

COMMUNITY MEETING MINUTES

From Street to Parks: Safer, Greener Public Space

A forum with San Francisco Mayoral Candidates

September 12 - 6:00 PM

California State Building, 455 Golden Gate, Milton Marks Auditorium

I. **Mayoral Candidates in attendance:**

- a. Jeff Adachi
- b. Michela Alioto-Pier
- c. John Avalos (join at 6:30)
- d. Terry Joan Baum
- e. David Chiu (join at 7:30)
- f. Tony Hall
- g. Dennis Herrera (left 6:30)
- h. Joanna Rees
- i. Phil Ting

II. **Moderator:** John King, Urban Design Critic, San Francisco Chronicle

III. **Welcome, Introductory Remarks and Forum Format:** Meredith Thomas, Executive Director, Neighborhood Parks Council

a. **Welcome and introductory Remarks**

i. **Welcome from the partner organizations**

1. **NPC and SFPT:** We are both independent non-profits in SF working to ensure everyone elected in SF doesn't just like parks, but are educated about our parks. We work to ensure that parks are clean safe fun in every neighborhood by advocating for community needs and planning for open space. NPC works closely with SFPT and, as of October 3, 2011, will be the San Francisco Parks Alliance.
2. **Friends of the Urban Forest:** Is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to community planning, tree care, education, and advocacy around our urban forest and canopies.
3. **Walk San Francisco:** Advocates for in a more livable walkable city—reclaiming the city as shared public space.

b. **Format:**

- i. This will be a lively discussion and dynamic conversation is our goal. Not all candidates will be asked each question. Our moderator, John King, will select which candidates answer which questions.
 1. The forum will be divided into three sections with approximately 20 minutes for each section:

- a. Pedestrian safety and walk-ability
- b. Parks and open space
- c. Our urban forest
- 2. Rules of engagement:
 - a. Candidates will be given 1 to 2 minutes per question.
 - b. Not all candidates will answer each question.
 - c. Questions, amount of time per answer and which candidates are selected for each question are at the discretion of the moderator.
 - d. Each candidate has a “Bonus Minute” that they can use of their discretion to either answer a question they were not asked or to extend their time on a specific question.
- ii. **Questions Submitted:** Question cards are available from the staff and were given out at the sign in desk. We received many questions on the on-line RSVP system. We will try to cover as many questions as possible, however, due to the number received, we will not be able to ask all of them tonight. The full list of questions will be attached to the minutes and posted online and emailed out to both attendees who provided their email address and the campaigns. questions will be posted online even if not asked.

IV. Candidate Forum

a. Pedestrian safety and walkability

- i. What would you consider are the determining factors in closing a street to cars and making it exclusively pedestrian street. Are there streets besides Market Street that we should consider making off limits to cars?
 - 1. **Terry Joan Baum:**
 - a. People are drawn to places without cars. This idea was put forward in Noe Valley, but it did not bring in enough dialogue with the neighbors before it was introduced with no real idea of how the neighbors were going to deal with the closure. Therefore they experienced incredible resistance. Requires a lot more discussion before we get to actually closing it off.
 - b. All for as much acreage without cars as possible in the city.
 - c. Bike paths, buses (that run all the time), allow people to leave cars at home almost all the time.
 - 2. **Joanna Rees:** I would be open to having street closures. Need to look at in 2 ways:
 - a. Entrepreneurial spirit, continually testing things. Test on diff streets and diff areas
 - b. Better job of getting community input, spent two years going door-to-door before running, met the “silent”

majority who have great input. Test impact before acting. Try on temp basis. Encourage things like the Mission Community Market.

3. **Phil Ting:** I'm father of two very young children. Number one issue we need to address is safety.
 - a. Some streets in SF don't feel safe for anything. Certain nodes have just transit, some with just biking/pedestrians, some with just cars.
 - b. Sunday Streets: feel safe, don't have to worry about kids' safety.
 - c. Hayes Valley has been transformed by not having a freeway and open space planning.
 - d. Need to make sure that neighbors and merchants are a part of the dialogue. Everyone needs to be involved. Not just those you can make it to city hall at 2pm. We have a 24/7 online portal for input.

ii. What specific steps would you take to increase pedestrian safety in SF (esp. SOMA)?

