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Media Contact: Peter Bartelme, 415-664-1503, pb@prstrategies.com

Mayor Lee, Supervisor Kim and Yerba Buena Community Benefit District Unveil City's First "Parkmobiles" and New Street Life Plan

San Francisco, August 2, 2011 — San Francisco's first mobile gardens and a comprehensive plan for improving public spaces in the Yerba Buena neighborhood were unveiled today by Mayor Ed Lee, Supervisor Jane Kim and the Yerba Buena Community Benefit District (YBCBD) at the opening of an exhibit for the Yerba Buena Street Life Plan at the San Francisco Planning + Urban Research Association.

The Yerba Buena Street Life Plan provides a road map for a next generation of public space in the neighborhood. The plan proposes 36 projects and initiatives to be implemented over the next ten years for new public spaces, redesigned alleys, public art, and sidewalk improvements. Community members, local businesses and institutions, City agencies, YBCBD and CMG Landscape Architecture developed the plan over the last year.

"The Yerba Buena Street Life Plan is a thoughtful and exciting vision to support resident and business goals in the district," said Mayor Lee. "These are important programs to facilitate vibrant social interaction and to promote pedestrian safety, beauty, sustainability and community pride. This collaborative community effort demonstrates how we can work hand-in-hand to improve our neighborhoods for residents, visitors and people of all ages."

The plan's projects range from temporary installations to long-term, large-scale urban design improvements. Some of these include: anchoring the district with a redesigned plaza at Moscone Center; clean energy solar docking stations for public use; improving alleys as social spaces for pedestrians; new dog parks and dog runs; creating garden streets with storm water improvements; new bike paths and bike parking; adding decorative lighting to define the district and improve pedestrian safety; and artistic crosswalks.

"It's heartening to see neighborhoods come together to take leadership of their community. The value of creating safe, vibrant public spaces builds strong, dynamic and livable neighborhoods. The many projects envisioned in this document will help to enhance Yerba Buena to the benefit of its many wonderful small and larger businesses and organizations," said Supervisor Kim.

The Yerba Buena Parkmobiles Program is new to the City. The mobile gardens, called Parkmobiles, are high-quality 16' x 5'9" containers that hold lush gardens. Six different concepts will be in Yerba Buena, some with seating, and include plants like Tasmanian Tree Ferns, Big Blue Lily Turf, and foliage that attracts birds and butterflies like Cotoneasters. They borrow parking spaces for two to six months and will be circulated in the district making streets more attractive and encouraging people to explore the neighborhood to find them. They can be installed and removed between two parked cars. The first Parkmobile will be placed in front of the Catharine Clark Gallery on Minna Street at 3rd Street, and another at the 5M Project on 5th Street at Mission Street.

“The Street Life Plan is important to achieving our mission to provide programs that foster a safer and more secure community, create a cleaner and greener neighborhood, and reinforce the viability of our economic base,” said Regina Flanagan, YBCBD board chair.

“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.”

YBCBD, in collaboration with CMG Landscape Architecture, Sherwood Design Engineers, and Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates, led the plan’s community based design process. Care and maintenance of the Parkmobiles is by Gardeners’ Guild.

The YBCBD is defined by an incredible diversity of residents, cultural offerings and businesses from about Second to Fifth and Market to Harrison Streets. It bustles with world-class museums, shopping, dining, convention space, hotels, and educational institutions. The neighborhood includes a variety of housing from senior housing and below market rate housing to luxury condominiums and live/work lofts.

The exhibit, *Street Life/Yerba Buena, A Community Design Initiative*, runs through August 19 at the SPUR Urban Center Gallery at 654 Mission Street in San Francisco. For more information, go to www.spur.org.

About YBCBD: YBCBD was approved by district property owners in 2008 to improve the quality of life in the area. Its mission is to provide programs that foster a safer and more secure community, create a cleaner and greener neighborhood, and reinforce the viability of our economic base. It began implementing programs in 2009. They include a Community Guides program, 10B police officer program, graffiti removal, street and sidewalk cleaning, marketing and other improvement efforts. To learn more and view the Yerba Buena Street Life Plan, go to www.ycbcd.org.

About CMG Landscape Architecture: CMG is a landscape architecture firm providing collaborative design and management services to a wide range of public, institutional, and private clients. It maintains that landscape architecture is essentially an “open field” operating at the nexus of planning, architecture, art and ecological design. At the heart of each of these disciplines is the idea of building community—and that idea is the central focus of its practice. Ultimately, everything CMG does is predicated on connecting people with each other and with their environments. It is CMG’s ambition and its passion to design and build vital and sustainable communities and enduring places. To learn more go to www.cmgsite.com.

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