



## 2008 Board of Supervisors Candidate Questionnaire

Candidates, please complete each question to the best of your ability in order for NPC to assess your "Park Friendly" rating. All responses will be posted on our website for the public to view. Text boxes expand to accommodate longer responses. Thank You.

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Name: **Alicia Wang**

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Email Address: **alicia@votealicia.com**

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Website: **votealicia.com**

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Mailing Address: **5059 Geary Blvd San Fran. CA 94118-2813**

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District: **1**

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Return to Sunya Ojure electronically at  
[sojure@sfnpc.org](mailto:sojure@sfnpc.org) by Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup>

1. In what ways do you feel parks contribute to the quality of life of San Francisco residents?

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**Parks, the heart and lungs of the city, are an integral part of San Francisco residents' life, especially for those who do not have large homes or back yards. For seniors it's a place they can go to socialize and exercise; for families, parks are essential for sports and outdoor activities. My neighbors consistently bring up the importance of playgrounds and the need for safety and cleanliness.**

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

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**I use the stretch along Park Presidio for walking my dog every day. It's a little urban oasis and an opportunity to meet neighbors. We neighbors often get together to do cleanup.**

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

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**Cabrillo Playground is in dire need of redesign: there is a crumbling wall that needs to be rebuilt which abuts several homes and has not received any response from Parks and Rec. Also, Ocean Beach – a complex situation because of overlapping jurisdictions – there are fires that emit toxic plumes of smoke that penetrate homes in the area and residents get no response**

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**from the GGNRA. There is also the problem of apparently illegal activities in the beach parking lots with drinking, drug sales, and drug use. On the pathway up to Sutro Park there is much graffiti and littering.**

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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?

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**1. KEEPING FAMILIES IN SAN FRANCISCO  
2. Playground Cleanliness, Safety, and Accessibility  
3. Balancing the needs of various stakeholders: Seniors, kids, surfers (at the beach), pet owners, and wildlife**

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5. NPC's ParkScan program indicates that the majority of problems reported by the public relate to misuse of parks by city residents. These conditions cost the City millions of dollars in staff time to address. Would you support NPC's proposal for the city to fund a public education campaign aimed at reducing misuse such as littering, graffiti and vandalism in our parks?

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**YES**

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6. The Recreation and Parks Department estimates that we are 200 gardeners short to keep up our parks to a good standard. Also, many common complaints from park users have to do with deferred maintenance such as broken irrigation parts and hazardous trees, largely the result of too few maintenance personnel and far too little funding. The Controller's City Survey 2007 indicates many residents continue to be dissatisfied with park maintenance. What do you propose to improve park maintenance?

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**This is budgetary issue and we need to fight for more resources for our parks – the heart and lungs of the City.**

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7. RPD has just developed work plans for each park but the plans do not clearly outline the tasks that volunteers can assist with. At the same time, efforts to reduce staff overtime require volunteer work parties (which usually take place on Saturday) to involve 15 or more—effectively eliminating many possible hours of volunteer assistance. With our parks being understaffed, volunteers are a critical way to bridge the maintenance gap. Do you support adding to the current work plans the specific tasks that volunteers can assist with? Also, in an effort to reduce staff overtime, would you support the creation of a program that would certify community members to volunteer in the parks without direct staff oversight, similar to DPW's adopt a street program?

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**YES to all, but we need to make sure community members are not supplanting the work of staff. I'd like to see a program that recognizes the existing efforts of so many citizens, especially seniors, maybe like retired executive programs.**

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8. ParkScan.org is a public portal that enables park users to report maintenance concerns to the Recreation and Park Department (and even include a photo!). Please ParkScan a park near you and describe the maintenance issue that needed attention in your park. If elected, would you like to receive regular reports on the conditions of parks reported in your district?

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**Yes, I would like to see ParkScan reports and the City Controller's Proposition C maintenance standards reports. These will likely prompt further inquiry and should inform budget decisions.**

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9. More than two dozen San Francisco playgrounds received failing grades in NPC's bi-annual Playground Report Card this year. Would you be available to participate in a workday to raise the grade of a failed playground?

***Note: To check which playgrounds in your district might be on the list, please check NPC's Playground Initiative Report Card at [www.parkscan.org](http://www.parkscan.org).***

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**I would like to work with neighbors to help clean parks and playgrounds near them. I have helped clean up quail habitat in the past.**

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10. NPC's Green Envy study identified many neighborhoods that lack playgrounds and neighborhood parks. (see enclosed map). Another survey (put the link here to Leon's study) by a national consultant indicates that San Francisco is deficient in soccer fields and opportunities for hiking on trails or community gardening. Do you have ideas to address these deficiencies?

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**To keep families in San Francisco certain high-need areas require additional parks and playgrounds. Adult and youth sports probably do need more fields. Open space needs to be acquired as the City grows; use of the City's Open Space Fund should be scrutinized.**

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11. The City provides start-up funds to establish Community Benefit Districts. Would you support additional funds in the city budget to establish Park Improvement Districts (PIDs) to supplement park maintenance and provide

funds for some ongoing capital needs in our parks such as irrigation systems and repairing playgrounds?

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**There are legal requirements (nexus study, Proposition 218, use of funds) that may restrict the use of money in the way that you suggest. Rather than setting up more CBD's, BID's, or even PID's I think we should adequately fund ongoing Rec-Park operating costs and continue to use general obligation bonds for major capital needs.**

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12. Are you aware that over 700 acres of park land is dedicated to golf in San Francisco (6 public golf courses) even though it has been identified as a low priority recreation in the 2004 Recreation Assessment (see above) and that each golf course requires 250,000 gallons of water a day? The Rec and Park Department is proposing to lease out 4 of these courses for 30 years, despite the need for more than sixty new baseball, softball and soccer fields just to meet current demand in these sports. What is your position on retaining so much golf land at the expense of other recreation needs?

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**I have not yet read the Golf report that is currently in the news. I am open to re-evaluating some courses or land for other park and open space purposes. I do wonder why San Francisco operates Sharp Park Golf Course in Pacifica – perhaps Pacifica, San Mateo County, or the GGNRA could acquire it. We should not contract out golf course maintenance activities.**

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13. San Francisco currently has no city-wide 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 city-wide open space requirement for all new residential development so that every neighborhood can have green space for play, exercise, and respite from urban life?

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**Yes. If City Planning would update the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Master Plan we could address that issue. Otherwise, the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan should provide for adequate open space for the increasing residential uses that are contemplated. Just as the Transit Impact Development Fee was expanded citywide the open space requirements should apply to new developments citywide – this is part of a larger discussion about developer-funded public benefits.**

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