1. **Tony Hall:** When I was on BOS, I made 5 promises and a 6th one that delivered on. One of the things proud of: 23 different safety approaches for District 7 that were not complex/expensive. How?
 - a. Identify the problem: Got together with DPW and looked at where dangerous intersections were, crosswalks, etc. Went over exactly what was needed, identifying needs by going out to neighborhoods and respond to people.
 - b. Follow-up: Kept on DPW.
 - c. Matter of leadership and will to get it done. Take the tenacity to make these things happen. Pedestrian safety--This is something that can be done.
2. **Jeff Adachi:** I would identify 3 things around deterrence as it works.
 - a. In SOMA it's hard to get a moving violation. You get parking tickets, but not moving violations.
 - b. Cameras would be a good idea.
 - c. Consequence to illegal turns etc.
 - d. Need to be more responsive to people reporting problems. Have to look at problem areas (where people get hurt/accidents).
3. **Michela Alioto-Pier:** I'm going to personalize this story: Have you ever used a wheelchair or pushed a stroller? Part of me would love to put member of DPT (Department of Parking and Traffice) in a wheelchair for a day and take them around SF.
 - a. Landscape isn't friendly for not who have a tough time getting around.

1. **Phil Ting:** Perfect Question for me, as I live in Sunset.
 - a. We need to incentivize people to not pave their yards.
 - b. People are afraid of upkeep. You all have heard the horror stories about people getting cited for keeping up trees. Neighbors are afraid of upkeep costs and city fines.
 2. **Tony Hall:** I agree with Phil—unfortunate that people will pave their lawn to park their car.
 - a. I don't want to tell people what to do with their property unless unsafe for others.
 - b. Introduced legislature to keep people from parking on sidewalk. Passed. This is a common sense law—not being enforced well.
 3. **Joanna Rees:** There is a disparity on this issue, people complain because they get tickets for being slightly over line of driveway. If the law is on the book needs to be enforced over whole city. For example, people in Vis Valley have been parking on driveway and there is no enforcement.
- v. Would candidates consider licensing bikes? Money could be used to make more bike lanes.

1. **Jeff Adachi:** I'd be open to this.
 - a. Would want to study the impact of this.
 - b. Would want to do in a way that would not discourage people to ride bikes. If people aren't able to afford a license, there is that potential of bikers not riding and losing an inexpensive option for in-city transportation.
 - c. Want bikes to follow rules of road. Clearer understanding on everyone's part. I've seen many incidences of people not following rules/following own rules.
2. **Michela Alioto-Pier:** Support Licensing bike riders.
 - a. Bikes are supposed to be riding on Street with cars, often they are not due to fear of riding in the city.
 - b. We need to be sure bikers know the rules and law as well as know safety so they feel comfortable riding on the street.
3. **Terry Joan Baum:** Yes, for this, and bikes obeying law.
 - a. Most people can afford \$35 for license.
 - b. San Francisco needs a network for bikes all over city— including a physical barrier between cars and bikes so that people can safely ride (like in several European cities). Now it's not safe to bike in SF.
 - c. We need to devote considerable funds to this issue so can stuff accidents and more people will feel free to rise around city.

b. Parks and open space

- i. Is idea of taxing households with more than 2 cars an option to raise money for open space programs?
 1. **John Avalos:** I support local vehicle license fee. We have a small one and I am waiting to increasing it. By doing this, it would allow us to put more \$ towards transit/ pedestrian safety, etc.
 2. **Terry Joan Baum:** Totally agree with John.
 - a. Not easy to pass taxes now, need state law that allows us to create own taxes.
 - b. Must use tax money to create a transit system that allows people to leave cars at home. People get cars because they cannot rely on Muni. SF needs a reliable, comfortable and magnificent transit system.
 - c. Encourage mosaics and murals in bus shelters/stations. Artists to work to make our transit system beautiful.
- ii. Challenge: Balance user desires and resources available: What would you push for as mayor to increase resources for parks?
 1. **Phil Ting:** Revenue is something I know a little about.
 - a. Can make my office, the Treasurer's, more efficient.

