

## North 2nd Street / Clay Street Drainage and Sidewalk Project

The North 2nd Street/ Clay Street Drainage and Sidewalk project, at \$13.1 million, is the largest road and drainage project executed in the City of Richmond. This project began with outfall construction mid- May 2024. This alternate outfall to the Brazos River will divert stormwater drainage from the Heights, Clay Street, and the new 10th Street re-alignment minimizing the flood potential for Wessendorff Park during high rain events.

In addition to mitigating flood events, the project will address pedestrian safety for North side residents. The construction of an underground storm sewer



will allow for filling in the ditches along Clay Street, providing for the hike and bike trail continuation from Collins Road/ George Park to Wessendorff Park. This project also includes decorative lighting on Clay Street, from Collins Road to Second Street, and south on Second Street to Wessendorff Park.

## Highway 90-A Commercial Utilities Project

The City of Richmond has planned, since 2021, to extend full city utilities on the south side of Hwy. 90-A, east of the Brazos River, from Damon Street to Edgewood Drive. With the development of Mandela residential subdivision, the water and wastewater lines had been extended from Damon St. to Mandela Blvd. The current Capital Improvement Utility construction project will now extend full city utilities from Damon St. to Edgewood Dr. to help promote commercial development.

Vera Industries, LLC was awarded the construction contract for \$873,369.50 to begin construction around May 20th, weather permitting. This project will be constructed by trenchless installation to minimize impact to the area businesses and residents.



## FM 762/ Tenth Street Mobility Project

The FM 762/ Tenth Street Mobility Project continues with Fort Bend County closed on 38 of 40 properties. The County reported at the recent City Commission meeting they recognize property acquisition and demolition have been slow for this project, but it is essential they follow codes and processes. The county committed to contracting with a service provider to clean up properties and ditches in the neighborhoods affected by this project.

*(cont'd on page 4)*

# Message from the Mayor

Mayor Becky Haas



It is a privilege to update you on the exciting developments and improvements happening around our city. We remain steadfast in our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all our residents and a couple of the Capital Improvement projects shared in this newsletter are a testament to that.

Several projects you read about in the prior newsletter have begun; the Hwy 90A Utilities Construction project promoting commercial growth and the much-anticipated North 2nd Street/ Clay Street Drainage and Sidewalk project has begun with utility relocations and outfall gate construction. This Clay Street project will include sanitary sewer line upgrades along North 2nd St. and water line replacement which continues the ongoing focus on North Richmond water lines. Heritage Heights has been completed with new water lines and sewage lines. Collins St./ Cub Ln. and various other North Richmond streets are in design waiting for funding due this calendar year. The city continually updates the Utility Master Plan which includes replacing aging infrastructure throughout the city.

We are sharing updates from the county on the status of properties and clean-up for the Tenth Street Mobility project and will continue to update you on these important road and drainage projects as neighborhood streets are transformed.

The Morton Street parking lot was completed as was the Myrtle Street building, referred to in prior newsletters. (The city's development corporation, Develop Richmond, and other city staff moved into the Myrtle St. building since city offices are busting at the seams to accommodate growing staff for this growing city.)

I hope you will enjoy the piece about our city's traffic signal boxes wrapped with art in the near future- a collaboration with TxDOT. We were pleased many of you came out to the Spring 2024 Document Shred and Electronic Recycling Event, since the shred event was the largest volume of documents the city has ever shredded. Don't miss the Save the Date for the Fall Shred event. Please know you can find many of the recommendations and tips in this newsletter on the city website at [www.richmondtx.gov](http://www.richmondtx.gov).

We trust you know that these improvements to our infrastructure are about building community and laying the foundation for a brighter, more prosperous future for all our residents. As always, I encourage you to participate in community events, volunteer for boards, commissions, and committees, and share your ideas with fellow residents and your elected officials to make Richmond an even better place to live, work and thrive.

## Reporting Street Lights Outage

If you need to report a streetlight out in the City of Richmond, you can find the CenterPoint contact link on the City's website under Departments tab on homepage- [www.richmondtx.gov/departments/public-works/streets-drainage](http://www.richmondtx.gov/departments/public-works/streets-drainage).

When you click the CenterPoint link, it asks for address or just street name and it will bring up a map with all the streetlights on that street/ in that area. You simply click on the streetlight location you are reporting to complete the process! This new system makes reporting outages very easy.



## Water Conservation

We are headed into multiple months of heat and extreme temperatures, both which have a bearing on drought conditions. Be conscientious about water usage and consider voluntarily reducing your water usage. Visit the Water Conservation page on city's website [www.richmondtx.gov/departments/public-works/water-department/water-conservation](http://www.richmondtx.gov/departments/public-works/water-department/water-conservation).

