



Neighborhood Parks Council
2010 Board of Supervisors Candidate Questionnaire

District 10- Chris Jackson

1. In what ways do you feel parks contribute to San Franciscans' quality of life?

I feel that urban area residents should have access to parks for a variety of reasons. Living in an urban environment can often lead to a lack of knowledge about our natural environment and in turn a lack of respect. I feel that having access to an outdoor, beautiful and natural area can increase San Franciscans quality of life by educating them about the importance of our natural world but can also provide a relief from the hustle and bustle of city life.

2. What park in your district do you use most and tell us what you like most about it.

I make use of the Casey Jones Park and the MLK pool. I also make use of McClaren Park. My fiancé and I swim at the MLK pool and we go on wonderful hikes in McClaren Park.

3. Which park in your district appears to need the most help and what do you propose to do about it?

4. From your observations, what are the 3 most important issues facing recreation and parks in San Francisco? How will you begin to address these issues if you are elected?

Lack of funding, lack of caretaking and lack of public awareness/involvement. I support open community spaces and I will work to increase funding for these areas as well as increasing community involvement, in particular supporting community advisory councils currently in place as to appropriate programs and allocation of funds.

In addition, the current Park and Rec department leadership has looked towards privatization to finance parks. As a trustee at City College, I was disappointed that Park and Rec evicted CCSF's Child Development center from its site in favor of another tenant that could afford to pay higher rents. This caused hundreds of working class parents to lose access to affordable childcare. As Supervisor, I will work hard to oppose all privatization efforts of our parks. They are our City's treasure.

5. What is your view of the role of volunteer community park groups? What commitment do you make to working with these groups to improve our public open spaces?

I admire those volunteer community park groups for actively caring about the natural environment and their neighborhoods. I view their role as an important one. I am committed to creating more open spaces throughout San Francisco but especially in District 10. I will commit to seeking input from volunteer community park groups, the SF Neighborhood Park Council, the Sierra Club, San Francisco Tomorrow and Coleman Advocates for Youth to ensure that my legislative decisions reflect what the community cares about.

6. ParkScan.org is a website that enables park users to report maintenance concerns to the Recreation and Park Department. If elected, how would you promote this tool?

I would hope to increase awareness to the general public for this tool. I will put a link to ParkScan on my website, and would like to see it promoted more in the 311 public outreach campaigns.

7. NPC's Green Envy study identified many neighborhoods that lack playgrounds and neighborhood parks. How would you address these park and open space deficiencies?

If elected Supervisor, I will be doing a lot of work with the 6 major redevelopment programs set to occur in District 10. I strongly advocate for open community spaces and I will work to ensure that all areas are thoroughly cleaned and safe for both humans and plants/animals. Then I will work to ensure that we have more open, accessible and versatile community spaces. I support the implementation of Recreation and Parks Natural Areas Program and I am committed to working with the Department of Public Works, Park and Rec department, and existing neighborhood beautification coalitions to create a comprehensive open space plan, focused on community gardens and recreation centers.

8. Deferred maintenance of things like irrigation systems continue to plague the park system. With little funding available to fix these types of problems, what would you propose to improve park maintenance?

In the short term, within our Park and Rec budget, I propose that we prioritize maintenance workers so that we won't further exasperate the problem. Taking a longer-term view, I propose a combined parks bond and small parcel tax increase on large commercial properties to finance our deferred maintenance issues.

9. San Francisco currently has no citywide open space requirement for new development. In areas such as the Eastern Neighborhoods, which are already deficient in open space and could see a tripling in residential density in the near future, this oversight could create unlivable communities severely deficient in parks. Would you support a citywide open space requirement for all new residential development so that every neighborhood can have green space for play, exercise, and respite from urban life?

Yes. I will work with the SF Neighborhood Park Council, the Sierra Club, San Francisco Tomorrow and other environmental organizations to create more open space throughout the city but primarily in District 10. By creating more parks, we will improve the quality of life in many of our neighborhoods and through the process we could also address a workforce development issue. I am committed to exploring the feasibility of creating a neighborhood beautification program to immediately employ our hard to place residents in jobs that foster neighborhood pride, such as park care and ecological restoration.

In addition, parks should be more than just spaces to play sports or hang out. I believe that portions of our City's open space should be restored to a natural habitat and am committed to working with various organizations to make this a reality.

Finally, I strongly believe that it is important to plan for usable and versatile open space when we are able to plan a community from the ground-up. With 6 redevelopment projects scheduled to break ground in District 10 in the next decade, we have the ability and the responsibility to plan for usable open space through the redevelopment process. I am committed to doing so as supervisor.