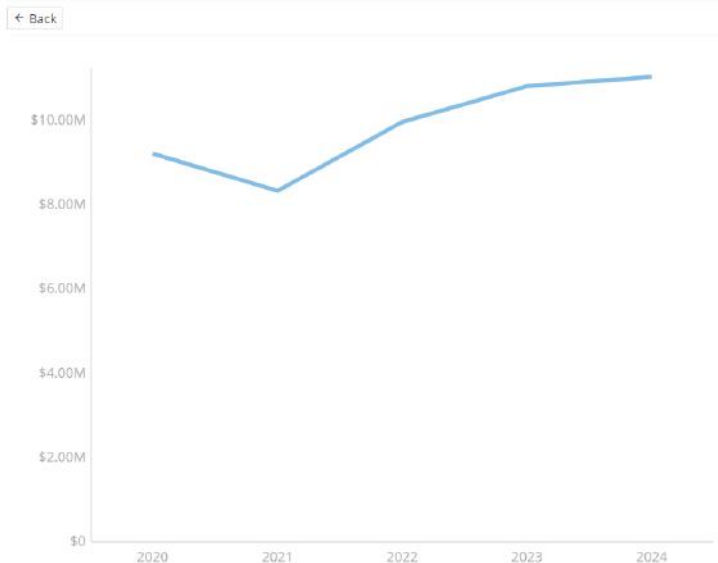
The question now reverberating through the city’s corridors is: should residents be alarmed at Richmond’s seeming inability to balance its budget?

A city’s financial well-being isn’t solely determined by a single fiscal year’s performance. However, consecutive deficits can spell trouble, potentially jeopardizing the city’s capability to finance essential services. This might lead to service cutbacks, heightened taxes, or a spike in borrowing, thereby pressuring residents.

Given the substantial gap between the inflows and outflows, it’s imperative for Richmond’s administration to meticulously dissect the causes behind the deficit and formulate holistic strategies to bridge the financial chasm. Now more than ever, there’s a pressing need for increased transparency and a possible overhaul of Richmond’s financial policies.

\$11.03 Million MEASURE U SALES 2024 July 01, 2023 - June 30, 2024

MEASURE U SALES broken down by Object
Within SALES & USE TAX and SALES & USE TX



Measure U Infuses Richmond’s General Funds with an Extra \$1.79M: What’s Next?”



The recent implementation of Richmond’s Measure U business tax adds a substantial \$11,030,000 to the general fund adding an additional \$1,790,000 from previous business tax. But with the added funds comes heightened scrutiny and controversy. The tax has ignited debates and spurred legal challenges, with some factions of the business community stepping into the courtroom to dispute its legitimacy. They argue against what they perceive as an undue financial burden, especially on smaller enterprises still grappling with economic challenges from the past. The effectiveness and fairness of Measure U will truly be tested in the coming months.



Richmond’s police department is critically understaffed, jeopardizing public safety, according to a recent study commissioned by the city

The Matrix Consulting Group found that the current force of 120 officers, down from an authorization of 180 in 2015, struggles to meet the city’s needs, particularly when major incidents arise.

Last Friday, nearly all available officers were preoccupied with a standoff situation at Crescent Park Apartments, exemplifying the staffing crisis. This has been a persistent issue, with Police Chief Bisa French stating

that the force often relies on mandatory overtime to cover the city’s beats.

In 2021, the city council slashed the police budget by \$3 million, resulting in the departure of 24 officers and the elimination of 12 vacant positions. While 17 new officers were hired this year, the department is functioning with approximately 110 deployable officers due to injuries.

The decrease in officers has significantly affected public safety. Notably, proactive policing, which targets repeat offenders and hotspots, has been significantly hampered. This proactive approach, according to French, has been pivotal in the declining crime rates witnessed over the years in Richmond.

The Matrix report highlights that Richmond Police spent only 30.5% of their time in proactive activities, below the recommended 35-40% range. It further recommends the hiring of an additional 40 officers and emphasizes filling vacancies in both patrol and investigations units.

Aside from staffing issues, the high overtime costs are also a financial burden, averaging almost \$9 million annually, as stated by City Councilmember Doria Robinson.



What can we do?

Contact your District City Council and let them know that we need more police officers in Richmond, and what plans do they have to ensure your safety?

How to get more clients - Attract New & Loyal Customers

In the ever-evolving business landscape, attracting new customers while retaining the old ones is both an art and a science. With the competition stiffer than ever, how can businesses stand out and magnetize a larger clientele? Here are some proven strategies:

1. Cultivate an Online Oasis: In the digital age, your online presence is your calling card. Ensure that your website is user-friendly and engaging. Tap into the power of social media to create a two-way communication channel with your audience. Regularly share valuable content and spotlight customer testimonials to build trust.

3. Community is Key: Engage locally. Attend or host community events, partner with nearby businesses for collaborative promotions, and be visible in local media channels. The community will be more likely to support businesses they feel are invested in them.

In conclusion, attracting and retaining clients requires a mix of modern strategies and timeless principles. As businesses adapt and innovate, the heart of the matter remains: value your customers and they will value you in return.