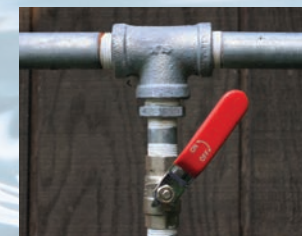
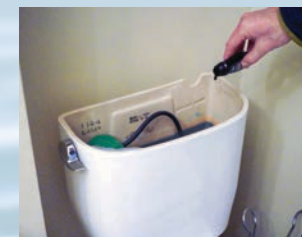
### Simple Ideas for conserving:

- Turn off water while brushing your teeth or shaving.
- Wash only full loads of laundry.
- Run dishwasher only once it is fully loaded.
- When washing hands or dishes, capture the water (known as gray water) and use it to water plants.
- Use rain barrels to catch roof rain run-off (Rainwater Harvesting 'How To' link on conservation page on website).
- Cut back watering your lawn to no more than twice a week; Use drip irrigation.
- Check for Leaks in pipes.
- Opt for water-efficient fixtures such as low-flow showerheads or toilets.
- Keep lawn watering to no more than 2 inches, including rain during summer months and 1 inch in fall to winter months.
- Don't water concrete with sprinklers, sweep or blow these areas

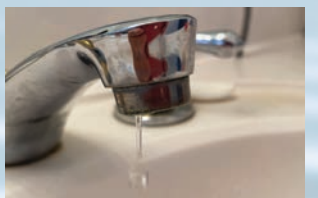


## Common Household Water Leaks

1. If you suspect a toilet leak, place a couple of drops of food coloring in the tank and wait 15- 30 minutes. If you see the colored water in the toilet bowl this is indicative of a worn toilet tank flapper.
2. If your water softener may be causing high usage then remove the water softener from the system by using the bypass and monitor your usage for a few days to a week.



3. Check for leaky faucets. These leaks are usually obvious and a leaking faucet often just needs only a replacement part of new O-ring to be fixed.
4. If you have an autofill on your pool then the fill valve adds water to the pool as water evaporated to keep it at a fixed level. If the valve becomes stuck open, then you should notice water level begin higher than normal.



## Filing a Homestead Exemption

If you have purchased a home in Richmond, you are now able to file for a homestead exemption in the same year you purchased your home. To file for a homestead exemption, please visit the Fort Bend County website to fill out your Homestead Exemption application. Scan QR Code for more information.

[www.fortbendcountytx.gov/government/departments/tax-assessor-collector/homestead-exemption](http://www.fortbendcountytx.gov/government/departments/tax-assessor-collector/homestead-exemption).



## FM 762/ Tenth Street Mobility Project (cont'd from cover)

Fort Bend County and the City are pursuing grant funds from the 2024 Consolidated Appropriations Act, for an overpass crossing the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. Richmond City Commission is reviewing the county's conceptual design for the planned overpass. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) has been completed. This county led project is expanding Tenth Street with concrete streets, curb and gutters, sidewalks, and a roundabout at Clay Street.



## Hurricane Preparedness

Be prepared for natural disasters. Hurricane Season begins June 1, 2024 and lasts until November 30, 2024. This is the time of year that storms have the potential to produce devastating winds and rains that can quickly reach flood levels. What are you doing to prepare yourself, your family, and your home? See city website, Emergency Management page Hurricanes | City of Richmond ([richmondtx.gov](http://richmondtx.gov))

Five simple steps to prepare for a hurricane or natural disaster:

- 1. Make or Update your Emergency Kit:** Gather water, food, flashlights, batteries and a first aid kit into a container or bag and store it in an easy to access area of your home. Have enough food and water for each person for one week. Don't forget food and water for your pets. Be sure to fill prescriptions and have medicine on hand. Radios, batteries and phone chargers are must haves.
- 2. Form a Support Network (talk to your neighbors):** Talk to your neighbors about a plan to check on each other after a disaster occurs. Include physical limitations or special needs you may have during emergency. During disasters, usually people in closest proximity are first to render aid.
- 3. Prepare Your Family (older adults, children, pets):** Make sure everyone in your household, including your kids, are involved in emergency preparedness planning. Help them understand, using the CDC's Ready Wrigley resources-<https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/22435>. Secure crates or other resources for pets to stay in/ transport. Gas up your vehicle and have extra cash on hand.
- 4. Join the City's Alert Notification System:** Register now for the City's Emergency Alert Notification network for up to date information by visiting [www.InformRichmond.com](http://www.InformRichmond.com). Inform Richmond is your connection to updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, who to contact and other important information.
- 5. Weatherize your Home and Review your insurance:** Review your insurance plan for natural disaster coverage, install or check smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms in your house.



## Richmond Works to Beautify Traffic Signal

The City of Richmond has been working on a Traffic Signal Box Art Wrap program for the fourteen traffic boxes located in the city with the assistance of a couple of its' Boards and Commissions.

