

## **D2 Catherine Stefani**

November 2022 Election

### **What park in your district do you use the most, and what do you love about it?**

My favorite park in District 2 is the Presidio. It is a beautiful open space to relax and enjoy some of San Francisco's best attractions, and I also use it almost daily to exercise. The grand opening of the Presidio Tunnel Tops is something I am so happy and excited about. It is a place for our community to gather, explore, attend events, eat good San Francisco food, and enjoy outdoor space, which is exactly what parks are meant for.

### **Are there any parks in your district that you feel need help? If so, which one do you feel needs the most help and what do you propose?**

Given the rapid increase in pet ownership during the pandemic, all of our parks need help accommodating all the pets that use these spaces. Our parks are seeing significant increases in foot traffic and usage, so maintenance and materials need to be updated to reflect that change. We want our parks to remain beautiful and welcoming places.

### **What do you see as the biggest challenge facing SF parks in the next 4 years? How do you intend to address this?**

One of my top priorities as Supervisor has been keeping the streets clean and safe, and a big part of this is ensuring that waste does not end up on our streets and parks or in the Bay. I support the work that my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors, as well as Mayor London Breed, have done around reducing waste in San Francisco – including the proposal to restrict the sale of plastic straws, which I've co-sponsored, as well as the ban on Styrofoam containers. Keeping our parks clean, safe and open is the biggest challenge facing San Francisco parks, and I will continue advocating for safe open spaces.

### **What were some of the successes and failures of COVID- era public space programs in your district? Be specific.**

The biggest success of COVID-era public space programs has been expanding open space opportunities like outdoor dining across the city. Additionally, we sponsored Bloomtown on Union, which brought art and activity back to one of our district merchant corridors. The biggest failure was not expanding public education instruction into outdoor spaces. Students struggled tremendously during the pandemic and they deserved more community hubs to make sure there was more in-person instruction.

### **How do you plan to move forward with COVID-era changes made to parks and public spaces in your district?**

Covid brought a newfound expansion in outdoor spaces, and we need to keep the pace of those activations at this new level. In particular, we've seen an enormous increase in pickle ball and tennis play, and we need to find ways to expand court offerings for both communities.

### **What involvement do you have with volunteer community groups in your district?**

I regularly partner with and attend the volunteer events hosted by our park partners; we worked with the Francisco Parks Conservancy to get the park open, which involved expediting utilities permits and construction approvals. I also helped the Friends of Allyn Park get established.

### **We've heard from our partners that they believe the city permitting process is the greatest hurdle to serving public spaces. If you believe any changes need to be made, what would your proposals be?**

Permitting delays plague many city departments and impede good work. I have always helped write and supported every permitting streamlining measure, including Proposition H (2020); all the COVID-19 permit streamlining; the temporary and permanent versions of the shared spaces legislation. I sought to loosen the restrictions on what kinds of groups or activities (like exercise classes) could have space in our parks during the pandemic. I'm happy to work with anyone to make it easier to provide the programming that we all need and love.

### **According to the SF Recreation and Parks Department, they currently have about \$1.5 billion in deferred maintenance. How do you plan to tackle this?**

There's no circumventing the citywide capital planning committee when it comes to addressing deferred maintenance. The best way to support our parks is to include these items in the Parks Bond funding measures and supporting them fully, which I always have and always will.