Baltic Kiss Celebrates One-Year Anniversary in Style

One year has swiftly passed since Baltic Kiss, the brainchild of the dynamic Tony Carracci and his partner Miss Suzie, began its culinary journey in the Point. The venue quickly became a hotspot for those in search of a hearty Southern comfort menu, delectable cocktails, and captivating live music. It's been a year of providing locals and visitors alike with memorable nights out.

On Friday, August 25th, starting at 6 p.m., the Richmond Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Point Richmond Business Association, held a spirited "One Year Party" to commemorate the occasion. The event, open to the public without any admission fee, was a delightful blend of laughter, dance, music, and gastronomy.

As the celebration carried on into the late hours, guests were serenaded by musical talents Cassandra Lewis & Graham Patzner. With such a triumphant first year behind them, it's evident that Baltic Kiss will remain a pillar of entertainment in our community for years to come.



Profitability for our members today and Prosperity for our community tomorrow



<p>Small Business Level \$199</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Opportunities per year to share on eblast • Host a Mixer • Discount to attend the Mixer • Ribbon Cutting Celebration 	<p>Promoting Business Level \$550</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listing on the Chamber's online membership directory. • Priority referrals for all Chamber members. • Membership certificate suitable for display. • Certificates of Origin for international trade. • Six (6) opportunities per membership year to advertise on the online chamber newsletter. • A ribbon cutting celebration in honor of a new business, anniversary, or a new location.
<p>Power Networking Level \$1,050</p> <p>All benefits of the promotional level plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free three minute promotional video or a free hosted WordPress website. • Unlimited opportunities to advertise to over 8,000 contacts using the Chamber weekly Newsletter. • Use of the chamber conference room. • Access to mailing labels of over 1000 business 	<p>Marketing Level \$2,550</p> <p>All benefits of the Power Networking level plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive 50% off the largest table price at the annual special fundraiser event. • Sponsorship of a new member orientation, thanks for giving luncheon, and first responders appreciation BBQ. • your logo displayed at all chamber events.
<p>Executive Level \$5,050</p> <p>All benefits of the Marketing Level plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsorship of the Annual Summit (includes a table), and one monthly Breakfast for Business of your choice. • Receive 50% off the largest table price at the Annual Special Fundraiser event. • Receive Online Banner Advertising including: Featured and Popular Banner Ads. 	<p>President's Circle \$10,050</p> <p>All benefits of the Executive Level plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive all versions of Online Banner Advertising including: Premium, Featured, and Popular Banner Ads (customized to your specification). • Your logo featured on the Chamber's website homepage linked to your website. • Your logo featured on the "Membership Insider" email newsletter.

BEST OF RICHMOND



Coming Your Way: The Best of Richmond - A Celebration of Local Businesses

Richmond, a vibrant city known for its diverse community and thriving business scene, is gearing up for an exciting event that will showcase the very best that the city has to offer. The Richmond Chamber of Commerce is proud to present “Best of Richmond,” a unique initiative that puts the power in the hands of its residents to recognize and celebrate their favorite local businesses.

The Best of Richmond aims to honor excellence and recognize the outstanding contributions made by businesses across various industries. From restaurants to dry cleaners, retail stores to service providers, this event encompasses the rich tapestry of offerings that make Richmond a truly exceptional place to live, work, and play.

What sets the Best of Richmond apart is that it allows the residents themselves to decide which businesses deserve recognition. Rather than relying on a panel of judges or industry experts, the community is

invited to cast their votes and have a direct say in which businesses will be celebrated. This democratic approach ensures that the awards truly reflect the preferences and experiences of the people who call Richmond home.

Once the voting period comes to a close, the anticipation builds as the Chamber of Commerce meticulously counts and verifies the votes. The winners will be announced at a special awards ceremony, where business owners, community leaders, and residents will come together to celebrate the best of Richmond. It will be an evening of recognition, networking, and forging new connections, all while showcasing the exceptional businesses that contribute to the city’s prosperity.

So, mark your calendars and be prepared to cast your votes for the Best of Richmond.



Search Richmond Business Online

The Richmond Chamber of Commerce offers a local business directory of local businesses, making it a valuable resource for individuals seeking a wide range of services. Whether you’re in search of enticing places to dine or reliable contractors for your projects, the Chamber’s website is the go-to destination. By visiting our website

RCOC.COM

<https://www.rcoc.com/membership-directory-2/>



Richmond Chamber of Commerce

We are a voice for each of our members and encourage participation by all. We are an excellent resource for anyone wanting information about Richmond and its business opportunities, policies and trends.



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Executive Committee

Chair: Hakim Johnson (Chevron), Vice-Chair Wally, Sarah (PLANN-A Development, LLC), Chair-Elect: Doellstedt, Rich (Richmond Wholesale Meat), Operations Ziesenhenn, John (M.A. Hays Insurance Co.) Past Chair: Jill Rodby (Sims Metal)

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Sofia Lopez (Membership and Events Director)

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