

PAR requests study of Great Highway closure

We wished to remind Mayor London Breed and Supervisor Connie Chan the position PAR has taken on the issue of the closure of the Great Highway. Here is the letter we sent.

I am writing on behalf of the Planning Association for the Richmond (PAR) regarding the most recent San Francisco Recreation and Park Department and San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency update on the future of the Great Highway.

PAR has requested that, after the COVID Emergency Order is lifted, the Great Highway should again become a four-lane roadway on which thousands of vehicles travel daily.

PAR has further recommended that once the Great Highway has been fully reopened, there must then be a comprehensive, reliable and valid data-driven study conducted over a period of at least two years to determine the impact of any change in its use.

PAR continues to maintain that position.

We have several concerns about the update.

Traffic Calming Has Not Been Successful

The update states that there has been successful traffic calming throughout the Outer Sunset. This is incorrect. The data on which that is based is incomplete and incorrect. The locations where data was collected are not representative of where traffic is impacted.

Further, the data was collected at the

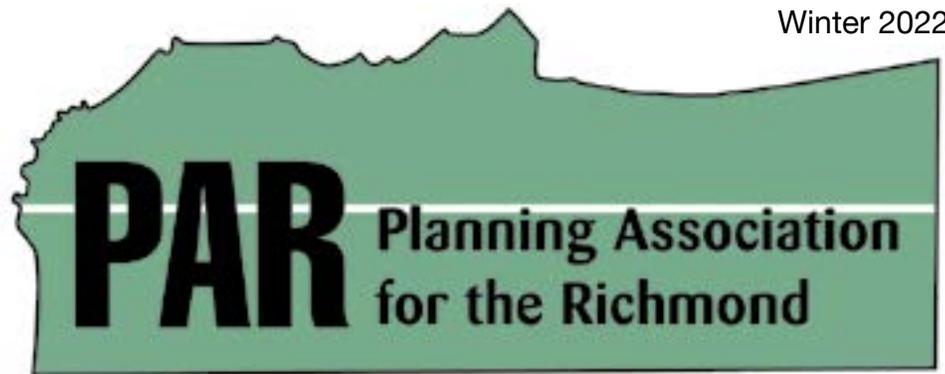
continued on page 2

General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, Jan. 19,
featuring
a discussion of the
San Francisco School Board
recall.

We will send Zoom sign-in details by email.

If we do not already have your email address, or for more information, please email sfparpresident@gmail.com.

Winter 2022



Quartermaster Reach restores marshland area in Presidio

Quartermaster Reach, seven acres of restored tidal marshland and a new pedestrian trail near San Francisco Bay, marks a significant milestone in the 20-year revitalization of one of San Francisco's original watersheds. The site will allow visitors to enjoy an intimate experience of nature just minutes from downtown.

Opened in December 2020, the Reach is a huge milestone in the 20-year effort of the Presidio Trust, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy and the National Park Service to restore the park's largest watershed. Work has been completed at sites including El Polin spring, MacArthur Meadow and Thompson Reach. Other sections will be restored in coming years.

The site is named for the U.S. Army's Quartermaster Corps, which operated in the area when the Presidio was a military post. The project transforms a formerly paved construction site under the Presidio Parkway approach to the Golden Gate Bridge into a beautiful new wetland ecosystem. Creeks now flow above ground along the Presidio's largest watershed known as Tennessee Hollow to San Francisco Bay through Crissy Marsh, improving the biodiversity of the Presidio.

Work at Quartermaster Reach excavated and brought above ground an 850-foot-length of stream once buried in a pipe. Box culverts were then installed beneath Mason Street at Crissy Marsh to allow the fresh water of the stream to flow into the saltwater marsh and San Francisco Bay, creating a unique brackish habitat that is vital to a variety of plant and animal species.

Specially fabricated fiberglass panels installed within the culverts and concrete

and shell "reef balls" placed in the marsh channels are part of a unique experiment to promote the resurgence of the native Olympia oyster. The team is currently planting 23,000 plants — including more than 40 different species of saltmarsh and dune plants grown in the Presidio Nursery — to create habitat attractive to the Presidio's many migrating shorebirds and water animals like fish and crabs.



Schematic design from the Bay City Beacon website.

"Our planet is in the midst of an extinction crisis due to the destruction of habitat. Projects like this give us hope that we can turn the tide. We've turned back time more than a century to restore the natural systems of the Presidio's shoreline. We hope the lessons we learn here will be helpful to others who are also committed to restoring Bay ecology," said Jean Fraser, CEO of the Presidio Trust.

With the addition of a pedestrian bridge and trail connector, visitors can hike from Crissy Field's East Beach, under the Presidio Parkway, and along the Tennessee Hollow Trail all the way to the southern end of the Presidio.

continued on page 2

Letter from the President

Hello PAR Members,
Welcome to 2022—we made it! First and foremost I want to thank you all for the support of PAR over the past year and all the emails. It is always nice to get to know our members.

As I reflect on the past year, I look at how we have progressed over the year from a past holiday season of not being able to do much to this holiday season where we have seen many nice community events and look forward to more.

