



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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District: 1

**Return to Sunya Ojure electronically at
sojure@sfnpc.org by Friday, September 19th**

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

In an urbanized environment like San Francisco parks are a vital component of making the City livable. Not just adding to the quality of life, parks help make our City friendly to families and soften the hard edges of our urban existence.

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

As a Richmond District resident I am fortunate to live near several excellent parks. Of course Golden Gate Park is just blocks away – when I used to run, my regular route included Stowe Lake and the Polo Field. But I also live near Rossi Park where I played as a child.



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

Lincoln Park was one of the parks in D1 that received a failing grade from the Neighborhood Parks Council. I will work with neighbors, the parks council and City Departments to make the necessary repairs and improve this important resource. This will include involvement in community activities and finding the resources needed for this park.

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?

Aging facilities -- our parks are aging, equipment and facilities need to be updated and improved.

Public Safety -- this is a major concern in all of our public and private spaces. We must make sure that we have adequate police presence and an environment of safety in our parks.

Cleanliness, we must keep our parks clean. This is an on-going problem, staff is burdened with cleaning up after park users and we must work to keep our parks clean and graffiti free.

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?

Yes as I noted this is one of the major issues our parks face.



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?

I believe we may need to look at other means to maintain our parks beyond hiring more gardeners. Even if we stated today it would take months or years to reach the full complement of qualified gardeners required. Some of the ways we can supplement gardeners are to create more volunteer opportunities and looking at using qualified contractors to perform some work.

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?

Yes I would support creating work plans for volunteers and the creation of a program to certify community members.



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?

Yes I would appreciate this information.

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.

Yes

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?

These are significant problems. I believe that for soccer fields and community gardening we need to be creative and look for opportunities within our existing resources.

For hiking opportunities we need to be sensitive to the City Open Areas plan but we should look to developing trails in a sensitive manner.

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?

Yes I think this is an excellent idea.

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?

I understand the importance that many people put on golf. But the City's recreation priorities are shifting. I believe that we should undertake a master planning program that looks at how our parks are being used and the priorities of residents. We should then align priorities with uses.

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?

Yes I would support an open space requirement.