- b. Close all loop holes. Prop 13 corporate loophole. Want to make sure that homes aren't lost.
 - c. Support local vehicle license fee--\$\$ could go to transit/parks.
 - d. Supported Parks Bond 2008.
2. **Tony Hall:** I know a little about budgeting. Grew up working with 0 based budgeting – you must justify every cost that every dept spends.
- a. We have highest per capita rev to tax base of any city in country.
 - b. Our City budget 3 times higher now, but parks and streets aren't better.
 - c. First thing want to do: audit RPD—abusing city funds (also PUC) “money going astray” if people really care, this is how we can re-coop money and not charge more taxes.
3. **Terry Joan Baum:** I reject this question.
- a. Want to ask, how did we get to this point to ask this question.
 - b. We live in a rich city in the richest state and rich country. It is ridiculous. Money is getting sucked upwards—rich gets richer while we don't know how to fund. Tax the rich!
4. **John Avalos:** Aggressive taxation is needed.
- a. General Fund money should be shared between all depts. In an appropriate way given their budget systems.
 - b. We need to have good decisions across all budgets.
 - c. Past success: I fought to get money from the police and fire department and we were able to move millions to other depts. without affecting public safety.
 - d. We cannot raise fees on residents.
 - e. Sharp park—in Pacifica—requires huge subsidies from the City. We have already lost \$1.2 M. SF and RPD have a lot of issues like this. By finding new ways to manage or remove these issues, we could support other uses with that money.
5. **Jeff Adachi:** Couldn't agree with Terry more.
- a. Need to reform IRS Tax Code. Pension reform—costs have gone up 100-125M increase each year.
 - b. I post several measures on the ballot (Prob D) to save city Millions. Could be reinvesting this money.
6. **Phil Ting:** With our population growth, we'll need to have homes for the families coming into San Francisco.
- a. I have concerns about environmental degradation. With an increased population, we'll have increased use.

- b. Balance that with needs of children – we don't have the number of fields that we need and we don't have money to bring more and upkeep those we have.
 - c. We need to bring everyone together and balance the concerns. A balanced approach will yield success.
- iii. Would it be good to move Hardly Stricly Bluegrass, Outerlands to Candlestick/McLaren?
 - 1. **Michela Alioto-Pier:** I don't want to move them. I like listening to music in nature.
 - a. Big events draw people into park.
 - b. Like idea of McLaren—SF jewel that has gotten dusty and needs polishing. There is space and venue there. Focus on McLaren and get festivals there.
 - 2. **John Avalos:** I don't have time to go to these festivals now that I'm on the Board of Supervisors.
 - a. These are great events and bring a lot of revenue in and showcase parks.
 - b. No to Candlestick and no to McLaren as I don't think it is quite big enough to have events like that.
 - c. I understand temp damage that happens due to these events but also really good way to let people get acquainted with parks. RPD actually does a lot with a little.
- iv. Would you be willing to allow more diverse food trucks to sell food in GGP and other city parks?
 - 1. **Tony Hall:** Whatever people want lets give it to them. I'm not about restricting this. There are issues sometimes though, like:
 - a. Artificial turf: is all about lobbyists and people making money.
 - b. Outside lands: there is a problem with enforcement of sound levels and parking.
 - 2. **Terry Joan Baum:** Can't stand food trucks: running motors all the time. Violation of being in nature.
 - a. Open to idea of kiosks. Don't like gasoline fumes. There are no chairs/amenities.
 - b. If we're going to have food let's have chairs for people to sit in.
 - c. Focus on the master plans, like the master plan of Golden Gate Park: pastoral landscape. The integrity must be maintained. Concept of turf on western end. Let's keep it that way.
- v. Many parks have means of generating revenue such as clubhouses and concessions but others don't. How will you address this funding inequity and ensure that all parks get funding?
 - 1. No time was allotted for candidates to answer this question.

c. Our urban forest

- i. According to FUF, former DPW director Ed Reskin said it would transfer tree care responsibilities for 24,000 trees from the City to the nearest property owners. After a public outcry, the Board of Supervisors said it would look for ways to maintain the city's tree care responsibilities. With this conflict between resident and city needs, what viable long-term solution do you propose to protect urban forest?
1. **Phil Ting:** We are in an environment where we have to do more with less.
 - a. Have to raise bar on all city agencies. Mrequireing them to be more transparent and accountable. Need to be doing very best job possible.
 - b. Huge fan on of urban forests. In Sunset—trees make huge difference. Compare 19th with Sunset BLVD. The difference is the trees and plantings. We need to make sure that we are adequately funding this.
 - c. How do we fund? The question is whether we are going to fund this by taking away from something else? We shouldn't subsidize large property owners for decades. We should be funding open space.
 2. **John Avalos:** I see that we need to make sure that our budget is more or less whole and expand budget for tree program. We have cut back significantly over the years.
 - a. Need to maintain DPW maintenance crew.
 - b. Keep working with FUF.
 - c. Have green jobs programs to train young people to take care of trees.
 - d. I've seen great expansion of trees in D11. 98 trees planted in one day. Having a dramatic impact on community and volunteering. Keep urban forest healthy/thriving.
 3. **Tony Hall:** Like anything else, its all about good government without new taxes. I'm against new taxes.
 - a. Need dedicated funds so can't be taken away.
 - b. If the city plants trees, it should have the sense to maintain them. We can't ask public to take care of what city has created.
 - c. We want honest dialogue with public about will get, but I totally believe in volunteerism to fill gaps, open space and parks.
 4. **David Chiu:** As a city we need to think about unused spaces. I requested that RPD identify potential land to turn into community gardens. We need all of the people in the room to pass cutting edge legislation around urban agriculture and it is happening. Small spaces have great potential to be urban forests/gardens. To do this, we need a partnership between the communities and the City.