I was happy to attend a number of tree lightings and other holiday events. Something I had taken for granted before last year.

As I look back, I look forward as well, and, as we know January is time for resolutions, I think one resolution we can all make is being community focused, be it volunteering to help seniors or children in our district or just opening a door for someone at a store.

Even a small gesture, such as saying hi and smiling as you walk by someone

on the street, is meaningful—despite the mask, people can see a smile and hear a greeting.

Smiling and simply saying hello are easy to do and could make a neighbor's day or even mean the world to someone who's having a hard time.

And now, let's all join in making this year a great one.

Nick Belloni

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Great Highway closure unfair to many District residents

continued from front page

height of the pandemic, during which time all traffic in San Francisco was reduced. Even after traffic mitigations were implemented, Outer Sunset residents and drivers through Golden Gate Park continued to experience significant traffic problems, causing excessive noise, congestion, and greenhouse gas emissions.

During This Partial Closure, the Great Highway Should be Closed at 6 a.m. on Saturday, Not at Noon on Friday

The closure of the Great Highway at noon on Friday is inappropriate. It creates neighborhood traffic problems on Friday evening when commuters are returning from work and drivers are entering or leaving San Francisco for the weekend. And,

there is very little use of the closed Great Highway on Friday afternoons by cyclists or pedestrians. There have been many requests to close the Great Highway at 6 a.m. on Saturday morning, but so far these requests have been ignored. This lack of cooperation with the surrounding community is disappointing.

continued on page 3

Quartermaster Reach is watershed accomplishment

continued from front page

“The pandemic has shown us how critical access to nature is, with the myriad of health benefits it provides for human beings — especially in an urban environ-

ment,” said Laura Joss, Superintendent of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

“With the adjacent Presidio Tunnel Tops project (planned to open in spring 2022), these new park sites will continue our work in providing a national park experience for all.”

Work has been completed in sections that include El Polin spring, MacArthur Meadow and Thompson Reach. Other sections will be restored in coming years.

“We are so grateful to the people who have supported the restoration of this watershed, from individual donors to Parks Conservancy members and volunteers,” says Christine Lehnertz, President and CEO of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

“This is an incredible gift to this region and builds on the work that began in 2001 with the restoration of Crissy Field and Crissy Marsh.”

About the Tennessee Hollow Watershed

The Presidio of San Francisco is the traditional territory of the Yelamu, a local tribe of Ramaytush Ohlone peoples of the San Francisco Peninsula. Yelamu families lived in the village of Petlenuc.

The Tennessee Hollow Watershed's

creek system comprises three tributaries that converge at MacArthur Meadow. The stream, dubbed Petlenuc Creek, then continues north in a single channel through a variety of habitats, ultimately emptying into Crissy Marsh and San Francisco Bay.

For centuries, people used this creek system as a water source, beginning with the native Ohlone and later Spanish settlers. Over time, the militaries of Spain, Mexico and the United States substantially altered where and how the creeks flow, creating dams and wells, and, ultimately, forced the water underground into pipes to create dry land for building.

Restoration of the Tennessee Hollow Watershed began in the late 1990s at the headwaters near the Presidio's Inspiration Point. Major revitalization projects have included the restoration of Crissy Marsh (2001), Thompson Reach (2005/2006), El Polin spring (2010/2011), YMCA Reach (2013/2014), Quartermaster Riparian (2014/2015), and MacArthur Meadow (2015/2017). After Quartermaster Reach, the final sections to be restored are the Eastern Tributary (under Morton Field) and Central Tributary (between El Polin and MacArthur Meadow).

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Middle Lake project to restore lake and native trees

The Middle Lake Rehabilitation project is an effort to completely restore an important lake in the Chain of Lakes system.

Middle Lake was identified in the Golden Gate Park Masterplan as having been built without a clay liner, which means that, when filled, it leaks a high volume of water into the sand below and requires constant filling.

Over the years, the lake and surrounding upland area have become choked with invasive species, making it hostile to wildlife, while nearby pathways and other landscape features have deteriorated.

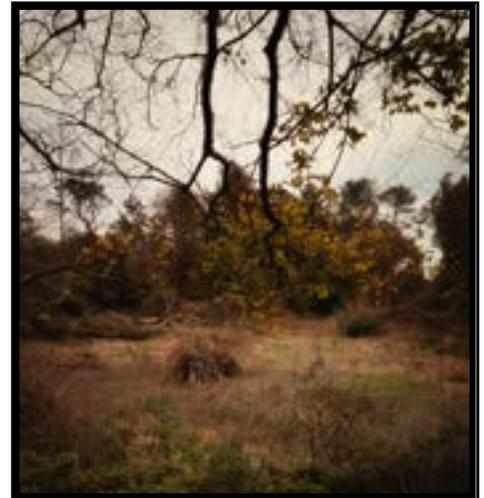
Middle Lake will be excavated, a clay liner will be installed to reduce water loss, and the lake will be deepened to improve

water circulation and habitat value.

The surrounding area will be grubbed and cleared of invasive plants and replanted with wildlife-appropriate, drought-tolerant species.

