

July 1, 2023

RICHMOND CHAMBER

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



Summer Employment Program

Does your business need additional help?



Hilltop Auto Dealer moves forward with a lawsuit

Hilltop Auto Mall filed suit, claiming an unconstitutional 8,000 percent increase in taxes due to the new rate structure.



City of Richmond reduces gun violence and experience a notable decrease in violent crimes

RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT has successfully managed to reduce gun violence and experience a notable decrease in violent crimes.

Little Buddha Lounge opens in Richmond



The Little Buddha Lounge, a haven of holistic healing and wellness services designed to nurture your mind, body, and spirit. Our range of offerings extends beyond conventional boundaries, encompassing oxygen therapy, aromatherapy, chromotherapy, sound therapy.



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.



HILLTOP AUTO DEALERSHIPS' LAWSUIT MOVES FORWARD



Hilltop Auto Mall filed suit, claiming an unconstitutional 8,000 percent increase in taxes due to the new rate structure



Hilltop Auto Mall filed suit, claiming an unconstitutional 8,000 percent increase in taxes due to the new rate structure approved by voters in

A Contra Costa County Superior Court judge has rejected Richmond's attempt to dismiss a claim filed by local auto dealerships to invalidate an increase in business taxes levied under Measure U. Last year, six dealerships located in Hilltop Auto Mall filed suit, claiming an unconstitutional 8,000 percent increase in taxes due to the new rate structure approved by voters in 2020.

The dealerships argue that the city failed to follow its own procedures and did not take any formal action to reduce the business tax rate or refund the excess tax paid under protest. Attorneys for Richmond tried

to dismiss the lawsuit, asserting that the dealerships had not exhausted administrative remedies to lower their business taxes. However, the judge rejected the city's argument, and the case will now proceed.

Andrew Bassak, attorney for the dealerships, emphasized the need for a reduction in the Richmond business tax rate, stating that it surpasses what other cities in Contra Costa County reasonably charge.

The dealerships claim that the tax burden consumes their entire net profit percentages, making it untenable for their family-owned businesses. While

the city was successful in removing one of the dealerships' claims, the judge agreed that the business tax does not constitute an illegal taking. The dealerships allege that the new tax system violates their constitutional rights and seek protection under the U.S. Constitution's Dormant Commerce Clause and the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause.

The court order noted that Richmond had to prove the dealerships' failure to follow proper procedures, which it failed to do. The exhaustion process outlined in Measure U may not be capable of addressing the dealerships' concerns, as it only addresses the amount in a given year but not the overall existence of the tax rate challenged by the plaintiffs.

SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM 2023



The City of Richmond Youth WORKS Program is now recruiting employer worksites for the 2023 Youth WORKS Summer Employment Program.

Youth WORKS employment program that helps teens and young adults develop skills and experience needed to obtain meaningful work experiences.

Businesses within the Richmond and East Bay area can serve as a host worksite for Richmond youth ages 16 - 24 for up to 500 hours.

Youth receive comprehensive career training and paid work experience at NO COST to the employers!

BECOMING A WORKSITE ALSO MEANS:

- Gaining access to a pool of new vetted young talent
- Working with a dedicated staff to ensure success of youth & business experience
- Assistance with short term projects
- Excellent PR potential for your business
- Helping build the future workforce

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.

<https://www.younggoldenmovers.com/>
info@YoungGoldenMovers.org



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/>



Contact Bouakhay Phongboupha
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510-412-2044

Five Free Ways to Boost Small Business Revenue Using Social Media



In today's digital age, social media platforms have become powerful tools for small businesses to increase their reach, engage with customers, and ultimately boost revenue. The best part is that leveraging social media doesn't have to break the bank. We will explore five effective and cost-free strategies for small businesses to maximize their revenue through social media.



DEFINE Define your target audience and craft compelling content

- Understanding your target audience is crucial to create content that resonates with them. Use social media analytic to gain insights into your audience's demographics, preferences, and online behavior. Tailor your content accordingly to address their pain points and provide value. Engage them through captivating visuals, informative posts, and storytelling. By establishing a strong connection with your target audience, you can increase brand loyalty, attract new customers, and ultimately boost revenue.



