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Yerba Buena Community Benefit District Unveils New Projects to Improve Its Public Spaces

*New Elegantly Designed Cast Iron Public Seating and a Portable Bike Corral are Part of a
Comprehensive Plan to Improve the District's Streetscape*

San Francisco, Calif., December 6, 2013 — Supervisor Jane Kim and members of the [Yerba Buena Community Benefit District](#) (YBCBD) unveiled new streetscape improvement projects for the Yerba Buena neighborhood today, including cast iron public seating with a dramatic mosaic design and an innovative portable bicycle corral that can be easily moved to provide additional bike parking at special events in the district.

Supervisor Kim said the projects are the latest elements of the YBCBD's [Yerba Buena Street Life Plan](#), a road map of more than 30 projects for enhancing public spaces in the neighborhood. "These projects result from partnerships with the city, community members, businesses and cultural organizations, and combine over time to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood," she said.

YBCBD plans to install 15-20 of the new benches over the next two years. CMG Landscape Architecture designed them with sturdy cast iron that complements the district's signature bike racks introduced last year. The benches' timeless mosaic pattern creates unique shadows and its curvature is designed to maximize comfort. At 42 inches long and 18 inches deep, designers believe they are large enough to seat two people. The first bench was placed at Archstone residences at Third and Folsom Streets.

"All of the projects in our Street Life Plan brand the neighborhood, and expand social interaction and promote pedestrian life, safety, beauty, and community pride. The seating and bicycle corral reflect the creativity of the Yerba Buena neighborhood, with its incomparable collection of museums, galleries and performing arts venues," said Cathy Maupin, YBCBD executive director.

Maupin said the portable bicycle corral would help to meet the growing demand for bike parking at cultural and special events in Yerba Buena, and encourage even more people to use sustainable alternatives of transportation. A team from San Francisco's Academy of Art University was selected in May from more than 35 international student entries to design the corral, which incorporates a 350-pound foldable steel bicycle structure on rubber casters for easy transport by one or two people. The competition was sponsored by the YBCBD and the San Francisco Planning Department's Pavement to Parks, with collaboration and partnership from the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, SPUR, and fabricator Noah Brezel of Spoke Systems.

The award-winning Yerba Buena Street Life Plan, created in partnership with the community and CMG Landscape Architecture, includes temporary installations to long-term, large-scale urban design improvements.

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“The Street Life Plan is about adding richness to the district’s streets to bring people out to use them,” said Kevin Conger, principal, CMG Landscape Architecture. “While many plans aim to organize an urban area or improve it systematically, this plan identifies discrete projects that take advantage of opportunities in a diverse, changing part of the city. Their impact will accrue naturally.”

Implemented already are six mobile parklets with landscaping and seating; 60 of the City’s first “artful” bicycle racks sporting tire tread patterns and made of recycled cast iron; and the nation’s first Living Innovation Zone or LIZ. The LIZ was created in partnership with the City and Exploratorium and serves as interactive welcome mat to draw people into the district with “Whispering Dishes,” two 8-foot-tall dishes facing each other on the sidewalk 50 feet apart in which two people whispering across the distance are able to hear each other even with surrounding street noise.

Plans underway for completion in 2014 include transforming part of Annie Alley into a pedestrian-friendly plaza; implementation of public art and greening plans; additional bike racks; and a second LIZ. There are also future plans for a clean energy solar docking station for public use; improving alleys as social spaces for pedestrians; adding decorative lighting to define the district and improve pedestrian safety; artistic crosswalks; and anchoring the district with a redesigned plaza at Moscone Center.

The YBCBD advances the quality of life for residents and visitors in the Yerba Buena neighborhood and San Francisco by fostering a safer and more secure community, enhancing environmental quality and beauty, and reinforcing the viability of its economic base. The district encompasses Second to Fifth and Market to Harrison streets with more than 400 shopping, dining and entertainment venues, world-class museums, convention space, hotels, and educational institutions. Thousands of new residences have been built in the last decade ranging from live/work lofts and senior housing to luxury housing and mid-rise apartments that add diversity and vibrancy. YBCBD began implementing programs in 2009, such as a Community Guides program, San Francisco Police Department bike patrol officer program, graffiti removal, street and sidewalk cleaning, neighborhood marketing and other improvement efforts. Learn more at www.ycbcd.org.

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