



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

**District 6- Matthew Drake**

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

Parks contribute to everyone's quality of life, but the details depend on the person. They give us everything from fresh air to a sports field to a place to read a book on the grass. They provide services for people who never set foot in them by cleaning our air and draining our water.

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

District 6 has the fastest growing population in the city and the greatest shortage of park space. I probably use the Embarcadero the most because it is at least open space on one side. I still enjoy seeing seals swimming in the bay.

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

The few parks we do have are troubled. Boeddeker Park probably has the most problems, but Victoria Manalo Draves Park is next. They need to be made safer, especially for kids. The SFPD should patrol them regularly to ensure they are safe for visitors.

**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?**

(1) Maintenance. The city's Recreation and Parks department is underfunded. City government needs to commit to funding park maintenance. Buildings will not fix themselves. (2) Playing fields. If we want to make San Francisco more kid friendly, we need more playing fields for kids. While real grass is the best surface, the city does not have the money to keep its grass fields in playable condition. We should continue to put in the new artificial turf playing fields, which can be used year around. The ones that have been installed are wildly popular—I play soccer on them myself. (3) Expanding parks to underserved areas. This is a significant problem in District 6. While we cannot create large new parks, we can work on projects like the Blue Greenway, which will bring some open space to the neighborhood.

**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?**

Our parks could not function without volunteers from the community. I will absolutely work with volunteers who want to make the city a better place.

**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 had never heard of ParkScan.org until I saw this questionnaire. At a minimum, we should post notices about at the park entrances.

**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?**

District 6 lacks playgrounds, parks, and open space. The fees we charge developers should be earmarked for local infrastructure improvements like parks, so our neighborhood can develop into one that is welcome for new residents.

**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?**

Unfortunately, I'm not aware of any secret new funding sources. However, we do have volunteers who have shown themselves to be eager and willing to give us a hand to improve their parks. City government should work with volunteer groups that can help with maintenance of the parks. It is not a perfect solution, but it is better than not doing anything at all.

**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. See my answer to #7. We should dedicate the fees we charge residential developers to creating new infrastructure in the immediate vicinity of the buildings, including open space, playgrounds, and parks.