Greetings from Supervisor Eric Mar

Happy July everyone! I have been ‘busy as a bee’ advocating, mobilizing, and speaking out for a fair and balanced budget that is equitable for our neighborhood and City. With grassroots community, labor and social service groups, I have taken a strong stand in supporting our City’s critical safety net for families and children.

Our office has been centrally involved in protecting programs that serve the Richmond and our residents, from Children and Families at the Richmond District Neighborhood Center and school Beacon Centers, to Citywide agencies like RAMS [Richmond Area Multiservices] that provide critical multicultural mental health and vocational services to people throughout the City. Thank you to all of you for speaking out strongly to protect our community needs in this difficult period. Thanks also to my staff Cassandra Costello and Lin Shao Chin and our dedicated volunteers for their hard work responding to your calls and emails.

During the crisis I have also worked closely with my colleagues on the Board and staff of the SF County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) and Municipal Transportation Authority [MTA] to minimize fee increases, fight against service cutbacks, and protect public transit routes used by our Richmond District families, seniors and residents.

Given the ongoing national housing crisis, and increased foreclosures and evictions in San Francisco, I have also been working with community-based family and tenant organizations to promote policies that protect families from evictions in this terrible economic period.

We are also working with a coalition of environmental and community organizations to access the maximum federal resources for new green collar jobs and to support green small businesses in San Francisco. We are working closely with the Mayor’s Office, Department of the Environment and Office of Economic and Workforce Development to establish a diverse community advisory committee to support our City’s transition to a green collar economy.

Finally, I want to highlight a meeting that I am co-hosting with the San Francisco County Transportation Authority on the Geary Bus Rapid Transit Project and street improvements planned for Geary Boulevard. The meeting will be on Monday, July 27th from 7-9pm at the Gymnasium in the Richmond Recreation Center. This meeting will be a chance to learn about the project and street improvements and will provide the opportunity for feedback. Hope to see you there! Please read in body of newsletter for more information.
Celebrating **PRIDE** and Diversity  
By Lin-Shao Chin

Supervisor Mar, myself and our friends Beth, Dan, Isabella, Michelle, Susan and Stina celebrated PRIDE by riding a bicycle built for seven in the parade. As usual, the parade was full of great energy, amazing costumes, and wonderful floats. We couldn’t have asked for more beautiful weather! As we made our way through the parade, we received many smiles, amongst the gawking and pointing. The party continued even after the parade, as we continued to ride the bike, play music, pick up passengers, and spread joy to everyone.

**Better Streets, Pavement to Parks, Planning Fun!**  
By Chris Gembinski

Our Richmond community deserves safer, more livable streets. Last month, I hosted a town hall meeting on pedestrian and traffic safety and street improvements with Captain Correia of the Richmond Police Station and staff from both the Planning Department and the Municipal Transportation Agency. Many people described concerns about dangerous intersections and streets. We also brainstormed creative ideas on how to make our streets more livable and discussed two concepts that the Planning Department is working on: Pavement to Parks and the Better Streets Plan.
Pavement to Parks transforms paved areas that are not being used to their fullest potential into lively and vivid public plazas and parks (http://sfpavementtoparks.sfplanning.org/).
We need your ideas and help to transform the Richmond into a more livable place for everyone.

The Better Streets Plan is a blueprint for the future of San Francisco’s transit first, pedestrian environment. The Plan takes into account the needs of all street users, and reflects the understanding that our streets serve a variety of social, recreational, and ecological needs. By providing guidelines for our sidewalks and crosswalks, and in some instances, certain areas of the roadway, The Plan will improve areas of the street where people walk, shop, sit, play, or interact, outside of moving vehicles. Once fully realized, the Better Streets Plan will help retain families in San Francisco, support Muni and a transit-first city, help promote public safety, decrease pedestrian injuries, increase street accessibility for all users, and enhance the everyday quality of life for all San Francisco residents.

As a follow up to last month’s town hall meeting, we will be hosting a “Better Streets” neighborhood meeting on July 8, 2009, from 6:30-8pm at the Richmond District Neighborhood Center (741 30th Avenue). Learn about how you can do sidewalk landscaping in front of your house, community challenge grants for street improvements, community gardens and Pavement to Parks. We need your thoughts and ideas. Please join us!