The Parks and Recreation Board along with Richmond's Historical Commission are evaluating artistic renderings of historical places or structures, as a central design theme to wrap these traffic signal boxes.

Carmen Flores, local artist and owner of Catapult Art Gallery in downtown Richmond, offered to provide her expertise and assist the process by sending out a participation invitation to local artists for submissions for these art wraps. Artists were provided reference pictures to create their own artistic version of the design, as well as criteria to follow for renderings for these traffic signal boxes. City staff will receive all final submissions and pass the proposed art on to the Richmond Historical Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board to be reviewed and approved. Once approved, designs will then move on to the City Commission for approval and then submitted to TxDot for final approval and permitting.

Examples of designs for historic district Art Box wraps



## City of Richmond Fire Chief Mike Youngblood Retires



After 13 years of leading the Richmond Fire Department, Fire Chief Mike Youngblood is retiring. Chief Youngblood is a career firefighter and dedicated public servant for over 33 years. Serving as the 9th Fire Chief for the City, Youngblood oversees 38 fire personnel, three fire stations, and provides fire protection for Richmond's 4.4 square miles and 60 square miles of Fort Bend County that is included in the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). "My time as Chief has left me humbled and honored to have dedicated 13 years to serving the City of Richmond. It has been a rewarding journey filled with so many memorable moments and personal experiences," said Chief Youngblood. "Serving the residents of Richmond, delivering top-tier emergency response, and collaborating with exemplary firefighters, support staff, as well as dedicated city commissioners and leaders committed to safeguarding our community and prioritizing city safety, has been and continues to be one of the most esteemed privileges of my professional career."

The Georgia native came to Texas in 1978. By 1991, after several years as a volunteer firefighter, Youngblood began his steadfast career as a paid full-time firefighter for neighboring Missouri City. Before becoming Fire Chief of Richmond in 2011, Chief Youngblood had held positions that include 911 dispatcher, arson investigator, paramedic, training chief, assistant chief, and commissioned police officer. As our Fire Chief, his accomplishments include leading his dedicated team through the high volumes of calls and high-water rescues of the Memorial Day floods of 2016, the torrential rains and evacuations due to Hurricane Harvey in August of 2017, to the uncharted times of COVID in 2020.

### Interim Fire Chief Christopher Legington

Chief Youngblood and his wife, Phyllis, are long-time residents of Fort Bend County who enjoy spending time with their children and grandchildren. The Chief prides himself on being part of a family of firefighters and is looking forward to the next chapter in his life. A nationwide search will be conducted to find the 10th Fire Chief for the City of Richmond. Christopher Legington, City of Richmond's Fire Marshal, has been named Interim Fire Chief.

# Richmond Police Department Receives Fourth Accredited Law Enforcement Agency Recognition

January's City Commission meeting saw presentation of Accredited Law Enforcement Agency Award to Richmond Chief of Police Jeff Craig by Hedwig Village Chief of Police, David Gott on behalf of the Texas Police Chiefs Association (TPCA). The Richmond Police Department received the award on January 6, 2024.

Begun in 2006, the Accreditation Program evaluates a Police Department's compliance with 172 Best Business Practices for Texas Law Enforcement. These Best Practices were carefully developed by Texas Law Enforcement professionals to assist agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of service and the protection of individual's rights. These Best Practices cover all aspects of law enforcement operations including use of force, protection of citizen rights, vehicle pursuits, property and evidence management, and patrol and investigative operations. There are roughly 2800 policing agencies in the State of Texas, 203 having received Accreditation status. Fewer than that have received Re-Accreditation multiple times. According to Police Chief Jeff Craig "It is an honor to achieve Accreditation status, this award reaffirms the police department's commitment to professional policing services for our community. I'm proud of the men and women of the department whose dedication and commitment made this possible."

The Richmond Police Department was originally Accredited by the Texas Police Chiefs Association Law Enforcement Accreditation Program in August of 2011. Police agencies Accredited by the TPCA must undergo a rigorous onsite inspection every 4th year. The on-site review was conducted by trained Police Chiefs from other areas of our state. The result of this review was then sent to the Texas Police Chiefs Association's Accreditation Committee for final analysis and decision to award "Accredited" status.

This marks the fourth successful onsite inspection by the Richmond Police Department, placing the Richmond Police Department among an elite number of law enforcement agencies with multiple repeat accreditation accomplishments. Police departments trained in community policing and continually refreshed on best practices of all policing operations is a benefit to the community they serve. Mayor Becky Haas accurately stated, "I love how our patrol officers know their residents by name and the residents know the officer on their beat."

The department was also recognized as Accredited at the Texas Police Chiefs Association annual state conference at the end of March 27, 2024.

More information and a description of the program may be viewed on the Texas Police Chiefs Association website at <http://www.texaspolicechiefs.org>.



