

Park, Recreation and Open Space Fund*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Final Digest

On: Monday, February 29, 2016

Members: Packard, Fasick, Fraps, Jorgensen

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Deadline to Request Reconsideration: 12 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1, 2016

The Way It Is Now: The City's Recreation and Park Department (Department) operates and maintains over two hundred parks, as well as many playgrounds, recreation facilities and open spaces throughout San Francisco.

In 2000, San Francisco voters created the Park, Recreation and Open Space Fund (Fund). Every year, the City must set aside and deposit into the Fund a portion of the property tax it collects. The Department must use that money to provide park and recreational services and facilities. The current amount of the set-aside is 2-1/2 cents for each \$100 of assessed property value.

The Fund will expire in 2031.

In addition to this set-aside, each year the Department also receives money from the City's General Fund. The City is not required to appropriate any specific amount for the Department beyond the set-aside in the Fund.

In 2000-2001, the Recreation and Park Department received 2.1% of the City's General Fund. That percentage dropped to 1.2% in the 2014-2015 fiscal year. A Parks Alliance budget analysis shows that, if the 2.1% had remained constant, the Department would now be receiving approximately \$89 million instead of \$50 million.

The Proposal: Proposition ____ would amend the Charter to:

- extend the Fund for an additional 15 years to 2046;
- require the City, beginning in fiscal year 2016-2017, to give the Department each year a minimum baseline amount from the General Fund, in addition to the Fund set-aside.

This baseline amount would be equal to the Department's share of the budget from the General Fund in fiscal year 2015-2016. Each year through fiscal year 2026-2027 the City would increase that baseline amount by \$3 million. After 2026-2027, the Controller would adjust the annual baseline amount based on the City's revenues. In any fiscal year, the City would not be required to make any increase if the City is facing a substantial budget deficit; and

- require the Department to determine whether low-income neighborhoods and disadvantaged communities are receiving the same level of Department services and resources as the City as a whole. If the levels are not the same, the Department would have to develop a plan to correct these imbalances.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to extend the Park, Recreation and Open Space Fund until 2046 and require the City to give the Recreation and Park Department each year a minimum baseline amount from the General Fund in addition to the Fund set-aside.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to make these changes to the Charter.

**Working title, for identification only. The Director of Elections determines the title of each local ballot measure; measure titles are not considered during Ballot Simplification Committee meetings.*