

Member, Board of Supervisors  
District 8



City and County of San Francisco

## RAFAEL MANDELMAN

July 29, 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](mailto:publications@sfgov.org)

### RE: **Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program**

Dear Chair Packard and Members of the Ballot Simplification Committee:

Thank you for your essential work in crafting accessible language that voters can understand when considering the many measures that will appear on this year's November ballot.

I write to respectfully request some additional language to the draft digest for the Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program initiative ordinance. These additions are intended to clarify the context, contents and effect of the initiative ordinance for the voters. Because this measure is closely related to the Uses of the Great Highway and JFK Drive measure, this language is also intended to ensure there is a clear differentiation between these two measures in order to avoid voter confusion.

While they both address impacts to the use of public space in Golden Gate Park, the measures would produce opposite outcomes: the Golden Gate Park Access measure affirms protected open space in Golden Gate Park, while the Uses of the Great Highway and JFK Drive measure removes the city's ability to provide protected open space on JFK Drive and nearby streets and requires road space to be dedicated to private motor vehicles at most times. One critical difference is that the Golden Gate Park Access measure preserves the ability of the city to make future changes to JFK Drive and other roads in Golden Gate Park, while the opposing measure would prohibit the city from making any future changes to JFK Drive and nearby roads without going back to the voters.

The following language would clarify the effect of this measure vis-à-vis the opposing measure.

**“The Proposal:** Proposition \_\_ would re-enact as a voter-adopted measure the ordinance that the Board adopted in April 2022, and allow the Board to later amend Proposition \_\_ by a majority vote. This would have the effect of maintaining portions of JFK Drive and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park as open space for recreation with limited motor vehicle use and preserving the Board's ability to modify the use of these streets in the future.

**A "YES" Vote Means:** If you vote "yes," you want to affirm as a voter-approved measure the Board's April 2022 ordinance designating portions of JFK Drive and connector streets as open space for recreation with specified disability access standards, and prohibit private motor vehicle traffic on those streets with limited exceptions, and preserve the Board's ability to modify the use of these streets in the future.

In particular, I suggest that the language in the "YES vote" paragraph be updated to ask voters to "affirm" the vote of the Board of Supervisors. The current language asking the voters to "re-enact as a voter approved measure the Board's ordinance" may cause unnecessary confusion by focusing on the process of "re-enacting", and cause voters to wonder why they need to vote on this measure when the Board has already acted. I propose the above clarification to the language to help voters understand the action they are taking with a "Yes" vote.

I also believe it is important to clarify in this digest what the Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program ordinance actually does and the background that led to the program being adopted. This will help ensure voters understand the specific city decision they are affirming and that stands in opposition to what the other measure would effectuate.

I suggest the following changes to the "Way It Is Now" section to provide some historical context for the voters on the use of JFK Drive for recreational use, as the draft digest implies that the recreation program only began in April of this year. It is also important to clarify that the city's Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program goes further than simply closing roads to motor vehicles, and explicitly provides for "disability access standards" and access for paratransit vans specifically as an allowed vehicle type:

**The Way It Is Now:** John F. Kennedy Drive (JFK Drive) is a public street that runs east to west within Golden Gate Park. Beginning in 1967, the City has provided for the use of portions of JFK Drive and certain connector streets as open space for recreational purposes and closed these streets to private motor vehicles on certain days of the week. Beginning in April 2020, the City temporarily extended the use of these streets for recreational purposes to seven days per week as part of the City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In April 2022, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted the Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program (the ordinance) that closed portions of JFK Drive and certain connector streets to private motor vehicles seven days a week, reserving the streets as open space for pedestrians, bicyclists, those using wheelchairs, and all other forms of recreation. The ordinance further established specific disability access standards and allowed access to emergency vehicles, official government vehicles performing government business, paratransit vans, intra-park transit shuttle buses and other similar vehicles used to transport persons, and vehicles making deliveries to the De Young Museum.

This additional context will help voters understand the intention of the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor in crafting and passing the Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program, the practical effect of voting for this ballot measure, and why this measure has been placed on the ballot when the Board has already acted.

Thank you for the time and care you have taken in writing this digest, and I appreciate your consideration of these requested additions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Mandelman', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Supervisor Rafael Mandelman

Exhibit: Proposed language for consideration

**Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program \***

**Digest** by the Ballot Simplification Committee

**Status:** Draft for Consideration

**On:** Thursday, July 28, 2020

**Members:** Packard, Anderson, Merrill, Patterson

**Deadline to Request Reconsideration:** TBD

**The Way It Is Now:** John F. Kennedy Drive (JFK Drive) is a public street that runs east to west within Golden Gate Park. Beginning in 1967, the City has provided for the use of portions of JFK Drive and certain connector streets as open space for recreational purposes and closed these streets to private motor vehicles on certain days of the week. Beginning in April 2020, the City temporarily extended the use of these streets for recreational purposes to seven days per week as part of the City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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**The Proposal:** Proposition \_\_\_ would re-enact as a voter-adopted measure the ordinance that the Board adopted in April 2022, and allow the Board to later amend Proposition \_\_\_ by a majority vote. This would have the effect of maintaining portions of JFK Drive and certain connector streets in Golden Gate Park as open space for recreation with limited motor vehicle use and preserving the Board's ability to modify the use of these streets in the future.

If Proposition \_\_\_ receives more votes than Proposition [initiative], then Proposition [initiative] would have no legal effect.

**A "YES" Vote Means:** If you vote "yes," you want to affirm as a voter-approved measure the Board's April 2022 ordinance designating portions of JFK Drive and connector streets as open space for recreation with specified disability access standards, and prohibit private motor vehicle traffic on those streets with limited exceptions, and preserve the Board's ability to modify the use of these streets in the future.

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