BUILD Build a consistent brand presence:

- Consistency is key when it comes to social media. Develop a cohesive brand identity by maintaining consistent visual elements, such as color schemes, logos, and fonts across all your social media profiles. This helps in creating a strong brand recall and builds trust among your audience. Ensure your brand voice remains consistent in your posts and interactions. By presenting a unified brand presence, you establish credibility and increase the likelihood of converting followers into paying customers.



ACTIVATE Actively engage with your audience

- Actively engage with your audience: Social media is not a one-way street. Actively engage with your audience by responding to comments, messages, and mentions promptly. Show appreciation for positive feedback and address concerns or complaints in a timely and professional manner. Actively participating in conversations shows your commitment to customer satisfaction and fosters a sense of community around your brand. Engaged customers are more likely to recommend your business, leading to increased revenue through word-of-mouth marketing.

Social media provides small businesses with a cost-effective way to boost their revenue. By defining their target audience, creating compelling content, building a consistent brand presence, actively engaging with their audience, leveraging user-generated content, and harnessing the power of social media influencers, small businesses can effectively grow their online presence, increase customer engagement, and ultimately boost their revenue. By implementing these strategies, small businesses can thrive in the competitive digital landscape without straining their budgets.



The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) system has flagged the impending closure or relocation of three prominent businesses

In a recent blow to the economic landscape of Richmond, the city's Workforce Development Department has received a disheartening notice from the state. The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) system has flagged the impending closure or relocation of three prominent businesses: Hello Fresh, Nutiva, and Sangamo Therapeutic. The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) is

a federal labor law in the United States that requires employers to provide advance notice of plant closings and mass layoffs. This news raises concerns about the potential impact on the local job market and the city's overall well-being. What does their departure mean for our community?

Implications for the City of Richmond:

The closure or relocation of these three businesses has

immediate and long-term implications for Richmond. The most immediate concern is the impact on employment, as hundreds of individuals, may face unemployment or job displacement. The resulting economic strain could lead to declining consumer spending and a potential increase in local unemployment rates.

Furthermore, the departure of these businesses can have a ripple effect on the local economy. Suppliers, contractors, and other supporting companies connected to Hello Fresh, Nutiva, and Sangamo Therapeutic may also experience a downturn in their operations. This loss of business relationships could harm various local enterprises' financial stability and growth potential.

The city's Workforce Development Department will be crucial in assisting affected **Continue on page 7 from**



What can we do?

Contact your District City Council and let them know that we need businesses to stay in Richmond, and what plans do they have to ensure companies will stay?



Benefits of Joining a Chamber of Commerce

We bring Opportunities

Taking advantage of these offerings can enhance your business skills, knowledge, and overall competitiveness

- **Networking Opportunities:** Chambers of commerce provide numerous networking opportunities where you can connect with other business owners, professionals, and potential customers. Networking events, business luncheons, and seminars

organized by the chamber allow you to establish valuable contacts and build relationships that can lead to new business prospects.

- **Business Referrals:** Chambers often have referral programs in place to promote member **Continue on page 7**

WELCOME NEW CHAMBER MEMBERS



The Richmond Main Street Initiative, Inc. is a community-based nonprofit corporation dedicated to revitalizing historic Downtown Richmond as a pedestrian-friendly urban village, offering products, services, arts, and entertainment that reflect the community's rich and diverse heritage.



Allegro Ballroom is a dance education studio run by Allegro Dancers, Inc., a non-profit, public-benefits educational [501(c)3] corporation. Our successful operation since 1994 is largely due to the dedication and support of approximately 100 Allegro members who staff the front desk, volunteer as DJs for our parties, pitch in to organize special events, and serve on an elected Board of Directors. Allegro thrives on the creative energy that comes from our members' shared interest in dance and the spirit of volunteerism.

