

Office of the Mayor
City & County of San Francisco



Gavin Newsom

November 18, 2010

Philip Ginsburg, General Manager
Recreation and Park Department
McLaren Lodge, 501 Stanyan Street
San Francisco, CA 94117

Mark Buell, President
Recreation and Park Commission
McLaren Lodge, 501 Stanyan Street
San Francisco, CA 94117

Melanie Nutter, Director
Department of the Environment
11 Grove Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Matthew Tuchow, President
Commission on the Environment
11 Grove Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Ginsburg, Ms. Nutter, Presidents Buell and Tuchow,

I have been engaged in an extensive and thorough process regarding the future use of the parkland which is currently the site of the Haight Ashbury Recycling Center. I am extremely pleased that, in collaboration with the Inner Sunset Park Neighbors, the Cole Valley Improvement Association, the Buena Vista Neighborhood Association and the Haight Ashbury Improvement Association, we have a vision for the site.

The goal was to imagine a use that fosters community, addresses a neighborhood need, respects the fact that the site is at the entrance to Golden Gate Park and honors the neighborhood-serving activities that have historically taken place there. A Community Garden Assistance Center will meet all of those objectives.

As you all know, the Recreation and Park Department's Community Garden program has been an overwhelming success. There is currently a list of over 500 people waiting for plots in the existing gardens. Currently, the Recreation and Park Department runs only one Community Garden on the west side of San Francisco. Expanding work of the native plant nursery that currently exists on the site will beautify and enliven the site, paying homage to the fact that it is at the foot of one of the country's most beautiful urban parks. I am confident that the Recreation and Park Department will create and manage a vibrant hub for community gardeners and urban agriculture.

In seeking to repurpose this site, we are interested in finding new ways to partner with HANC. HANC has been an important part of the community for many years and I am asking the Recreation and Park Department to make all possible efforts to include HANC in the Community Garden Assistance Center.

The HANC center served an important purpose at the beginning of the recycling movement. Currently however, the recycling tonnage collected at HANC accounts for only about one tenth of one percent of San Francisco's total landfill diversion. It is reasonable to expect that those dedicated recyclers that use the facility will take their material to another existing site for proper handling—whether that means bringing bottles and cans with California redemption value to another redemption center, or using the city's robust curbside collection program.

I am confident that the Department of the Environment has and will work to make the redemption of bottles and cans, and recycling in general, more convenient in San Francisco. This can include urging supermarkets and other beverage retailers to install reverse vending machines, or redeem bottles and cans in-store. Notwithstanding, I am directing the Department of the Environment to take all measures necessary to safeguard San Francisco's laudable recycling diversion rate and to ensure continued, convenient access to recycling services for park neighbors.

It is with great excitement that I ask you to pursue implementation of the garden assistance center plan while safe-guarding our extraordinary accomplishments regarding landfill diversion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Newsom', written over a horizontal line.

Gavin Newsom
Mayor