

August 3, 2022

Chair Packard and Members of the Ballot Simplification Committee  
San Francisco City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 48  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
Via email to: publications@sfgov.org

Re: Uses of the Great Highway and JFK Drive

Dear Chair Packard and Members of the Ballot Simplification Committee:

Thank you for your work improving the digest for “Uses of the Great Highway and JFK Drive.” The work of the committee is essential to crafting language that is accessible and understandable for voters who are being asked to consider many ballot measures this November. In support of your important work, we are requesting reconsideration of the following suggestions to the Approved Digest for this measure.

**1) Be consistent when describing the Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program**

It’s important to be consistent when describing the Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program when it is listed in multiple digests. **The Way It Is Now** section of the Approved Digest for the “Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program” states:

“In April 2022, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted the Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program (the Ordinance) that closed portions of John F. Kennedy Drive (JFK Drive) and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park seven days a week to private motor vehicles, reserving the streets as open space for recreational uses.”

We respectfully suggest that the description for the “Uses of the Great Highway and JFK Drive” in the section, **The Way It Is Now**, be amended to be consistent with the opposing measure to provide more clarity to voters by adding the following language as shown underlined below:

“In April 2022, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted the Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program that closed portions of John F. Kennedy Drive (JFK Drive) and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park seven days a week to private motor vehicles, reserving the streets as open space for recreational uses.”

**2) Be consistent when describing the existing conditions in The Way It Is Now**

It's important to be consistent when describing the existing conditions when it is listed in multiple digests. For the competing Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program measure, the committee removed extraneous background language and streamlined the Digest to start with the more recent actions on JFK. We respectfully request doing the same for this measure to be consistent in how the JFK and Great Highway closures are discussed and removing the background about how or why the streets were closed. Our suggestion is shown below:

**“The Way It Is Now: ~~The City has closed certain public streets to private motor vehicles, reserving the streets as open space for recreational purposes. These closures were enacted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.~~”**

**3) Clarify that this measure returns JFK to its previous conditions**

It is important for voters to know that this proposition intends to return JFK Drive to “the condition and status they were before the Covid-19 pandemic,” as stated in the measure’s legal text. The current Digest states the proposition would “require the City to allow private motor vehicles to use JFK,” which can be interpreted in several ways and configurations. Does this mean private vehicles will share the existing open space? Will they have their own lane? It’s important for voters who support, oppose and are learning about this measure to recognize that the street configurations would revert to their original design before the emergency changes enacted during the Covid 19 pandemic.

As such, we respectfully recommend including information in the digest that clarifies the proposition’s intent. We have provided some suggestions below:

Suggestions:

“Proposition \_\_ would repeal the Board’s April 2022 ordinance and require the City to return the open space to its previous uses to allow private motor vehicles on ~~to use~~ JFK Drive and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park at all times except from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays and legal holidays, as well as on Saturdays in April through September.

**OR**

“Proposition \_\_ would repeal the Board’s April 2022 ordinance and require the City to revert the streets from open space back to vehicle lanes to allow private motor vehicles on ~~to use~~ JFK Drive and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park at all times except from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays and legal holidays, as well as on Saturdays in April through September.

**OR**

“Proposition \_\_ would repeal the Board’s April 2022 ordinance and require the City to return the streets to their original use/design/configuration to allow private motor vehicles on to use JFK Drive and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park at all times except from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays and legal holidays, as well as on Saturdays in April through September.

We recommend these changes are included wherever the phrase “require the City to allow private motor vehicles to use JFK” is used in the Digest. This includes the section **A “YES” Vote Means**, for example:

**A “YES” Vote Means:** If you vote "yes," you want to require the City to return the open space back to its previous use to allow private motor vehicles on JFK Drive and connector streets in Golden Gate Park at all times except from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays and legal holidays, as well as on Saturdays in April through September. You also want to require the City to allow motor vehicle use in both directions at all times on the Great Highway and not allow the City to remove the Great Highway between Sloat and Skyline boulevards as planned.

