

MONDAY | JANUARY 9, 2012

[LOGIN](#) | [REGISTER](#) | [SUBSCRIBE](#) | [ABOUT US](#) | [ADVERTISE](#)

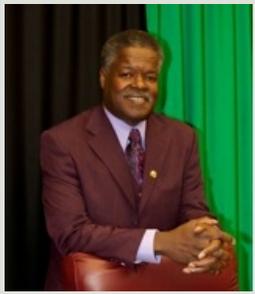
Martinez News-Gazette

Your hometown paper since 1858

[HOME](#) [NEWS](#) [SPORTS](#) [CALENDAR](#) [LIFESTYLE](#) [LETTERS](#) [OPINION](#) [OBITS](#) [DIRECTORY](#)
[HOME](#)

Glover Credits RDA For 'Rebirth' Of Pittsburg

By Greta Mart
Staff Reporter
Sunday January 08, 2012
Local News



Now that redistricting has shifted Martinez into Contra Costa Supervisor Federal Glover's jurisdiction, residents are becoming familiar with his stance on a myriad of topics, including the still-controversial subject of redevelopment agencies.

He's all for them, while allowing that not every community needs to embrace the now-terminated tax-increment financing mechanisms.

"Pittsburg has been one of the cities that has taken advantage of the tool that's been out there with redevelopment, and has really done a good job of it ... with the downtown improvement that has taken place there," Glover told the Gazette on Thursday.

"One of the things that earlier [Pittsburg] city councils and city managers had the foresight to do was to put pretty much the whole city, 90 percent, into the RDA area."

Glover said he had personally "lived through a lot of the blight in particular, lived through the empty lots and vacant places."

"So I've seen all that and to see the rebirth of the downtown has been rewarding. Had [RDA] not been there, the city would still be suffering a lot of those issues," he said.

Glover was born and raised in Pittsburg, and served as that city's mayor in 1998-99, after being elected to the Pittsburg City Council in 1996. He was first elected to the Board of Supervisors in 2000 and been reelected twice since, narrowly beating out challenger Gary Agopian. Prior to holding public office, Glover worked as a training and safety manager at POSCO and Dow Chemical companies, working at the latter for 22 years.

"I'm not saying that all communities need to embrace a redevelopment agency, they have to be embraced by city leaders and the community," continued Glover this week. "I look at places like Martinez and think wow, that's where a RDA could have really been helpful. Then again, you have to have the desire."

He agreed that RDAs create indebtedness that must be repaid, and that abuse of RDA has occurred.

"I've always viewed [tax-increment financing] as a great tool. I think it was time to look at it and do reform but I'm not in agreement that it should have gone away," he said.

Last year, when the debate over the suggested abolishment of all of California's RDAs was heating up, State Controller John Chiang took a magnifying glass to 18 RDAs around the state, and published a report of an analysis of their administrative, financial and reporting practices. The Pittsburg RDA was among those studied.

Out of the 18, Chiang pointed out that "two of the RDAs made questionable loans to their cities' general fund. In Pittsburg, the agency loaned \$16.6 million in fiscal year 2009-10 without interest to the city for specified projects. By the end of the fiscal year, \$15.4 million was unspent, allowing the city to earn interest on those funds."

At the same time, the Pittsburg RDA refused to shell out over \$17 million in required funds to an educational supplement fund intended to make up for reduced tax revenue to local public schools, citing that it had "insufficient funds to make the payment," said Chiang.

According to Chiang's report, as of June 30, 2010, the Pittsburg RDA carried a total agency debt of \$855,031,754.

Nevertheless, when asked about the enormous amount of debt owed by the Pittsburg RDA and the opposition to eminent domain, a key component of redevelopment, Glover said, "We have to look at being creative around the issue of blight and really trying to create communities again. We were able to do that through redevelopment," he said, indicating his hometown leaders.

"I definitely think that you have to be aware of the public good that takes place when you go in and do eminent domain. It's a balance ... some things have to happen; communities need to change and grow. You outgrow some of the things that are in place today. Again, I think it's something that the leadership and community have to agree upon."



Email [Greta Mart](#)

You must be logged in to leave a comment.

You can login or register for an account:

See the top banner of this website for links to login or register.

Thank you!

0

[Recommend](#)

[Send](#)

News
Local
Profiles
Crime

Lifestyle
Arts
History
Food & Wine

Sports
Local
National

Opinion
Letters
Submit Letter

Obituaries
Submit Obituary

About Us
Subscribe
Advertise