

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT:

Meredith Thomas, Neighborhood Parks Council Executive Director

P: 415-621-3260, C: 415-728-3354

mthomas@sfnpc.org

Elton Pon, RPD Public Information Office

P: 415-831-2782, C: 415-297-7174

2010 Playground Report Card to be Released at Annual Play Day Event

April 5, 2010, San Francisco: The 2010 San Francisco Playground Report Card will be released at Play Day on April 8th at 12:30pm at McLaren Park (details below). The report grades the 100+ public playgrounds in San Francisco for safety and maintenance. Local playground advocates Meredith Thomas, Executive Director at the non-profit Neighborhood Parks Council, Phil Ginsburg, General Manager of the Recreation and Park Department, and Supervisor John Avalos will be joining community volunteers and local children at Play Day to celebrate the new Report Card.

Play Day shines a spotlight on San Francisco's playgrounds and highlights the importance of play in our city. Play Day and the 2010 Playground Report Card are key components of San Francisco's Playground Initiative, which is a partnership between the Neighborhood Parks Council (NPC) and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department (RPD). The Initiative works towards ensuring that all children in San Francisco have access to a safe and engaging play space in their neighborhood. The Report Card helps determine which playgrounds are in the worst condition and in need of the most attention. Through advocacy and community volunteerism, the Playground Initiative works to upgrade or replace these needy playgrounds.

"The Playground Report Card is a wonderful communication tool that helps us all understand how well we are meeting the needs of young children and families in San Francisco," said Meredith Thomas, NPC Executive Director. "At the Neighborhood Parks Council, we believe that every child deserves a playground near their home where they can play safely and make friends. The Report Card helps us prioritize our advocacy and organizing work so that we can direct resources to the playgrounds that need the most attention."

Playgrounds have been an ongoing priority for RPD and NPC. "Young children have always been one of our most important user groups," said Rec and Park General Manager Phil Ginsburg. "The Department is proud about the number of

renovated playgrounds that have opened since the 2008 Playground Report Card was issued and we look forward to continuing that trend with our current bond funding, in partnership with NPC and the community. ”

Over 10 playgrounds identified as needing major repairs in the 2008 Playground Report Card have since been renovated. An additional four playground sites are currently under construction. Moreover, the Playground Initiative held volunteer workdays at 24 C, D, and F grade playgrounds in 2008 and 2009 that resulted in significant improvements. Sixteen D and F grade playground remain, down from 26 in 2008.

This year’s Play Day will be held from 10am to 2pm at the Peru St. play area at McLaren Park. The formal report card release will be at 12:30pm.

The Peru St. site is one of three play areas in the park that once had play equipment, but have since been removed. NPC and RPD are currently supporting a community fundraising effort to revitalize the play areas in McLaren Park.

The *2010 Playground Report Card* will be available online after April 8th at sfnpc.org/playgrounds.

Since 1996, Neighborhood Parks Council (NPC) has established itself as San Francisco's premier park advocacy authority, representing more than 100 park groups, over 50 strategic partner organizations, and 4,000+ park volunteers. Our well-articulated mission and energetic agenda has inspired positive change within our city's parks. Neighborhood Parks Council (NPC) advocates for a superior, equitable and sustainable park and recreation system. NPC provides leadership and support to park users through community-driven stewardship, education, planning and research. See www.sfnpc.org for more information.