



City of Mount Rainier
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CITY MANAGER REPORT
April 5, 2011

Grants Management

The management team is working on its application amendment to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for approval to resurface the former Blue Bird Cab Lot. The remaining funds left in the 2009 earmark are approximately \$101,574. Assistant City Manager Michael Jackson has consulted with contractors who are in the process of recommending the appropriate material and construction to handle water run-off and they are looking at the best options to include this as a joint project in conjunction with the water problems connected with the 35th Street alley. The management team is waiting for instructions from the FTA TEAM Help Desk to address a technical problem once again with submitting the application.

The firm of Torti Gallas is working with management on the initial draft of a sustainability plan for the city to finalize the Downtown Architectural Plan Grant awarded through 2010 Community Legacy Grant. The amount of this award was \$25,000. Approximately \$21,000 was utilized for the design building concepts and potential development recommendations for the 3200 block of Rhode Island Avenue. Some key components of the plan will include the city's green initiatives, the purchase of the former Blue Bird Cab Lot to improve parking availability, the Emergency Operations Plan, the CIP infrastructure improvement priorities established by the mayor and council, and the Environmental Protection Board "green" recommendations.

The Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) through its CDBG program recommends that the City of Mount Rainier receive approximately \$234,000 for infrastructure projects. A list of these projects and current status can be found on the city's website www.mountrainiermd.org. A hard copy of this document is attached to this report for reference.

The Director of Finance is working on the city's application to the Maryland Community Development Administration for infrastructure financing for the civic center project.

A teleconference is scheduled for Thursday, April 7, 2011 in reference to the Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant Application to create a bio-retention green project on Buchanan Street.

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The façade program contract is still under administrative review.. In the interim, management has been instructed to submit pictures, and descriptions of the work to be conducted at each site in order for the DHCD to schedule environmental reviews of each property which can take up to several months. A request has been made to the Mount Rainier Business Association to place this item on the agenda for discussion at its monthly meeting. The following businesses are scheduled to be included in this funding for façade improvements:

- Glut Food Cooperative
- Nisey's Boutique
- Francis Carry-out
- Island Style Ice Cream
- Potomac Fish House
- Colors by Tangie
- Mount Rainier Post Office Artist Studios

Management recommendation is to use any available funds after the aforementioned projects are completed to assist property owners with removal of the iron gates within the MUTC which are no longer permitted under the new guidelines. The properties that were formerly approved for inclusion in the program and are no longer in business are House of Health, Strictly Business, Quest for Fresh, and H&F Gallery. With the exception of House of Health, the other businesses are now operating under new management or owners, or different venue, e.g., Strictly Business is now Zoom Business, Quest for Fresh is now operating as Sweet and Natural (open sporadically due to interior renovations), and H&F Gallery which is currently operating as Fountain Framing.

Training/Recognition/Awards

The city's submittal for an MML Award for the partnership with MRBA for the window and door replacement and redesign for Glut and Nisey's was not awarded. The Town of Fruitland was awarded for its youth program in the same population category.

The city will be recognized for its 100 year history and achievements at a ceremony in College Park on April 10, 2011.

The public works department is hosting in a defensive driver training workshop at Bunker Hill Fire Station in conjunction with Injured Worker's Insurance on April 14, 2011 8am until 12 noon. Code Enforcement Officers and Police Officers are invited to participate in this training as well.

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Injured Worker's Insurance Fund Representative Mario Melfa contacted the city today to congratulate us because thus far this fiscal year the city has had an excellent claim ratio. Claims and reports of injuries are down significantly from last year including serious injuries, time off from work, etc. He of course was unaware of the accident that just occurred this past weekend with one of our officers who was t-boned by a speeding vehicle; the driver was driving under the influence of alcohol. The officer suffered bruises and reports being very sore but is expected to be okay with non life threatening injuries. Chief Scott will expound more on this in his departmental report. If the current trend in employee injuries continues for the next two year period, the city should see a significant decrease in premiums.

The city manager was highlighted among four other managers across the nation in a column entitled *On Point* which appeared in the April edition of Public Management (PM) Magazine.

Financial Matters

The city has received approval for a small County Special Appropriation Grant Award in the amount of **\$1,000** for Mount Rainier Day.

Treasurer Manjani is completing the application this week for the Community Development Administration (CDA) Infrastructure Program Loan for the Civic Center Project. If approved, this should enable the city to complete the construction for this project. The program entails selling bonds for the financing of projects for several municipalities who enter the financing round during the same time period. Other potential jurisdictions that anticipate inclusion during the next financing opportunity include the cities and towns of Laurel, Capital Heights and District Heights among others.

The city received **\$26,960.55** in property tax liens placed on property for failure to pay vacant building registration fees, fines and fees for code abatement on property and for court judgments.

A request for **\$1,425.00** in property tax liens has been requested for court judgments rendered on behalf of the city for cases successfully defended in court for non-compliance with city codes. An additional amount of **\$1,400** in property tax liens will be requested within the next few days based on additional court judgments entered on behalf of the city. Kudos to Code Enforcement Officers Alex Brown and Kevin Simpson for these judgments from District Court.

The management team is scheduled to continue with budget discussions on the proposed Fiscal Year 2012 Budget following the regular meeting of the mayor and council on April 5, 2011. A public hearing on the proposed budget is scheduled for April 19, 2012.

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Upcoming Events

The Better Block Project preparations are in full swing. The event to spruce up the city's businesses along 34th Street, with volunteers and local artists cleaning and decorating storefronts and city staff assisting with clean up and additional patrols will occur on April 9, 2011 from 12 noon until 6 pm. (Rain date is April 10, 12noon until 6am). There will be entertainment and fun activities to all. It is estimated that city staff including managers will have contributed over 60 hours toward this event at its conclusion, including power washing sidewalks, extra police patrols, street cleaning, flyer distribution, contact and consultation with property owners, and consultation with MRBA and project team members. This is in addition to the numerous hours of support from city residents, student volunteers, Joe's Movement Emporium, and last but certainly not the least, Jan Townshend and the Neighborhood Design Center. What great teamwork!

The city's Xtreme Teen Program is revitalized and coming back! Saturday, April 30, 2012 is the grand opening of the program at Mount Rainier Christian Church, located at the corner of 33rd and Bunker Hill Road. The activities are scheduled from 1 pm until 4 pm. Parents are required to attend with their children on their first visit. Please contact Pastor Brian Adams at 301-864-3869 for additional information.

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End of Report