**Assistant Police Chief Dixie Brzozowski, Lieutenant Diane Butinski, Police Chief Jeff Craig and Chief Albert Garcia- Past President of TPCA**



**Lieutenant Lowell Neinst, Officer Vladimir Golovine, Richmond Police Chief Jeff Craig, Hedwig Village Police Chief David Gott, Assistant Police Chief Dixie Brzozowski, Lieutenant Donald Kovar, Sergeant Steven Rychlik, and Lieutenant Jesse Martin**

# Want to Make a Difference in the Community of Richmond?

The City of Richmond welcomes all residents interested in getting involved in their community since the city relies on the advice and expertise of our resident volunteers. You can make an impact in the Richmond community by volunteering to serve on one of the boards, commissions, and committees.

This involvement provides input and insight for the improvement of the City's operations and the Richmond Community. Serving on a City board, committee or commission is voluntary, open to all Richmond residents and without monetary compensation. The reward is the opportunity to make a difference in the future of your community and know you had a hand in it! The City provides any required training. The boards, committees, and commissions of Richmond needing alternate positions filled are:

- Richmond Historical Commission
- Building & Standards Commission
- Zoning Board of Adjustments
- Parks and Recreation Board
- Board of Ethics and Compliance
- Planning & Zoning



Applicants must complete an application and submit it to the City Secretary's office to be considered for appointment. If interested, download the application located on the city website at <https://www.richmondtx.gov/departments/city-secretary>. Once completed, email to [LGillespie@richmondtx.gov](mailto:LGillespie@richmondtx.gov) or mail City Secretary, 402 Morton St., Richmond, TX 77469.

# Richmond Farmers Market Continues with New Location



Richmond Farmer's Market continues the first Friday of the month 3:00 - 7:00 pm. in a new location. Attendees will find it located at City Hall Park Plaza, 402 Morton St. in downtown Richmond. The Richmond Farmers Market is on-going offering fresh produce from local growers and artisan goods as well as some prepared foods.

This market is being managed by Stephanie Catlow who has been activating farmers markets in various communities and is looking forward to sharing this market with our community. She can be reached at [manager@richmondtxfarmersmarket.com](mailto:manager@richmondtxfarmersmarket.com).

"We have been eager to bring back the Richmond Farmers Market and look forward to the seasonal changes in produce and goods which will be offered at the markets. It has been a goal of the city team to bring events to our community which introduce people to historic downtown Richmond and a chance to shop local," City Manager Terri Vela shared.

Support local in historic downtown Richmond first Fridays of the month, 3:00- 7:00 pm.- come hungry and ready to explore!

## Keep Richmond Beautiful, GFL Environmental and City of Richmond Partner to Beautify Richmond



The City of Richmond has two annual free Document Shred events for residents who receive their utility bills from the city, one in the Spring and one in the Fall. The Spring event incorporates other recycling resources based on residents' feedback. Based on this input, the city will add paint disposal/ recycling to the Spring 2025 Shred/ Recycling event.

The Richmond community took advantage of the Free document shred and electronic recycle event provided by Keep Richmond Beautiful and the City of Richmond Saturday, April 13, 2024. This Spring 2024 Document Shred event set an all- time record with 24,640 lbs. or 12.32 tons of documents shredded! The Electronic Recycling portion, sponsored by GFL Environmental added another 2800 lbs. of electronics. Volunteers from Keep Richmond Beautiful (KRB) included Barbara Johnson, Veronica Torres, Vicky Seely, Pat Pittman and Larry

Pittman. City Manager, Terri Vela and City Attorney Gary Smith along with other community volunteers joined the group to execute this successful annual event.



### Fall Document Shred Event is October 19, 2024

9am- 12 Noon at City Hall Park Plaza.  
The Fall event is exclusively a document shred event.

## Renting Richmond's City Parks

City of Richmond Park pavilions and athletic fields are available to rent 365 days a year on a first- come, first- serve basis to any person 21 years of age or older. Reservations for the parks, pavilions, and gazebos can be made via email to [permits@richmondtx.gov](mailto:permits@richmondtx.gov) or by visiting the city's Permits Dept., Richmond City Hall Annex, 600 Morton St., Monday- Friday, 8 am- 4:30 pm.

Rental costs are \$10.00 per hour for a pavilion without lights and \$25.00 per hour with lights. Consider our park facilities when planning your next birthday party, shower or family or holiday gathering. For larger events and/ or special events, health permits may be required.

For more information regarding rentals, please visit the city's website- [www.richmondtx.gov/departments/public-works/parks/reservations](http://www.richmondtx.gov/departments/public-works/parks/reservations) or phone the Permits Dept. at 281-232-6871. The city's website, Departments tab- Public Works- Parks Department also lists the city's six (6) parks with their amenities.

