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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

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## ***Press Conference: New Pilot Program at Fremont Park relies exclusively on sustainable, organic methods to control weeds***

**Sacramento, California, July 31, 2009**—Councilmember Rob Fong, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and Pesticide-Free Sacramento (PFS), plan to announce the start of a 2-year pilot program that will eliminate the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers at Fremont Park and instead rely on sustainable, organic methods to control the park's weeds. The pilot program will be kicked-off during the **Sustainable Pest Management Pilot Program** press conference on **Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>**, from **9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.** at Fremont Park – 1515 Q Street.

The Sustainable Pest Management Pilot Program was envisioned by Councilmember Fong and represents a collaborative effort between the Department of Parks and Recreation and the nonprofit coalition Pesticide-Free Sacramento. The purpose of the pilot program is to identify sustainable weed control strategies that are effective in a park environment and can be replicated in other City parks.

"This pilot program is a first for our city and this community," said Councilmember Fong. "It will allow us to identify effective weed control methods that are in line with the City's commitment to sustainability. The fact that Fremont Park was chosen as the pilot program site speaks much about the surrounding community's commitment to its parks and recreational spaces."

During the pilot program, amongst other things, the Department will:

- Refrain from using synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.
- Utilize hand-weeding performed by volunteers, mulch, aeration, and modified watering schedules to control weeds.
- Ensure that key park maintenance staff attend free trainings on organic landscape management practices and techniques.
- In partnership with PFS and the community group Friends of Fremont Park, conduct quantitative and qualitative evaluations of the pilot program's effectiveness.

The Department will not incur new costs as a result of the pilot program. PFS will provide technical assistance while community volunteers will help implement the weed control strategies and evaluate their effectiveness.

Media-related inquiries about the Sustainable Pest Management Pilot Program press conference can be forwarded to Hindolo Brima, Media and Communications Specialist for the Department of Parks and Recreation, at (916) 622-8066.

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