December 7, 2021 City Council Meeting - Interim City Manager Update on Vallco Project

1. During the September 7 City Council meeting, I provided a comprehensive update on the Vallco development project, after which Councilman Willey asked for periodic updates to the Council and public.  At the September 21 Council meeting under Manager’s Report, I provided the first oral update and am today providing my final update.
2. First, the project is progressing, and it appears it will be built as the developer prefers because that's the requirement under State law in terms of the City's jurisdiction and authority, despite community concerns that well less than 10% of the nearly 6 million square feet is dedicated to affordable housing and over 90% is dedicated to retail, commercial, and market-based housing.
3. The biggest project delays are due to the long-standing toxic contamination on the site. Since I last spoke about Vallco, the developer has submitted a first draft of the Conceptual Site Model to identify the extent and sources of the contamination.  The County, which has regulatory authority over the toxic contamination, has responded to that first draft and needs considerable additional information which is due by December 20. After the developer completes that additional work to the County’s satisfaction, then the developer will begin working on a Site Management Plan for County review and approval.  I expect that any cleanup work, if required by the County, will not start for several months, contingent on how quickly the developer chooses to act.
4. Because of the importance of monitoring the cleanup process, two City staff members are now immediate subscribers to the State’s GeoTracker website which is the formal authority on the cleanup process.  In addition, we have requested both Vallco and the County to provide direct updates to City staff as well.  As public documents become available, we will continue to post them on our website.

Despite the contaminant delays, two ministerial permits for small portions of the site on the West Side of Wolfe Road have been released and will be posted on the City’s website this week.  However, any soil-disturbances are not allowed until the County believes the contaminant issues have been resolved to the County’s satisfaction.