5. **Terry Joan Baum:** How about rescind \$50M tax break to Twitter?
 - a. These questions of how we're going to make do are what we need to rebel against. Take back the money from corporations.
 - b. Trees are special. Trees are plants with souls that we need to nurture. Children at school should be involved in caring for trees around school—seeing a being grow and change the environment.
 - i. We could host a city-wide Arbor Day contest. Children nominate trees (most beautiful tree in city).
 - ii. Trees are tremendous spiritual force on our streets. We should want to make that blossom.
6. **Michela Alioto-Pier:** This is an issue that has frustrated me. We as a city need a fundamental shift in way we think about urban forest.
 - a. When we have more trees we have less crime. Trees decreases violence and crime, then use public safety agencies to add trees.
 - b. We alleviated sewers issues in Seacliff by creating street gardens and planting trees. The PUC should promote such creative endeavors because they can save expense in long run.
 - c. Drive through Sunnydale housing—devoid of plant life. Trees serve a very real function—need to take advantage of this. Impact on almost every issue that city.
7. **Jeff Adachi:** Shared a personal story about a community member who had a tree in front of her store. She got a \$40 ticket for putting leaves in the inappropriate bin. These are the things drive people crazy.
 - a. Walk the walk of shared responsibility - the city has to make sure that it is doing its part.
 - b. We can model off other cites like Chicago/NYC by bringing in trees into areas that are cement blocks.

V. Summary Remarks from each candidate

- a. **Tony Hall:** As a father of 7 raising a family in a 3-bedroom house, playgrounds were our back yard.
 - i. When I ran for Supervisors, my priority was RPD. In D7 I refurbished many different parks. Our young kids need a place for recreation!
 - ii. We should look into building more athletic fields on Treasure Island, and further, in its development as D7 supervisor, I made Lake Merced a priority for me.
 - iii. Budget and Revenue Bond Oversight: I am very concerned about pension reform (different program than Mayor Lee and Jeff Adachi's).

We're not going to have money for anything soon. We need a new program for all city employees—so city isn't stuck with a lifetime of care after 5 years of working for the government. We can talk all night long about RPD but we won't have money without pension reform.

- iv. I want to make you happy and proud to live in SF. I need you to help me do that.
- b. **David Chiu:** Thank you for being here. I moved here 15 years ago because of all that is great about this city. Upon moving here, I worked as a civil rights attorney/prosecutor, but my attraction to innovation (tech company) redirected my focus to technology.
 - i. I moved to SF because of its beauty. Almost every Sunday I would go to a park. I am concerned that some of these fundamental assets, our parks, are in danger. Treasures aren't being taken care of.
 - ii. We need to also reverse trend of family flight, world class transportation system here, Visit my website and see my blueprint for SF. Join us in making sure we are building a better SF.
- c. **John Avalos:** I want to acknowledge all the people are passionate about parks. We have incredible amount of talented interest from every day folks and RPD hasn't utilize these people well enough.
 - i. I have a parent perspective. I walk my kids to school, I run through my park. I want to make sure that my daughter believes in parks.
 - ii. There is a need for greater General fund support in our parks. I want to find revenue and we know we have about \$500 M that we can tap from the rich in SF. This money could go towards our public facilities.
 - iii. I tried to prevent Botanical Garden from having non-resident fees. RPD mobilized people against my efforts. In my view, this is not good way of using resources.
 - iv. As Mayor, I'll be listening and I'll make sure you have a RPD Commission that listens.
- d. **Michela Alioto-Pier:** Thank you for having us here today.
 - i. When I was little, my dad had this drawer where would throw our crusts if we didn't eat them. Every Sunday we would feed the ducks at the Palace of Fine Arts. Now I spend time on soccer fields with my children. Parks are very much part of who I am.
 - ii. As D2 supervisor there was one project I didn't get to that I would want to get to as mayor: the Francisco Reservoir. This should be a new beautiful parks. There is a dense community (Chinatown/North Beach) and we need this resource for the population that lives there.
 - 1. We need to keep the children and families we have in SF and to do this we need more resources.
 - 2. The PUC wants to build homes on it, but it should be open space for all of SF's people.
- e. **Terry Joan Baum:**
 - i. Ranked choice voting: remember all those times, came up to election and didn't vote for anyone who didn't have a choice. Those days are open with ranked choice voting. Use #1 to vote your heart then vote for anyone else you think you could support.

