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MEMORANDUM

Date: April 18, 2019

To: Debbie Raphael, Director, SF Environment

CC: Peter Brastow, Senior Biodiversity Coordinator, SF Environment

From: Mohammed Nuru, Director, Public Works

RE: Public Works Biodiversity Initiatives

San Francisco Public Works is firmly committed to supporting San Francisco's Biodiversity Vision.

As background, on April 17, 2018, the Board of Supervisors adopted [Resolution No. 107-18](#), sponsored by Supervisor Fewer and former Supervisor Kim, which was approved by former Acting Mayor Farrell on April 27, 2018. Pursuant to Resolution No. 107-18, over the past year San Francisco Public Works has been participating in an inter-agency biodiversity working group to collaborate on ongoing and future initiatives to support biodiversity in San Francisco, including:

- Vetting of citywide biodiversity goals that each department supports through its own operations.
- Integration and implementation of City policies, plans, and tools that promote habitat-supportive greening in the built environment, such as Green Connections and the San Francisco Plant Finder and many more.
- Promotion of equitable experience and awareness, and responsible access and stewardship of nature.

Through the leadership of Public Work's Bureau Manager, Jennifer Cooper-Sabo and Senior Landscape Architect, John Dennis, the Public Works Landscape Bureau has completed a biodiversity survey provided by the SF Department of the Environment to:

- Acknowledge and celebrate Public Works programs and initiatives that support biodiversity.
- Describe how Pubic Works will help realize San Francisco's Biodiversity Vision through project work and interdepartmental collaborations.
- Connect children with opportunity to enjoy biodiverse native landscapes.

Public Works' survey results identified many exemplary strategies and initiatives actively in practice related to San Francisco's Biodiversity Vision and gave an opportunity to reflect on gaps, collaboration opportunities and future initiatives. Public Works has significant past and current projects and initiatives that support biodiversity including:

Completed Projects

- **Brotherhood Way**
 - Native plantings of Coast Live Oak, Ceanothus, Manzanita, Wax Myrtle, CA Buckeye, CA Buckwheat, and other natives planted along Brotherhood Way in 2003. Additional plantings added in 2009 through a grant from American Express.
- **Pollinator Blvd.**
 - As a project partner with BASE landscape Architecture, Parks Alliance, and SF Community Challenge Grants, the first block of Dolores at Market St was transformed into a drought tolerant pollinator garden.
- **SFPlantfinder**
 - Public Works Landscape Architecture staff and BUF have contributed and reviewed the SFPlantfinder plant lists including the Thrifty 50 and other lists of microclimate specific plant palettes for sidewalk, understory plantings, and other landscaping types.
- **Recommended Street Tree Species List (2018)**
 - The Bureau of Urban Forestry worked with the Urban Forestry Council to develop and approve the City's annual Recommended Street Tree Species List. The 2018 list features the addition of two California native trees – the Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and California sycamore 'Roberts' (*Platanus racemosa* 'Roberts'). The list also features another California native - Ceanothus 'Ray Hartman.'

Current Projects

- **Sunset Boulevard**
 - Public Works is connecting the landscape of Sunset Blvd. to a greywater irrigation system and creating a masterplan for a more drought tolerant landscape supporting native plants and pollinators. In partnership with Climate Action Now! and the Bureau of Urban Forestry (BUF), hundreds of trees have already been planted. An expanded collaboration with DOE is underway to study the potential habitat connections on Sunset Blvd between Golden Gate Park and Lake Merced.
- **1550 Evans**
 - Public Works design staff are in the process of design for 1550 Evans which is a community center and green infrastructure landscape for SFPUC. The "adventure landscape" has been designed to incorporate planting typologies for multiple native CA landscapes and uses logs, stones, and plantings to create engaging landscapes for neighborhood children.
- **SF Children and Nature**
 - Public Works Landscape Architecture staff are participating in the SF Children and Nature group and integrating its principals into playground project with RPD.
 - Current projects that integrate this technique include George Christopher and Juri Commons Playgrounds.
- **Designing Pests out of Landscapes**
 - Public Works Senior IPM Specialist from BUF and Landscape Architecture staff are attending an IPM working group that will issue city-wide IPM guidelines within the next year. The guidelines will then become part of Public Works standard specifications and practice.

- **Better Market Street**
 - The interagency Street Tree Working Group which also included external experts was convened to bring expertise in urban tree health, soils, and biodiversity together to select potential street trees and optimal planting conditions for the Batter Market Street Project.

The survey also suggested new and innovative initiatives to consider including:

- **Bioblitz as baseline biodiversity indicator**
 - As a part of the Sunset Boulevard community process, Public Works and DOE will facilitate a community bioblitz to set a baseline for biodiversity in the existing landscape.
- **Partnerships with non-profits and academic institutions**
 - Potential to study and monitor progress of biodiverse landscapes.

Public Works is committing on a City-wide scale to work together towards San Francisco's Biodiversity Vision, as articulated in the Resolution No. 107-18. As part of an inter-agency biodiversity working group, Public Works is will continue to:

- Regularly convene with the Department of Environment to review progress, receive training, and help identify additional policies and actions as needed.
- Provide regular reporting on progress, opportunities, and resources implications associated with supporting the City's biodiversity vision.

This common goal will encourage conservation of and connection to nature, which is essential for thriving and resilient ecosystems, upon which we all depend for food, health and well-being, clean air, and clean water. Promoting our native habitats and making effective use of our natural resources has been and will continue to be a priority for Public Works.

Sincerely,



Mohammed Nuru
Director of Public Works

