



London N. Breed, Mayor
Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager

April 23, 2021

Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

On behalf of the residents of the City and County of San Francisco, I write to request your support for the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department's application for a \$1.5M grant through HUD's Economic Development Initiative to support our Herz Recreation Center Project. The focus of this allocation would be to close the funding gap on construction of new gym and outdoor amenities for the Herz Recreation Center project. The project currently has \$25 million of funding, and any additional funds could help close the funding gap of approximately \$5m. The federal funding will be used for the construction contract.

The new facility will be located in an equity zone that will serve the Sunnysdale and Visitacion Valley neighborhoods. Sunnysdale HOPE SF is the largest public housing development in San Francisco. The project scope includes construction of a new 11,500 square foot multi-use recreation center with an indoor basketball court, raised bleachers, one multi-purpose room, lobby, reception area, staff office, kitchen, restrooms and support spaces. This multi-use facility will serve a variety of uses for basketball, volleyball, badminton and will also serve as an event space for small gatherings and community meetings. The exterior improvements include an adult fitness area, a nature exploration and picnic area, which will serve wellness/trauma healing outdoor space that will encourage kids to connect with nature. It will also serve an opportunity for outdoor classroom. In addition, the project includes accessible pathways, lighting, and a maintenance/access area for staff. The project is slated to open on March 1, 2024.

The San Francisco Recreation and Park Department administers more than 220 parks, playgrounds, and open spaces, including two outside the city limits-- Camp Mather in Yosemite Valley and Sharp Park in Pacifica, Calif. Our mission is to provide enriching recreational activities, maintain beautiful parks and preserve the environment for the well-being of everyone in our diverse community. Our park system includes 25 recreation centers, 41 community gardens, nine swimming pools, five golf courses and numerous tennis courts, ball

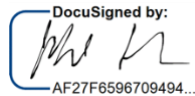


diamonds, soccer fields and other sports venues. Included in the department's responsibilities are the Marina Yacht Harbor, the San Francisco Zoo, and Lake Merced.

The San Francisco Recreation and Park Department in collaboration with community and the project partners have worked hard to arrive at a design that fits the needs of these very deserving neighborhoods and ask for your support to make this a reality. The neighbors and residents of Visitacion Valley and Sunnydale are extremely supportive of this project and they have advocated for an indoor gym for decades. In a recent public hearing, a community leader referred to this project as a "life-saver" as it would provide a safe, clean and community-oriented space for youths and young adults to gather and play.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to our request. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Phil Ginsburg
General Manager

cc: Mayor London N. Breed
Edward McCaffrey, Manager, State and Federal Affairs, Office of Mayor London N. Breed



February 24, 2021

San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission
501 Stanyan Street
San Francisco, CA 94117

Dear Recreation and Park Commission,

Writing on behalf of Boys & Girls Clubs of San Francisco, Mercy Housing California, Related California and Wu Yee Children's Services, we want to offer our enthusiastic support for the Herz Recreation Center grant acceptance, donor recognition, and approval of conceptual design for the recreation center and playground. We are thrilled that the 2020 Health and Recovery G.O. Bond, which includes \$10 million for the Herz Playground Recreation Center, was approved by San Francisco voters last fall. As you know, we are matching this proposed funding with a \$10 million donation from private sources to move this important project forward and are well on our way to raising that money.

In partnership with the Recreation and Parks Department, we have made progress on the project and are excited to bring this much-needed resource to the Sunnydale and Visitacion Valley neighborhoods, which is home to one of the highest concentrations of young people in the City and unfortunately one of the highest concentrations of poverty, as well. Over the last decade, our organizations have been working with HOPE SF and neighborhood residents to create a recreation center for the community. Unlike most San Franciscans who live within a mile or less from their neighborhood recreation center, residents of Sunnydale and Visitacion Valley do not have this opportunity in their community and thus have significant barriers to access recreational programming and facilities needed for physical and mental well being.