- ii. SF is different than the rest of country. Money is moved from public welfare and rich are getting richer. This is not getting resolved by either major party. We need voice on left. By electing a green mayor - open up political dialogue. Country needs us to be a leader.
 - iii. "Time for SF to woman-up: become city that outsiders think we already are."
- f. **Phil Ting:** San Francisco is a world-class city with world-class people, but our government is not always world-class.
 - i. You all, the residents, need more say – especially on the issues we discussed today. These things are at crux of Reset San Francisco – creating a better life for citizens.
 - 1. If you have safer streets/park those neighborhoods are more attractive (prop value higher). So often what we forget is that these tradeoffs actually make are city worse off.
 - 2. So important to have urban greenery as it adds value to our homes and our lives.
 - ii. I encourage you all to remember that not just about money but about what we are getting for it.
- g. **Jeff Adachi:** Nature is healing whether you go to the ocean or park. We heal ourselves through nature.
 - i. One of the most impressive program that I've seen is called the Garden Project. At the San Bruno Jail over 150 inmates are gardening and raising their own food and food for others. These are the kinds of programs that we have to have in our city.
 - ii. I am running for office because I'm a reformer. When I ran for Public Defender no one gave me a chance...but I won. I have stood up for social justice issues again and again. We need a leader who isn't afraid to make tough decisions. All of these issues that we've discussed have been happening since 2007. If you want a change vote for me. Use public resources wisely. I've worked 2 years to bring fiscal reform to SF. This is the time of change we need.

VI. Closing: John King

- a. Thank you to the sponsors: Neighborhood Parks Council, Friends of the Urban Forest, San Francisco Parks Trust and Walk San Francisco.
- b. Go to: sfnpc.org/mayoralforum2011 for more details

VII. Unanswered Questions due to shortage of time

- a. All questions submitted prior to the forum and during the forum are included at the end of these minutes.

From Streets to Parks: Safer, Greener Public Space

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Questions from the Public

Overlapping Questions

Talk about your accomplishments in terms of public realm improvements. Not what you plan to do, but what you have done so far?

What are your plans for improving public spaces that are unused/underused? What are your thoughts about programs for art in the city in the face of the city's limited budget?

What will you do to make San Francisco a quieter city for residents and visitors alike?

What kind of values do you want San Francisco to stand for? What is your vision – as a leader- for SF?

Will you ensure that non-profit projects, which create economic opportunity for at-risk neighbors and generate local retail, will not have to pay for parade permits?

Will you, as Mayor, take the impact of parking displacement into consideration to ensure that the continued development of parklets will not adversely affect San Francisco's commitment to reducing GHG emissions to 20% below 1990 levels by next year?

Walkability

San Francisco should be a great walking city, but 800 people a year get hit by cars – more than anywhere else in the state per capita. New York City committed to improving pedestrian safety on 60 miles of streets a year. SF is 1/6 the size of NYC. Will you support improving pedestrian safety on 10 miles of streets a year?

When someone is hit by a car, the car's speed makes the difference between life and death. A car going 30mph is six times more likely to kill you than one going 20 mph. Thanks to Walk SF, San Francisco is creating 15-mph school zones. We still need enforcement. Will you prioritize enforcement of the most dangerous behaviors: speeding, running red lights, and failing to yield to pedestrians?

Even though everyone is a pedestrian, pedestrians often get short shrift and the least funding from the city. Would you increase dedicated funding from the city for pedestrian projects and pedestrian safety?

