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Love letters to Parks campaign Kicks-off Valentine's Day at Dolores Park
City-wide nonprofit encourages San Franciscans to show love to their parks

SAN FRANCISCO (February 2, 2010) – In search of the perfect Valentine? Look no farther than your neighborhood park. Love Letters to Parks is launching on February 14th with a free event at Dolores Park from 11 AM-1 PM. The Neighborhood Parks Council (NPC) in coordination with the Recreation and Park Department (RPD) created this new campaign to celebrate the city's wonderful parks. The public is invited to come and write a "love letter" to their favorite park at the event or online. Letters collected both at the event and submitted afterwards will be published on the campaign's website: <http://www.sfnpc.org/loveletters> and on NPC's Facebook fan page.

The campaign seeks to celebrate and promote the positive experiences people enjoy in San Francisco's many beautiful parks. Each day, tens of thousands of San Franciscans get out to their neighborhood parks to participate in recreation programming, enjoy their morning coffee, catch a glimpse of the city skyline, or meet a friend after work. Children enjoy playgrounds, and seniors get exercise. The Love Letters to Parks campaign will capture those moments and engage the public in building momentum for parks during a difficult budget season.

While this budget year will certainly prove challenging, NPC hopes the Love Letters to Parks campaign will remind park users of what is really at the heart of the difficult decisions to be made on expenditure reductions and revenue generation. "San Franciscans have an incredible amount of love for their parks. We hope this campaign will make that evident, and will help translate that sense of appreciation into real action for our parks," said Meredith Thomas, Executive Director of the Neighborhood Parks Council. "As RPD staff delve into budgetary number crunching, it will be increasingly important both to remember what is at stake, and to call on park users to help."

The Valentine's Day event is free and open to the public, and snacks and refreshments will be provided. Generous donations are provided by Bi-Rite Market, Dolores Park Café, Ixia flowers, Bell & Trunk Flowers, Vbkirk Flowers, Polished Lounge and Your Printer.

Love letters, submitted both at the event and afterwards, can recall special park moments, such as meeting a new friend or celebrating a special occasion, or they may describe the most enjoyable aspects of the park itself. Already, several letters have been published, highlighting a variety of stories. One such letter, from Haight resident Samantha Tabak, recalls the moment when a small dog ran up in the middle of her wedding ceremony at Buena Vista Park. "It was a perfect moment," she wrote, "as if the whole park was invited to the wedding." NPC invites all park users to participate in this campaign, and to show our parks extra love this year.

To submit a love letter, send your story in an email to loveletters@sfnpc.org (photos are welcome too.) For more information about the Valentine's Day kickoff event at Dolores Park,

including an alternate rain site, visit <http://www.sfnpc.org/loveletters>.

About the Neighborhood Parks Council

Established in 1996, the Neighborhood Parks Council (NPC) is a citywide nonprofit that emphasizes how vital parks and open spaces are to every neighborhood in San Francisco. NPC helps the community take action on park issues and keeps parks a priority at City Hall. NPC's current programs include: Park Stewardship, ParkScan, Park Advocacy, Playground Initiative, Playfields Stewardship Initiative, Open Space 2100 and the Blue Greenway. NPC believes every inch of the city is valuable and all citizens should have clean, safe and enjoyable parks. To learn more about NPC and its programs, please visit <http://www.sfnpc.org>.