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Bayview Model Block Improvement Project - A Renaissance in the Making

Since 1997, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency has spearheaded the efforts to transform the Bayview neighborhood, the long neglected San Francisco southeast sector, into a livable and economically sustainable community. The decades-long efforts are now paying dividends.

The Newcomb Avenue Streetscape Model Block Improvement Program is the latest in a long line of innovative projects the SFRA will be rolling out in the future. This project was made possible by active participation and collaboration by various city, state and federal agencies, including the City's Departments of Public Works, Planning, and Public Utilities, and the Environmental Protection Agency. In addition to the project's oversight, SFRA also established low interest loans for homeowners to make energy-

enhancing improvements, exterior painting and façade improvements.

SFRA Executive Director Fred Blackwell spoke to attendees at the Bayview Model Block project groundbreaking.

On May 11, SFRA and City of San Francisco officials broke ground on the Newcomb Model Block Program. SFRA Commission President Rick Swig was in attendance, along with local community members. At the podium to kick off the milestone event, Fred Blackwell, SFRA's executive director, said, "The Model Block Program is demonstrative of the mindset of the Redevelopment Agency of today - one that improves existing homes and neighborhoods by empowering the residents to play an active role in designing and implementing projects in their community."

The pilot program will replace several areas of the street's current infrastructure with new landscaping, street trees, new lighting and street barriers for traffic calming. The flood-prone street will undergo massive storm water improvements to allow rainwater to permeate into the ground. When completed, Newcomb Avenue will be a point of destination and a model program for other city street improvements, just like the alleyway improvements in other SFRA redevelopment areas.

At the groundbreaking ceremony, San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee echoed the long held vision of the SFRA for the city and the redevelopment project areas when he said, "San Francisco continues to be at the forefront with innovative projects and programs that are transforming our streets and public spaces. The Newcomb Avenue Model Block Improvement Project is an investment that will transform and create one of the greenest and most sustainable streets in San Francisco."

Dignitaries broke ground on the innovative Newcomb Model Block Improvement Program.

Longtime Newcomb Avenue resident and community leader Michelle Mouton spoke about the dedication of her neighbors, SFRA and city staff, the numerous volunteers, and support from the community at large. She said, "Through the process of building the Model Block, we have come to know our block members as community activists. The San Francisco Redevelopment Agency's initiative has facilitated neighbors modeling community involvement and city partnerships toward the creation of a better quality of life for our own and future generations."

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