Walk SF endorsed Prop B, a bond with \$50 million for pedestrian and bike safety and \$25 million for disability access. This means permanent improvements like wider

sidewalks, traffic calming, and curb ramps. Do you support Prop B, the Road Repaving and Street Safety Bond measure, on the November ballot?

San Francisco has created small pedestrian plazas -- in the Castro, along Guerrero, and elsewhere -- which calm traffic and create more outdoor space for people to enjoy. "Parklets" are also creating mini-parks in the streets. Do you support expanding these programs and creating larger, more permanent plazas, in visible, central locations -- like Times Square in New York?

Sunday Streets, which Walk SF helped launch, is great. It creates miles of car-free streets every month and gets people out walking, hula hooping, and hopscotch-ing. Will you grow Sunday Streets with steady City funding so it can happen more often?

I'd like to be able to make my street car-free sometimes like Sunday Streets, but on a smaller, simpler scale. But getting the permits costs hundreds or even thousands of dollars. Will you streamline the permitting so more people can use streets as public space?

What ideas and examples have you seen in other cities that you'd like to implement here to make our streets and public spaces more inviting for everyone to walk on and enjoy?

What is your plan for increasing pedestrian safety in San Francisco and, in particular, south of Market?

Valencia has become a major pedestrian corridor. How do envision expanding this corridor from Cesar Chavez to Market St? What neighborhood do you envision being the next Valencia St?

How do you intend to reprioritize our public realm, away from the current dominance of the private car and toward pedestrians, bicycles, parklets and parks, etc? Will you support more car-free streets?

How will you work to make the city more walkable, bikeable, and accessible for public transit?

What are your plans for expanding shared use streets such as Linden St?

What neighborhood do you feel is most emblematic of the perfect walking environment? Will you schedule walk-throughs to do an on-the-ground survey of pedestrian conditions, especially busy intersections without countdown signals? What measures do you think need to be taken to improve pedestrian safety?

City agencies have tried to fix dangerous intersections with sidewalk corner bulb-outs and changes to the timing on traffic lights. This is a step but it's not enough. What would you do to free up funds to reconfigure corridors with a record of pedestrian crashes? How would you move pedestrian safety to the forefront of our city operations?

Sunday Streets has been an incredible success, with a huge number of participants. We want more such events but they cost a good deal of money to implement. The Sunday road closure on JFK Drive in Golden Gate Park is also very popular but costs very little to implement because there is only a single cross street. Do you support greatly increasing such events?

I want to know if the Mayoral candidates would consider licensing bicycles, require cyclists to stop at red lights and stop signs and yield the right of way to pedestrians. The money from bike licenses could be used to make more bike lanes to keep bikers and pedestrians safer. How would you ensure bike paths and routes in SF are safe for the whole family?

Even though city planners know that a walkable sidewalk in a commercial area should have at least 8 feet of unobstructed space for pedestrians, MTA is placing large bus shelters on narrow sidewalks, like those on Polk Street, Leavenworth Street, etc. Residents have signed petitions and complained, but MTA has stated that they make money from bus shelters and will not remove those blocking the sidewalk and will not offer the option of a small bench. What will you do as mayor to prevent MTA from blocking sidewalks with poorly designed and poorly placed bus shelters?

There are tens of thousands of cars parked on the sidewalks of San Francisco. This is an untenable situation for pedestrians. What are you going to do to keep cars off sidewalks?

Has the idea of taxing households with more than 2 cars an option?

What can be done to make the buses safer for seniors and less abled folks?

Urban Forest

Urban trees provide numerous benefits to San Francisco. They're the only element of our urban infrastructure that appreciates in value. Yet we lag behind other cities in the percent of area covered by trees. Earlier this year, in response to cuts in Mayor Lee's proposed budget, the Department of Public Works said it would transfer tree care responsibilities for 24,000 trees from the City to the nearest property owners. After a public outcry, the Board of Supervisors said it would look for ways to maintain the city's tree care responsibilities. What viable, long-term solution do you propose to protect and grow the City's green infrastructure generally and its urban forest specifically?

There are many streets in the city with really wide sidewalks (especially in the single-family-house neighborhoods, like Richmond and Sunset) which have no trees at all. It makes these streets extremely unattractive, dull, simply boring and even unpleasant at some degree for its residents and passerby pedestrians. Is there any plan to change current situation? Do San Francisco Mayoral Candidates even consider this situation as a problem?

