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Contact:

Maureen Barry (415) 350-4929
 Lily Madjus (415) 238-9095
 Ashley Summers (415) 554-7460

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**Supervisor Katy Tang and San Francisco Public
 Utilities Commission Kick Off the Front Yard
 Ambassadors Program**

**Paved Front Yards Replaced with Vibrant Front Gardens to Manage
 Stormwater**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – Today, Supervisor Katy Tang of District 4 and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) was joined by over 40 volunteers along with the Friends of the Urban Forest, Surfrider Foundation, Sloat Garden Center and Sunset neighborhood residents in kicking off the Front Yard Ambassadors Program to replace 2500 feet of paved residential driveways with vibrant front yard gardens. This new grant Program provides Sunset residents an opportunity to partner with their neighbors and the City in transforming their front yards into vibrant, ecologically friendly spaces while also helping the City’s aging combined sewer system manage stormwater and promote water efficient landscaping practices.

“There are tremendous benefits to breaking up concrete and installing water-wise landscaping in our neighborhoods – from taking pressure off of our combined sewer system to replenishing our aquifer and beautifying our neighborhoods. We hope this program will serve as a model for the rest of the City,” said Supervisor Katy Tang of District 4.

The \$85,000 Program is funded \$75,000 from the SFPUC and \$10,000 from Supervisor Tang and will be administered by the Friends of the Urban Forest in its first year. Residents interested in participating in the Program will need to have at least five homes on their block collectively apply for the grant. Current program eligibility is limited to residences in District 4. Residents chosen for the program will pay a nominal permit fee, depending on how many residents apply with permit fees ranging from \$182 - \$245.

Today’s Program launch featured the planting low maintenance and drought tolerant front yard gardens simultaneously at three locations in the Sunset District (24th & 25th Avenues on Ortega, 47th Avenue between Pacheco and Quintara streets and 37th Avenue between Judah and Kirkham streets) by Friends of the Urban Forest and Surfrider Foundation volunteers along with neighborhood residents. Program launch partners included Sloat Garden Center,

- Edwin M. Lee**
Mayor
- Vince Courtney**
President
- Ann Moller Caen**
Vice President
- Francesca Viotor**
Commissioner
- Anson Moran**
Commissioner
- Art Torres**
Commissioner
- Harlan L. Kelly, Jr.**
General Manager



a local nursery located on Sloat Boulevard, providing a garden starter kit as well as ongoing garden expertise to participants.

"Cities and their residents are healthier when the urban environment includes natural spaces," said Dan Flanagan, Executive Director of Friends of the Urban Forest. "Unfortunately, this is a challenge in the Sunset neighborhood as it has less greenery and natural space than most other San Francisco neighborhoods. Through this Program partnership, we will be able to create more residential open spaces."

The launch of this Program in District 4 is in response to an ongoing problem throughout the City of the prevalence of paved-over driveways. In the Sunset, this Program is expected to transform six to ten blocks during its first year with a minimum of 2500 sq feet of concrete to be broken up and replaced, offsetting 30,000 gallons of stormwater from the City's aging combined sewer system.

This Program launch coincides with important steps the SFPUC is taking to transform neighborhoods and improve stormwater management throughout the City. The SFPUC is in the midst of planning the installation of green infrastructure technologies such as rain gardens and permeable pavement in each of the City's eight urban watersheds. These projects bring the natural infiltration processes of plants back into prevalently paved over areas to capture stormwater runoff. One of these projects is the Sunset Boulevard Greenway, where rain gardens are planned along the 16-block corridor to divert 17 millions gallons of stormwater from entering the system.

"As the SFPUC upgrades our aging combined sewer system, this grant Program provides residents a mechanism to keep stormwater out of our sewers while showcasing water-efficient landscaping practices in their front yards," said SFPUC General Manager Harlan Kelly, Jr.

Applications are still being accepted until March 31st, 2014. Interested residents can find more information here: <http://www.sfbos.org/index.aspx?page=15348>.

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