Better Streets Follow up Meeting
Wednesday, July 8th
6:30-8pm
Richmond District Neighborhood Center
(741 30th Avenue)

Upcoming Events

July 4

Join the Neighborhood Parks Council and Alexander Leff for a Community Picnic from noon to 2pm At Muriel Leff Mini Park (7th Avenue between Anza and Geary (behind Richmond Police Station)
There will be burgers generously donated by Hearst Ranch, drinks provided by Odwalla and lots of community supporters including NorCal (with their famous grillers). This event will also help jumpstart the creation of a park group at Muriel Leff Mini Park, a project made possible by Alexander Leff (Muriel's son). Come enjoy some food, fun activities for kids, and (hopefully) warm weather. If you have any questions, or would like to help out please contact Mikki Sulanchupakorn, the new staff person for Muriel Leff Mini Park, at mikki@sfnpc.org
**July 9**

Vigil for Euna Lee and Laura Ling,  
Current TV Journalists Held in North Korea

Where: Polk St steps, City Hall, 6:30 pm

As a follow up to our June 3rd Vigil organized by a variety of individuals and community organizations we are sponsoring another vigil for the two San Francisco-based Current TV journalists currently detained in North Korea. They were arrested on March 17, 2009 near the North Korean border while reporting on refugees living in China. Both women have been accused by North Korea of crossing into the country illegally and committing “hostile acts,” and have been sentenced to 12 years of labor in North Korea. Please come to show your support.

**July 16**

District One Coffee with Eric  
Come meet me for coffee during my monthly district office hours. On the 16th of July (every 3rd Thursday of the month) I will be at the Bazaar Café (5927 California Street), from 6:30pm-7:30pm. Drop by!

**July 17**

New Visions, New Leadership:  
A Kick-Off Mixer hosted by The API Caucus  
6:00pm-8:00pm  
Mercury Lounge  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
No-host bar: $20 for new API Caucus members/Free for current API Caucus members  
To learn more about us, please visit:  

**July 27**

Street, Pedestrian and Transportation Improvements  
BRT Update

I am hosting a meeting along with the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) to discuss pedestrian, transit and street improvements on Geary Boulevard and the Geary Bus Rapid Transit project (BRT).

Our neighborhood is poised to significantly improve the reliability and speed of our 38 Geary buses in the city’s 2nd most widely traveled street. We also have a key opportunity to beautify and improve Geary Boulevard with new landscaping and amenities.

The evaluation of BRT for Geary Boulevard that kicked-off in 2004 has reached a new milestone as the SFCTA delves deeper into its analysis of the proposed project with a full

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environmental impact analysis. BRT, which incorporates a dedicated transit lane between Van Ness and 33rd Avenues, real-time travel information, and high quality stations, among other features, is being considered for this important corridor as a means to better serve the 55,000 daily transit riders on Geary.

Though primarily focused on transit improvements, Geary BRT would offer enhancements that carry benefits for drivers and pedestrians as well. Traffic signal optimization will help maintain the flow of vehicles on the roadway, while new countdown signals and curb extensions on many street corners will improve crossing conditions for those traveling on foot.

While Richmond District residents and businesses are poised to reap substantial benefits if BRT is implemented, the Environmental Review underway will help identify any potential impacts of the project. Some of the issues that will be evaluated during this analysis include changes to traffic on neighboring streets, the effect on parking availability on Geary, and construction impacts that would be associated with the implementation of BRT.

Join us on July 27, at the Richmond Rec Center, from 7-9 pm to learn more about Geary BRT and pedestrian and street improvements planned for Geary Boulevard. For more information about the project, please visit www.GearyBRT.org or contact the Principal Transportation Planner, Zabe Bent, at gearybrt@sftca.org.

July 31
Bike-to-Work Day!

Bike to work with us on Friday, July 31st! We will meet at 8am at the Velo Rouge Café (798 Arguello Blvd) and bike down to City Hall.
Sunday Streets coming soon to Ocean Beach 8/9 and 9/6!

Celebrate our San Francisco neighborhoods and take pride in the community as a Sunday Streets volunteer. Sunday Streets is a San Francisco city event that opens miles of car-free neighborhood streets to people for walking, biking and recreation – connecting San Francisco neighborhoods on six Sundays in 2009. The next Sunday Streets event is July 19th on a new route through the Mission District (10AM-2PM). Volunteering for Sunday Streets is an easy way to have a great time while making a difference in your community. Volunteer shifts are about half the length of the event, so your team will have plenty of time to enjoy Sunday Streets and volunteer. A free lunch and t-shirts are provided to all volunteers. There is also a special treat for all volunteers who help on five dates or more. To sign up to volunteer and for more information about dates and routes, go to: www.sundaystreetssf.com/volunteer.html

The west side of the city will host Sunday Streets on August 9th and September 6th along the Great Highway.  http://sundaystreetssf.com/

Community Clean Team comes to Ocean Beach! Read below for details.

Community Clean Team Promotes Summer Beautification

In July, let’s get together and clean up the Richmond District! The Community Clean Team led by the Department of Public Works (DPW) is coming to our District and asking for our help.

Richmond residents can show support to our community by participating in the cleanup activities including litter abatement from the beach and the neighborhood, graffiti paint out on the sea wall, weed removal from center medians, and neighborhood beautification projects throughout District One. The event is on Saturday, July 11 from 9 am to 12 noon at Great Highway and Fulton. If you want to organize a cleanup at your own neighborhood, contact DPW to get supplies and tools.