Despite the good work of RPD, FUF and DPW we are already losing trees faster than they are being replaced in San Francisco. I am concerned about DPW's recent decision to phase out care for street trees due to budget cuts on top of this. What are the candidate's long range plans for planting and caring for our street trees?

Numerous studies show the economic, health, environmental, crime reduction and other benefits of urban trees. Ed Reiskin said that "our trees are the only infrastructure investment that appreciates over time." Yet the City has under-funded investment in our Urban Forest relative to other cities of similar size and reputation and more recently the City has taken action to abandon its commitment to care for many street trees and to thrust that obligation onto property owners. To this end, what is your proposal to reverse these trends and to provide sustainable long term investment in our Urban Forest infrastructure so that the people and the City can experience and enjoy the "appreciation" and other benefits?"

In designing streetscapes we need to bear in mind that trees need to be planted and trimmed so they do not impede tall vehicles such as motor-coaches. How can we develop a policy that encourages an increased number of trees in our Urban Environment while balancing safety needs for our transit and tourist attractions?

How committed are you to tree maintenance and planting?

Parks and Recreation

Current Contentious Issues

Do you support the Rec & Park Department's plan to keep the historic 18 hole Sharp Park Golf Course open, while at the same time improving and recovering habitat for endangered species at the property? What is your position on Sharp Park Golf Course? Would you be willing to convert more golf courses to city parks for everyone?"

What are the candidates' positions on the idea of designating Golden Gate Park as a historic district, which is now being studied by the Historic Preservation Commission?

There are plans to develop the western end of Golden Gate Park with seven acres of artificial turf, 1/4 million watts of sports lights on 60 foot poles, and a 40,000 square foot water treatment factory with a chemical building. These projects are counter to the design concept of the western end of Golden Gate Park as wooded parkland and a respite from urban development, as mandated by the 1998 Golden Gate Park Master Plan. SF Ocean Edge and the Golden Gate Park Preservation Alliance feel that the playing fields should be renovated with natural grass, the \$12 million funding used to fix up other Park properties, and the water treatment factory built in another location. What is your position on these two projects?

What is your stance on San Francisco's leash laws and RPD's Dog Policy? What is your position on off leash dog recreation areas?

Would you be willing to allow more diverse food trucks beside the overpriced "Roach Coaches" (cable car trucks) and pretzel vendors sell food in Golden Gate Park and other city parks?

What does "services being cut" mean to you, and how do you propose to create more revenue?

Maintenance, Access, & Preservation

How would you approach overlap of city services. For example: at the present time, if debris and trash is left on the edge of a park it is up to RPD to remove it. If that same trash was left a few feet closer to the curb it would be a DPW issue. Citizens are frustrated that our parks are used as dumping grounds and want full enforcement of laws and all city agencies to work cooperatively on this problem. How would you, as mayor address this?

How will you, as Mayor, guarantee that Rec/Park Dept will be responsive to the needs of the average park user who does not fit with the 'scheduled' services; i.e. early morning tai chi groups that need to use club house during rainy weather, yet are not welcome to be inside, and the area of basketball court they use is uneven due to extremely cracked surface. What are the candidates' positions on the Recreation and Parks Department encouraging volunteerism in parks?

Litter mars our city streets and parks and cleanup is a major expense for both the Department of Public Works and the Recreation and Parks Department. What is your plan to end the blight of litter in San Francisco?

"Would you consider holding Festivals such as Outside Lands Festival and Warren Hellman's Bluegrass Festival at Candlestick Park or McLaren Park to lessen the impact on the natural flora and fauna and in the case of McLaren Park, to draw more attention to McLaren Park? What would you do to draw more people to McLaren Park?

Right now there are too many kids who want to play outside than space and playfields to do so. How will you make more playing time available for youth living in San Francisco?

Everyday, our parks serve citizens and tourists yet many parks also serve as toilets for dogs and humans alike. What can be done to enforce existing nuisance laws such as the prohibition against public urination/defecation to ensure that our parks are safe for occupancy?

As mayor, what will you do to facilitate the protection and restoration of our City's naturally occurring ecosystems?

Given that San Francisco has been designated a biological hot spot in terms of species diversity, how do you think City government -- in particular, the Recreation and Parks Department -- should balance the need to protect biological diversity and endangered species with human needs to recreate?