For that reason, our organizations joined together in 2018 to launch a capital campaign to raise funding for both a new recreation center in Herz Playground and a critically important community center next door on what is now Housing Authority property. With funding from the campaign, we have partnered with Rec/Park staff, residents, and city officials to create a conceptual design for the recreation center. We committed to raise \$10 million for the project in order to ensure that the community gets the recreation center that it deserves.

In closing, we believe as you do that young people deserve the same opportunities to grow and prosper regardless of their income or race. The Herz Recreation Center will help to achieve that vision, and we are looking forward to continuing to work with the Recreation and Parks Department, Capital Planning Committee, and the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor to move this critical project forward.

Thank you for your vision and support.

Sincerely,

Rob Connolly, President
Boys & Girls Clubs of San Francisco

Ann Silverberg, CEO NorCal Affordable
Related California

Doug Shoemaker, President
Mercy Housing California

Monica Walters, CEO
Wu Yee Children's Services

cc: Supervisor Walton, via email

Ward, Alexis (REC)

From: Linda Stark Litehiser <linda.litehi@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 8:47 PM
To: Commission, Recpark (REC)
Cc: Ward, Alexis (REC); Walton, Shamann (BOS); Safai, Ahsha (BOS); Fran Martin; Ronen, Hillary; Ginsburg, Phil (REC); Steven Currier; Joe Litehiser
Subject: Herz Playground letter of support of proposed Recreation Center plus Grant Acceptance & Donor Recognition

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Dear Commissioners and All;

My husband Joe and I would like to further be on record in full support of all the Herz Playground, proposed projects coming before the Commission. In my previous email, I referred to the Playground Improvements only. There are two other aspects necessary to the completion of the Herz Playground improvement package. We have both attended a number of virtual meetings on the recreation center design and how the entire facility works with the outdoor playground space, the existing clubhouse and swimming pool. With the completion of these additional features, Herz will become one of the most comprehensive recreation centers in the entire park system. We support the grant acceptance and donor recognition aspects of the project as well. Putting together this package is essential to the final completion of the project.

We are very committed to the entirety of John McLaren Park. We spend a great deal of our free time volunteering in various physical areas and activities in the park. We consider this work a most rewarding experience. Each time we return to the park--like this past weekend-- we see more and more families discovering that there are so many opportunities to recreate in this amazing park. With the completion of the entire Herz Playground facility, the southern neighborhoods of San Francisco can feel very uplifted and supported by our City.

Best regards, Linda and Joe Litehiser

(For identification purposes)
Friends of the AMP/ Jerry Garcia Amphitheatre
Members of the McLaren Park Collaborative
Crocker Amazon Playground Advisory Committee volunteers
District 11 residents
78 Havelock St. San Francisco, CA 94112



Where Nature, Art and Science Meet

February 27, 2021

Recreation and Parks Commissioners,

Historically, the City of San Francisco has neglected Visitacion Valley and its diverse population has suffered as a result. With one of the highest rates of poverty, number of children and single parent families in the city, public amenities have been noticeably lacking. A gymnasium and playground on the western edge of the Valley are sorely needed and long overdue, particularly adjacent to Sunnydale, the largest public housing development in the City.

Given the unprecedented influx of proposed new housing both on the western and eastern edges of the Visitacion Valley neighborhood and without a baseline of adequate public amenities, it is necessary that the City build a gymnasium and playground at McLaren Park for existing and future residents in the Valley.

Having worked on open space issues and outdoor education in our community for many years, I have seen the need, as well as the benefit, of recreational facilities for our children. It is Visitacion Valley's right to have public infrastructure equal to that afforded to wealthier neighborhoods. Ultimately, it is a matter of social justice. Consequently, I am voicing my support of the proposed McLaren Park/Herz/Sunnydale Hub gymnasium and playground to meet the needs of our disenfranchised community. I urge you to join our community in supporting these projects.

Thank you.

Fran Martin
Visitacion Valley Greenway/GOAL