



Neighborhood Parks Council
2010 Board of Supervisors Candidate Questionnaire

District 10- Eric Smith

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

Parks are some of the city's best places for enjoyment and for offering families and communities healthy activities and the respite of natural beauty.

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

I love Heron's Head Park. As a board member of Literacy for Environmental Justice, I helped to oversee the construction of the EcoCenter, San Francisco's first completely off-the-grid building with it's own solar power, wastewater system and living roof. The center provides sweeping views of the bay and provides teachable opportunities to the community about our precious eco systems and how we need to be stewards of the park and wetlands.

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

There are many parks in my district and all of them need help. India Basin, Warm Water Cove, McLaren and Crocker Amazon could use a fair degree of tender loving care and maintenance. Partnerships, both public, private and with organizations like NPC, the State Parks Foundation and Park and Rec, could provided united coalitions to address the issue of funding sources and creative, sustainable solutions.

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?

My top three priorities are responsible budgeting, development that benefits the community, parks and open space, and outcome-based services. In addressing those issues citywide, it is impossible to overstate the need for transparency, scrutiny, and accountability, which is why those issues are the cornerstones of my campaign. Because D10 is where the intersection of my priorities will have the greatest impact, I intend to play a very important role in the future of San Francisco governance as Supervisor.

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 love them. As a board member of LEJ, I have participated in our annual Coastal Clean-Up Day and the Peoples Earth Day events and well as NPC meetings and charettes. These are wonderful opportunities to not only clean up our parks, but to meet neighbors, fellowship with the community and empower ourselves to be the stewards our planet requires. I will continue to work in that regard as Supervisor.

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?

As a former member of the Alamo Square Park Neighborhood Association Board of Directors, I worked with fellow board members using this innovative tool to report to the Parks Department. I will continue to promote the benefits and uses of ParkScan as Supervisor.

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?

NPC's Green Envy Studies are a particularly helpful resource in determining the needs for equity in open space. As Supervisor, I would work to implement their recommendations: the need for more playgrounds, parks and open space, to create an inventory of available park lands and update the City's General Plan.

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?

This is a huge issue, and I also experienced this first hand in Alamo Square and other parks. Funding is a big issue and directing resources to address this problem is a challenge. There are however, opportunities to address this issue perhaps with capital improvement dollars, the SFPUC and the potential use of gray water systems for irrigation as a sustainable alternative.

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 want to make sure that there is real community engagement and involvement. Too often developers design a project without adequate input and oversight. I want to know what kind of impacts it will have on density, pollution, traffic, open space and the quality of life in and around the community from not only the project sponsors, but the people who actually live there. How will it be financed and how it deal with the issues surrounding wastewater, stormwater, power, transportation, schools, seniors, youth and children? These are just a few of the questions I've addressed as a member of the Mission Bay CAC and would bring to the Board of Supervisors.