Currently, RPD is not staffing the City's park clubhouses due to lack of funds. Thus, there is no RPD recreation programming at the clubhouses. Instead they are rented out to non-profit agencies or others to do their own programming. How would you as Mayor work to obtain funding to staff the clubhouses with RPD recreation personnel and/or find other creative ways for RPD recreation programs at our City-owned clubhouses? How will you keep our parks accessible to all of our residents?

I live downtown in the TL, a neighborhood with few parks. The little park space we do have is surrounded by 10ft high fences, making it more prison than park. In fact, though I have lived only a block from a gated park this past year, I have never yet actually been able to walk through that park as its always locked up. Candidates, will you remove these odious fences which keep the people of my neighborhood from accessing our local parks?

Revenue

The current funding paradigm of the Recreation and Parks Department accepts as a fact that the portion of funds available to the Department from the General Fund will, at best, remain the same and may well decrease in the future. As Mayor, what will/can you do to increase the City's commitment to our parks and recreational facilities through increased General Fund revenues?

How can the short term burden of the America's Cup be converted into a long term benefit for SF's waterfront?

How will you secure more park funding in the City budget? Please identify new viable ideas for funding sources for Parks.

One of the great challenges we have experienced in the city in recent years is a tension building around how to fund our parks. How would you propose we sustainably fund the parks system to ensure we can enjoy it in future years?

What are the candidates' positions on increasing RPD's earned revenue through leases, concessions, etc.?

Professional dog walkers are heavy users of off-leash dog runs (and of other park areas where leash laws are not enforced.) They provide a service but are high impact users. They are using the parks as their place of business, rent free. Can we charge a fee and limit the number of dogs per permit to help offset the impacts?"

AT&T being sued by a collective of citizens that really have their best interest at heart. Can San Francisco continue to pollute out limited, sometimes historical store and home fronts with technology that is already underground in San Francisco itself and many parts of the country. How would you address the AT&T issue. "Should we generate \$\$\$ for parks by selling naming rights? What is your view on this idea?"

Many commuters park free in GGP all day. How about 4 hour metered parking at \$0.50/hour?

Would you ask the wealthiest San Francisco citizens and corporations to pay higher taxes (progressively, i.e. the wealthier and corporations pay the most, the poor pay not at all, those in the middle pay an amount based on their level of income) to maintain our parks and other vital city services? If so, why; and if not, why not?

Fees are not fair or uniform for the Rec. Programs. Will you get Rec and Park to set up criteria and justify what they do and don't charge for?

What do you believe the commercialization of the Arboretum is a symptom of (if it is considered a symptom of something)?

Many parks have means of generating revenue such as clubhouses or concessions, but others are simply too small for any of RPD's recent income-generating ideas. How will you address this funding inequity and assure that even the small parks in poor neighborhoods like the Tenderloin get their fair share?

San Francisco lacks sports fields for all the kids who want to play. This spring, Little League closed registration six weeks early due to not having enough fields. Why is it easier for San Francisco kids to buy a ticket to watch a pro team than to actually play a sport in their local park?

Future Investment Choices & Decision-Making

What will you do to ensure a larger voice in decision making for neighborhood park groups in terms of their local parks, particularly when they provide the bulk of maintenance, support and programming?

How do you propose addressing the population growth in areas already lacking sufficient open space such as SoMa, Rincon Hill, Showplace Square, and Potrero Hill?

More parks are needed in Chinatown, the Mission District, the Tenderloin, the Outer Mission, Ingleside, the southeast sector of the City. What are your ideas to create more small parks for the outer neighborhoods?

Where do you envision creating more public plazas such as UN and Justin Herman Plaza?

As a new mayor of San Francisco, what are you going to do for Ocean Beach?

What are your views on preserving the reservoir and park space below Russian Hill as OPEN SPACE? It is located adjacent to the Hyde Street Cable Car's downhill run approaching Ghirardelli Square and Fisherman's Wharf. It is a uniquely beautiful view and popular place where the general public and tourists are currently able to watch the Blue Angels and 4th of July fireworks, and enjoy one of the grandest views of the Bay

stretching from the East Bay to Marin (Aquatic Park and Alcatraz in the foreground) unobstructed.

What is your position on the Francisco Reservoir?

- A defunct reservoir between Hyde and Larkin Streets, North of Chestnut.
- It is zoned open-space now.
- It has not been maintained by PUC and is in a state of dangerous disrepair.
- It is an eyesore to residents and visitors traveling the Hyde Street Cable Car.

What opportunities (and liabilities) can you imagine in linking schools and parks?

What will you do to encourage more art in public spaces?