In addition, Richmond residents can also take advantage of Clean Team’s Gigantic Three program which provides free service to residents in District One to recycle, compost, and drop off household bulky items on Saturday, July 11 from 8 am to 12 noon at Great Highway and Fulton.

To volunteer or to organize your own neighborhood event, call (415) 641-2600 or email volunteer@sfdpw.org. For more information about the events, visit www.sfgov.org/dpw.
UPDATES

Arboretum Fees

Great news everyone! Thanks to all the community activism opposing the proposed entrance fee to the Arboretum in GG Park, we are glad to report that the Arboretum will remain free to all! Thanks for your strong advocacy.

Many of you worked very hard on this issue and it paid off! The Recreation and Park Department is no longer looking at fees for residents or visitors, instead they have proposed food concessions and a donation box to help raise revenues at the Arboretum.

Lincoln Park Steps Tiling Project

Great news! Due to the diligence of many individuals in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, the Lincoln Park Steps tiling project was just awarded $51,000 through a Community Challenge Grant. This is a great start, but the project still needs your help. Read below for information about the tiling proposal and how to donate.

A group of dedicated neighbors lead by Anna Yatroossis and Meg Autry from the Friends of Lincoln Park are organizing to create a wonderful tiling project on the staircase at the end of California Street at 32nd Avenue. These steps are a gateway to and from the surrounding neighborhoods, Lincoln Park, Lincoln Park Playground, Lincoln Golf Course, Legion of Honor and the Land’s End walk.

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These steps are heavily used on a daily basis and show the scars of wear and tear. The Friends of Lincoln Park have put together a proposal to revitalize the steps and install artistic tiles on all of the steps and benches. This will completely transform the area and will be a true public gift that we will cherish for generations to come.

The Friends of Lincoln Park began this process by talking to members of their community about their tiling idea and eventually, they were able to get a coalition of neighborhood support to move forward. The tiling design was inspired from historic photographs of Sutro Baths, buildings of the 1890 World’s Fair in San Francisco, and the artistic vision of Aileen Barr, a renowned tile artist who has worked on many public projects in San Francisco, including the award winning tiling project on the 16th Avenue Stairs in the Sunset District. She has designed a beautiful handmade Beaux Arts tile proposal that is supported by the surrounding neighbors and community, the Board of Supervisors, the San Francisco Arts Commission and the Recreation and Parks Commission.

The restoration and tiling project will be conducted in two phases over two years to allow for fundraising and to maximize community input. Phase one will consist of site preparation and emplacement of art tiles on the top retaining wall bench, mid-point benches and pillars. Phase two will install art tiles on the step risers.

The Friends of Lincoln Park have teamed up with San Francisco Parks Trust as their financial sponsor. If you are interested in donating to the California Street tiling project, please visit: http://www.sft.org/Default.aspx?tabid=279. Also, for additional questions about the project, please email: FriendsOfLincolnPark@yahoo.com.

These community projects are vital to livable and vibrant communities. I want to do all I can to support other neighborhood groups to do similar public improvement projects. For more information about the Community Challenge Grant Program, please visit: http://www.sfgov.org/site/ccg_index.asp.

These are a few of the steps that Aileen Barr did that are part of the 16th Avenue steps in the Sunset District.
**ParkScan**

I encourage all of you to use a program called “ParkScan” which is run by the non-profit, Neighborhood Parks Council here in San Francisco.

ParkScan enables park users to report maintenance issues they observe in City parks and playgrounds to the appropriate City agencies that manage them. Observations are assigned a tracking number, which creates an accountable and transparent system for park users and City officials. ParkScan data are also used by the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department to make budget requests, and by park advocates to get publicity and funding for park projects.

For more information about ParkScan and how to participate, please visit: http://www.parkscan.org/about

**Summer Programs for Kids**

School is out and summer is finally here! The Richmond has so much to offer year-round, and summer time is no exception. For youth of all ages, the Richmond District YMCA has camps that cater to all interests. The Y also offers the Fitness and Leadership Experience (FLEX), a free program for middle and high schoolers that focuses on educating youth about nutrition and activities that promote physical fitness. The Y also has a program to train high school students to work as daycamp leaders. For more information, please visit: http://www.ymcasf.org/Richmond/camping.html

If you need some insider advice on other Richmond District summer camps, I’ve found that the reviewers on the blog Parents Connect, are happy to voice their helpful opinions. The web site has a list of camps and other activities in the Richmond District, like Kids on Camera, an acting camp that trained the person who was the voice of Andy in the movie Toy Story. For more reviews, please visit: http://gocitykids.parentsconnect.com/category/inner-richmond-san-francisco-ca-usa/resources/camps
Thank you for reading the District 1 Office Newsletter. Please contact us at any time if you have questions or comments.

Also, thanks to the volunteers in my office for making this newsletter happen every month!

Photo of Richmond District residents brainstorming about problem intersections and areas for improvement at the May 30 Town Hall Meeting.

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