This effort includes the removal of as many as 80 trees, due to death, poor health, safety or negative impact on the lake, and replacement of native tree species at a ratio of 2:1 per park policy.

The surrounding pathways and other landscape amenities will also be renovated and, when possible, timber from trees felled on site will be used to create seating elements. This project is currently working toward 90 percent construction drawings, and groundbreaking is scheduled to begin by summer 2022.



Middle Lake has almost disappeared beneath the overgrowth of invasive plants.

PAR repeats request for EIR of Great Highway closure

continued from page 2

The Continued Closure of the Great Highway for Six to 12 Months to Collect Data is a Significant Change to the Use of the Highway and Requires an Environmental Impact Report.

The update recommends keeping the Great Highway closed from noon on Friday until 6 a.m. on Monday for another six to 12 months, even if the emergency order has been lifted. Only after that would there be a pilot program, starting by the end of 2022. But a partial closure of the Great Highway for six to 12 months is a de facto

pilot project and is a significant change to the original use of the highway as a four-lane roadway.

Accordingly, PAR repeats its request for an Environmental Impact Report, as required by CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act), once the emergency order has been lifted, and before there are any changes to the original use of the Great Highway.

In sum, this update falls far short of resolving the issue of how the Great Highway can best be used by the most people.

The SFRPD and SFMTA have not

cooperated with the thousands of people who have signed a petition for the Great Highway to be fully reopened.

They have shown a callous disregard for the importance of this roadway for residents of the Richmond District. They also fail to appreciate the impact this closure has had on traffic in Golden Gate Park, especially Chain of Lakes Drive.

PAR looks forward to working with you to assure that the Great Highway will meet the needs of District One, as well as all the others who rely on it.

Unlikely roommates surprised they're so well matched

For both Jonathan and Jackie, finding each other through Home Match, a non-profit shared housing program, has been a life saver.



Seeking hard-to-find affordable housing in San Francisco, Jackie and Jonathan were paired by Home Match, a nonprofit service, and found friendship as well as a home.

Shortly after Jonathan moved into Jackie's Richmond District apartment, they say it already feels like they've known each forever. Jonathan describes Home Match as "a 'dating service' that helps you find a perfect match for the perfect roommate."

Jonathan, a social worker with the city of San Francisco, couldn't find affordable rentals locally and so was commuting daily from Hercules.

"I was searching for a place to live. I tried Craigslist, apartment.com, asking through friends, with no success," he said. "It was either Home Match, or I had to leave San Francisco."

Jackie, a retired hotel worker, was thinking of giving up her San Francisco

apartment, where she'd lived for nearly a decade, in order to save some money.

"I was going to put all my stuff in storage and find a room somewhere else, but then I thought I love this Richmond District neighborhood," she said. "Why don't I just see about a roommate?"

Home Match was the key.

"With Home Match, along comes Jonathan, and he's been like a blessing," said Jackie.

"The last 10 years have been incredibly difficult for me, and I've felt very alienated and alone. Living with Jonathan has opened the door back to life. It's the best thing that could have happened to me."

continued on back page

Unlikely roommates now share a home and friendship

continued from page 3

Before living with Jonathan, Jackie didn't have internet in her apartment. "He brought me into the 21st century. I lived for many years very happily without cell phones and internet. Now Jonathan's my

internal tech support," she said.

Luckily for Jackie, Home Match meets participants where they are.

"When I found out about Home Match from a friend in Novato, I spoke to Karen Coppock, Home Match director, who sent

me the application to fill out." Jackie said.

"But I couldn't print it! I was so grateful that I could actually get a person on the phone and do things in person if necessary."

Jonathan also liked the personal nature of the application and matching process.

"I appreciated all of the steps you had to take, even if they were time-consuming. I felt that I was being treated with dignity throughout the process," he noted.

"Even though I'm a millennial and all about cell phones and computers, going to the office and meeting Karen, I always felt that she was going to do the best for me. The first time I met her, I felt like I could trust her.

"I would absolutely recommend Home Match to anyone in my position. I love it because it brings people together, even those who you wouldn't think would connect like Jackie and I have," Jonathan added.

"Home Match is making the world nice again," said Jackie. "You are connecting people who need the help. We are two regular people living in the most expensive city in the world, and we can still have a nice space and have a nice life."

Home Match is a nonprofit program that receives funding SF Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development. To learn more, call 415-351-1000 or visit covia.org/programs/home-match.

Join PAR now and make your voice heard.

Membership is open to all persons living, working or owning property in the Richmond District of San Francisco. PAR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Your contribution is tax-deductible as provided by law.

Yes, I/we want to support the Richmond District

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Membership: Individual Business

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Please complete and cut out this form, then mail it with your check (payable to the Planning Association of the Richmond) to

PAR, 5758 Geary Boulevard, Box 356, San Francisco, CA 94121-2112

You can also join, contribute or pay your dues the easy way at

sfpar.org/site/join-par-via-paypal.html

THANKS for helping to support the quality of life in San Francisco's Richmond District.

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