**4) The use of the word “traffic” should be consistent throughout the digest**

The Committee removed the word “traffic” throughout the digest in response to public comment, and instead uses the neutral phrase “vehicle use” or just “vehicles.” However, the committee left the term “traffic” in one sentence in the section **As It Is Now** about redirecting vehicles. For consistency with the rest of the Digest, we recommend removing the word “traffic” to state:

“The City would redirect vehicles ~~traffic~~ along Skyline, Sunset and Sloat boulevards.”

**5) Clarify it is a portion and not the entirety of the Great Highway in The Way It Is Now**

The Committee helped clarify the extent of the Great Highway that will be affected by the proposition. However, an opening sentence in **The Way It Is Now** is misleading and suggests that the entire Great Highway “is closed to motor vehicles, with limited exceptions...”. Instead of listing the specific extents of the Great Highway that experienced the changes, we recommend the following change to the text:

“A portion of the Great Highway is closed to motor vehicles, with limited exceptions, from noon Fridays to 6 a.m. Mondays and on holidays.”



We appreciate your dedicated work on behalf of San Francisco voters and thank you for your consideration of these suggestions.

Sincerely,

Sujata Srivastava  
San Francisco Director, SPUR

Attachment 1: Proposed Edits to Digest for “Uses of The Great Highway and JFK Drive”

**Uses of The Great Highway and JFK Drive \***

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Approved Digest  
On: Tuesday, August 2, 2022  
Members: Anderson, Merrill, Patterson

Deadline to Request Reconsideration: 4:30 p.m. Wednesday August 3, 2022

**The Way It Is Now:** ~~The City has closed certain public streets to private motor vehicles, reserving the streets as open space for recreational purposes. These closures were enacted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.~~

In April 2022, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted the Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program that closed portions of John F. Kennedy Drive (JFK Drive) and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park seven days a week to private motor vehicles, reserving the streets as open space for recreational uses. These closures do not apply to emergency vehicles, official government vehicles, intra-park transit shuttle buses and similar vehicles authorized to transport people, and vehicles making deliveries to the de Young Museum.

A portion of the Great Highway is closed to motor vehicles, with limited exceptions, from noon Fridays to 6 a.m. Mondays and on holidays. The City intends to remove the Great Highway between Sloat Boulevard and Skyline Boulevard to protect City infrastructure from damage caused by sea level rise. The City would redirect vehicles traffic along Skyline, Sunset and Sloat boulevards.

**The Proposal:** : Proposition \_\_\_ would restrict the City's ability to limit private vehicle use of JFK Drive and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park and the Great Highway.

Proposition \_\_\_ would repeal the Board's April 2022 ordinance and require the City to return the open space to its previous use to allow private motor vehicles on to use JFK Drive and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park at all times except from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays and legal holidays, as well as on Saturdays in April through September.

Proposition \_\_\_ would require the City to allow motor vehicle use in both directions at all times on the Great Highway and would not allow the City to remove the Great Highway between Sloat and Skyline boulevards as planned. For both the Great Highway and JFK Drive along with the other affected streets in Golden Gate Park, the City could temporarily limit access to these roads to respond to emergencies, for street repairs and for community events.

If Proposition \_\_\_ passes, the Board may later amend this ordinance by a two-thirds vote, only if the amendments are either consistent with the measure's purposes or required by a court.

If Proposition \_\_\_ passes with more votes than Proposition [four-supes measure], then Proposition [four-supes measure] would have no legal effect.

**A "YES" Vote Means:** If you vote "yes," you want to require the City to return the open space back to its previous use to allow private motor vehicles on to use JFK Drive and connector streets in Golden Gate Park at all times except from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays and legal holidays, as well as on Saturdays in April through September. You also want to require the City to allow motor vehicle use in both directions at all times on the Great Highway and not allow the City to remove the Great Highway between Sloat and Skyline boulevards as planned.

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