City of Richmond reduces gun violence and experience a notable decrease in violent

In the midst of discussions surrounding the surge in crime rates in the Bay Area, one particular city in the East Bay has successfully managed to reduce gun violence and experience a notable decrease in violent crimes, all while grappling with low levels of police staffing. The City of Richmond has achieved this remarkable feat through the implementation of proactive policing tactics and an unwavering commitment to community outreach.

By the conclusion of 2023, the Richmond Police Department anticipates reaching its full designated staffing level. The agency has been successful in attracting a greater number of recruits, and once these individuals undergo thorough training, their presence on the ground will alleviate the burden of excessive overtime currently shouldered by officers. Since the commencement of the year, there has been a consistent downward trend in most categories of violent crimes, including sexual assaults and robberies.

While the latest reported month showcased a slight increase in aggravated assaults, the overall number of homicides in the City of Richmond this year stands at a mere two, as opposed to the ten reported during the same time frame last year.

Sergeant Patchin places great emphasis on proactive measures as a means to seize firearms and remove criminals from the streets. The goal is to prevent acts of violence before they occur by taking preemptive action.

A pivotal role in reducing gun violence within the City of Richmond is played by the Office of Neighborhood Safety. Staff members dedicated to community outreach actively engage and maintain consistent communication with individuals who possess criminal histories, aiding them in resolving conflicts through nonviolent means.

Sam Vaughn, the deputy director of community services, elucidates the importance of addressing the root causes behind these criminal acts. He asserts that the remarkably low number of young lives lost in the city over the past 37 months, which currently stands at only two, is a testament to the community's improved decision-making skills when it comes to conflict resolution.

Ultimately, the City of Richmond's commitment to fostering sound decision-making processes and resolving conflicts without resorting to violence has led to safer streets for its residents.



Taste of Richmond returns safely! This will be an event aimed at showcasing some of Richmond’s finest foods accompanied by community, music, and MORE!

Saturday, July 15 | 11am – 4pm
Richmond Civic Center – 450 Civic Center Plaza | Richmond Ca. 94804

from Page 5..... They actively refer chamber members to individuals and organizations seeking particular products or services. Being a member of the chamber increases your visibility and credibility, potentially leading to more referrals and business opportunities.

- **Advocacy and Representation:** Chambers of commerce act as advocates for businesses within their community. They represent the collective interests of their members and work to create a favorable business environment. Chambers engage in lobbying efforts, monitor legislative changes, and collaborate with local authorities to address issues affecting businesses. By joining the chamber, you gain a voice and benefit from their advocacy work.
- **Community Engagement:** Chambers are deeply involved in their local communities. Participating in chamber activities and initiatives allows you to engage with the community and demonstrate your commitment to its growth and well-being. By contributing to community events or supporting charitable causes promoted by the chamber, you can enhance your brand reputation and build positive relationships with customers and fellow business owners.



Page 5..... workers with reemployment services, including job training, resume writing, and connecting them with potential employers. Additionally, efforts to attract new businesses to fill the void left by these departures and diversify the local economy will be of paramount importance.

The news of Hello Fresh, Nutiva, and Sangamo Therapeutic closing down or moving out of Richmond is undoubtedly disheartening for the city and its residents. The impact of these departures will be felt in terms of lost jobs and the potential setback to the local economy and the community’s well-being. The deeper question one must ask is, will there be more?



<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.



Phone: (510) 234-3512
Website: www.rcoc.com
E-mail: staff@rcoc.com

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)

Board Members

Anderson, Ahmad, Brown, Kevin (Riggers Loft Wine Company-R&B Cellars), Burrell, Y’Anad (EBMUD), Harris, Tiffany (Bay Area Girls Club, Lau, Ryan (AC Transit), Melissa, Macho (Prologis), Ochoa, Gonzalo (GO Tires), Portillo-Knowles Andrea (Richmond Main Stret), Saballos, Guillermo (Mechanics Bank, Shiloh, Tamara (Multicultural Books), Whitmore, Vernon (Whitmore & Majors)

Staff

James Lee (President/CEO)
Sofia Lopez (Membership and Events Director)

RICHMOND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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