

Safety key in Boeddeker makeover

First meeting to get residents' ideas on \$8 million redesign

BY TOM CARTER

IT was ironic — two dozen people stargazing during a public meeting about how to spend \$8 million on Boeddeker Park when the place had been locked up for more than a week because the city couldn't afford to open it.

The 1-acre park in the Tenderloin has had problems galore over the years related to drug dealing and drinking. But this was the first time a \$438 million city deficit had shut it down. "It's very frustrating — we may have new hours here but then the park's not open at all," Friends of Boeddeker Park Chair Betty Traynor said.

Only a handful of people at the May 13 meeting were neighborhood residents. An Oakland couple, who happened to be in the neighborhood, were former residents. The rest were city employees and staff members of park-related nonprofits.

"People feel like the park is a fortress."

Nearby resident

Ideas surfaced slowly for the coming grand makeover, ranging from an open-space-razed-the-clubhouse brainstorm to a costly clubhouse conversion adding a second story so there could be performances and plenty of storage space. And maybe a roof garden.

Trust for Public Land was guest host for the meeting, first in a series to be scheduled over the next few months. Whatever plan emerges, project leaders said they expect a finished makeover by the end of 2011.

The Trust, which promotes parks in low-income urban areas, has \$3 million for the renovation project that it began fostering more than a year ago. It is confident of getting \$5 million more this year from state Prop 84 funds, a bond initiative California voters passed in 2006 for parks and water conservation.

Boeddeker Park is a prime candidate for the state funds, said Jacob Gilchrist, the trust's project director, because of the Tenderloin's dearth

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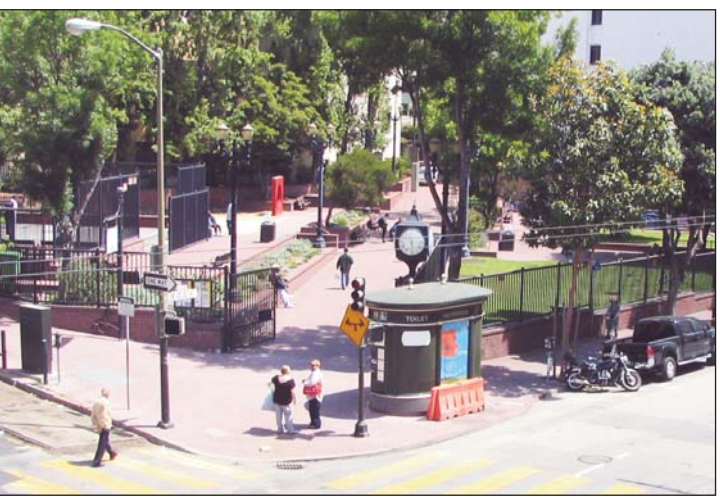


PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

Boeddeker Park, recently reopened, as seen from the front entrance.

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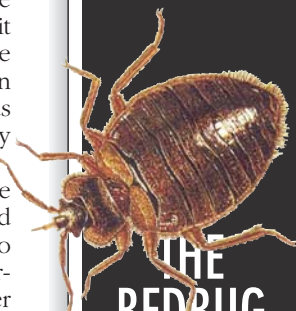
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Building 49-seat venue next door

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City attorney reacts to supe's planned law

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CENTRAL CITY



SAN FRANCISCO

SPECIAL REPORT

THE MANDATE

... each board and commission of the City and County shall be required by ordinance to prepare an annual report describing its activities ...

CITY CHARTER, SEC. 4.103

City agencies are legally obliged to produce an annual report, but many don't and most that do are out of compliance, a Central City Extra investigation shows.

INFORMATION GAP

Annual report obligation gets short shrift at City Hall

BY HEIDI SWILLINGER

IN his bid to become California's governor, Gavin Newsom's main selling point is his record as mayor of San Francisco. His Website touts a long list of accomplishments in education, health care, the environment, public safety, fiscal practices and government accountability.

But voters will have to take his word on that, because his administration has largely stopped producing annual reports, which could give people the information they need to assess the city's progress for themselves.

San Francisco law — spelled out in the San Francisco City Charter and Administrative Code — requires departments, boards and commissions to issue annual reports that describe their activities. To make that information accessible to all, each report must be posted on the Public Library's Website, as well as the agency's.

But a Central City Extra investigation of 69 city agencies reveals that only 6 are in full compliance with annual report mandates — they've produced a current annual report, posted it on their Website, and posted the link to the Public Library's Website —

and 63 are out of compliance in some way:

- 35 do not have a current annual report posted on their Website.
- 13 have not posted an annual report since 2007.
- 49 have no link to their annual report on the Public Library's Website.
- 14 have out-of-date reports on the library's site.

The reports are required to inform the public about the work of each major unit of city government and how much those activities cost. Moreover, annual reports provide an irreplaceable historical record.

Noncompliance with the laws regarding annual reports is a problem Newsom is familiar with: It's been a concern of two civil grand juries during his tenure as a public servant, beginning with his 1998 election to the Board of Supervisors. Despite his stated commitment to improve accountability in government, Newsom has failed to use his powers as mayor to address red flags raised by civil grand juries over the state of the city's annual reporting procedures.

ROLE OF THE CIVIL GRAND JURY

The state Constitution requires each county to have a grand jury. In San Francisco, the Superior Court's presiding judge impanels two each year: the Indictment Grand Jury, which has jurisdiction over criminal indictments, and the Civil Grand Jury, which serves as a watchdog over the functions of government. San Francisco's Civil Grand Jury consists of 19 members who serve for one year, from July through June. They decide for themselves which aspects of government to investigate. At the end of its tenure, the jury issues rec-

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