



November 15, 2007

Dear Open Space Task Force Participants:

I would like to thank you for attending the inaugural meeting of the Open Space Task Force. The Open Space Task Force is charged with establishing a vision for open space in San Francisco for future generations. The Task Force has been organized through a partnership between the Mayor's Office, city agencies including the Planning Department and the Recreation and Parks Department, and our non-profit partners: the Neighborhood Parks Council and San Francisco Planning and Urban Research (SPUR).

We are all aware of the growth in San Francisco, creating higher density and new residential neighborhoods. The challenge of providing great parks and recreation facilities in these neighborhoods is daunting given the lack of available open land and the high cost of real estate. Nonetheless, we all know that parks are the barometers of quality of life; their active use is also an indicator of, and a tool for, creating social capital in our city.

The Task Force will meet over a 12 month period, with 4-5 meetings of the larger group and 6-7 meetings of its subcommittees. We promise that it will be a stimulating and worthwhile dialogue, reviewing best practices from other cities, and resulting in tangible outcomes that will lay the framework for achieving great parks and an equitable distribution of open space.

I would like to acknowledge the financial assistance to the Task Force provided by the Gerbode Foundation, The Walter and Elise Haas Fund, The Evelyn & Walter Haas Jr. Fund, and The University of California San Francisco.

Sincerely,

Mayor Gavin Newsom