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CITY AND COMMUNITY TEAM UP TO RESOLVE PARK ISSUES
311 and ParkScan apply collective effort to maintain parks

San Francisco. The City of San Francisco and a local park advocacy organization announced today a partnership to help residents ensure that parks are well maintained.

"Our parks are one of our greatest resources and this partnership will help keep them maintained to a standard that residents expect and deserve," said Mayor Gavin Newsom. "Connecting ParkScan to our 311 system will make government more efficient and accountable, it will also make it easier for San Franciscans to report park issues online."

ParkScan.org, a 6-year old project of the Neighborhood Parks Council, allows city residents to use the web to report conditions that need attention in parks. The partnership will now link all of the ParkScan.org observations into the city's 311 system. "The City's 311 service is a fantastic accountability tool for city residents," said Isabel Wade, Executive Director of the Council. "311 staff follow up on every call or complaint to make sure that different agencies respond, greatly expanding the capacity of a small non-profit to get action from the City" she added.

"Our 311 system is proud of our 90% closure rate on park issues reported by the public," said Nancy Alfaro, Director of the 311 System. "And now city residents or visitors can report issues over the phone, where a "live" representative is available and can provide assistance in over 170 languages, OR online at www.sfgov.org/311 – both 24/7," she emphasized. Alfaro has been the Director of 311 since 2008 and manages a staff of 103. Nearly 4 million calls were received in 2008.

"We expect San Francisco parks and recreation centers to be maintained and operated at a very high-level of excellence," said Jared Blumenfeld, general manager of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department. "By receiving up-to-date reports on issues that need our attention, we can be more responsive to the needs of the public. This new public-private partnership between 311 and ParkScan will help us identify issues and track progress towards implementation."

ParkScan is software developed in 2004 with a \$1.5 million grant to the Neighborhood Parks Council from the Sloan Foundation of New York. Sloan is supporting the expansion of the tool in the city of Portland, Oregon where it will be launched on May 11th. More than 1600 observations are typically filed annually in San Francisco. The ParkScan annual report for 2008 indicates that graffiti and litter are the most frequent problems reported by park users. 311 and ParkScan will be preparing a joint report for 2009.

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