



Neighborhood Parks Council  
**2010 Board of Supervisors Candidate Questionnaire**

**District 4- Carmen Chu**

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

Parks are important to San Francisco residents' quality of life. Many of the families and residents in my District value and utilize the neighborhood parks on a daily basis. On any given day, residents use our neighborhood parks to participate in organized sports, to exercise, to meet with friends and family or to enjoy the natural environment.

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

The park I most often go to is Parkside Square. The park is within walking distance of my home and is located next to Pine Lake Park. Set next to Pine Lake, Parkside is beautiful with a great balance of mature trees, grassy areas, and recreation structures. I like the fact that people of all ages use the park whether it is the morning tai chi and dance groups, the young kids in the children's' playground, the softball teams on the field or residents with their pets enjoying the walk around the perimeter.

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

The district will be seeing a number of significant renovations in the coming years. The Sunset Recreation Center and playground will be seeing over \$13 million in renovation work and seismic upgrades in the coming year, which is very much needed because it is the only full service recreation center in the District. McCoppin Square will see over \$5 million with construction beginning within the year for improvements to the park. West Sunset playground and courtyard will also be improved to coincide with the opening of the new Ortega Branch library. Prior to these projects, the South Sunset fields and playground, Parkside playground and Sava Pool were also renovated. At the same time, opportunities for improvements still remain. For example, Larsen, especially the playground, remains underutilized. Part of our office's efforts in the coming years will be to help build community support around improvements by partnering with residents and organizations like NPC and will be to seek options for funding those improvements.

**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?**

Some of the most important issues around recreation and parks involve the maintenance of our recreation facilities and parks, the allocation of scarce resources for recreation programming and the availability of parks in various parts of our City. The

first two challenges require more stable funding sources and planning. Already our department is taking the steps needed to understand the magnitude of maintenance needed to keep our facilities in a state of good repair and to secure non-general fund revenues to support its operations. That is why I supported the Neighborhood Parks bond passed by voters in 2008 which specifically improves facilities across the City including funding for the improvement of restroom facilities on recreation and parks facilities. The availability of parks in various parts of the City is another opportunity. The Board's recent support of the redevelopment of the Bayview/Hunters Point/Shipyard areas includes the creation of a significant amount of new open space for the City.

**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?**

Working in partnership with Recreation and Parks, volunteer community events have been very helpful in assisting with the clean-up of our local neighborhood parks. These events help to connect residents with Recreation and Parks staff and help to build community and ownership over keeping those public spaces safe and clean. Our office has demonstrated a commitment to working with community groups and with NPC over the past few years I have been in office.

**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 an elected member of the Board, my staff and I receive ParkScan updates on a regular basis. We review the information and make sure the comments and observations are shared with the department so they are able to make necessary repairs.

**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?**

One way of working on this issue is to partner with non-governmental organizations to provide for additional public open spaces. For example, the Board of Supervisor's recent support of the redevelopment of the Bayview/Hunters Point/Shipyard areas included plans for the creation of significant amounts of new open space for the City in a currently underserved area.

**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?**

The passage of the 2008 Parks Bond was an important first step in addressing the deferred maintenance issues at Recreation and Parks but it does not address the

issues of ongoing maintenance of our system. One long term impact that can be applied immediately is a more thoughtful approach to how we design our facilities when we move forward with our renovation work – to ensure that we lay the groundwork for designs that reduce cost and reduce the use of resources (drought resistant plants, etc.).

**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?**

I would be supportive of looking into open space goals but would be concerned about applying a City-wide standard in all instances. The physical environment and constraints across the City are varied and much like the recent area-wide plans we have approved at the Board, should be considered with the community's input.