



July 23, 2024

RE: Draft Digest - Reserving the Upper Great Highway as Public Open Recreation Space

Dear Ballot Simplification Committee Members:

We write as community members who have advocated for the past four years for the city to use the Upper Great Highway as a public open recreation space. We thank you for your work to put this ballot measure in context for voters, and respectfully offer the below comments and suggestions.

- **Asking voters whether the Great Highway should be reserved as a public open space.** The committee's draft digest correctly asks voters whether they want to reserve the Upper Great Highway as public open recreation space, referencing restriction of private vehicle traffic as the means by which the space will be made available as a public open space. Public letters submitted to your committee urge a focus on the traffic restriction rather than the use of the Great Highway as a coastal park space - these letters ask you to obfuscate the purpose of the ballot measure to voters. Creation of a public open recreation space along the coast is the purpose of the legislation as per the City Attorney's Title and Summary; the question framing used in the draft digest is true to the purpose of the legislation and also complete and transparent to voters as to how the purpose (the creation of public open space) will be accomplished (by restricting private vehicles with limited exceptions). As such, we urge you to retain the "public open recreation space" framing used in the draft digest.
- **Matching the Yes and No Responses.** The "A YES Vote" means language asks voters whether they would like to "reserve the Upper Great Highway as a public open space, permanently closing the Upper Great Highway to private motor vehicles with limited exceptions." This question is clear as to both the outcome and the means by which the outcome is achieved. However, the different phrasing of the "A NO vote means" introduces some ambiguity for voters. We respectfully suggest that the "A NO vote means" language be adjusted to match the "A YES Vote means" language to ensure that voters understand their choice as it relates to whether the Upper Great Highway should be used as a public open recreation space. We suggest the following edits:

"A NO Vote Means: you do not want the City to reserve the Upper Great Highway as public open recreation space, permanently closing the Upper Great Highway to private motor vehicles with limited exceptions."

- **Clarifying Impacted Areas.** A common confusion among voters is difficulty distinguishing the status of the various parts of the Great Highway:
 - The closure of the Great Highway Extension from Skyline to Sloat, which was already legislated on 5/24/2024 by the Board of Supervisors;
 - Conversion of the Upper Great Highway from Sloat to Lincoln into a public open recreation space, per this measure;
 - Great Highway from Lincoln to Point Lobos Ave, where no changes are planned by this measure or other projects; and
 - The adjacent Lower Great Highway, where similarly no changes are planned.

If possible, including a map in the digest illustrating these segments would help voters understand what streets are and are not impacted by the measure. If not, we respectfully suggest explaining these segments in “The Way It Is Now.” In addition, we suggest that the “A YES/NO Vote Means” sections refer to “the Upper Great Highway between Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard” to clarify which portion of the roadway is to be impacted by the measure and that other portions will not be changed. This could be done as follows:

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote “yes,” you want the City to reserve the Upper Great Highway between Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard as public open recreation space, permanently closing it seven days a week to private motor vehicles with limited exceptions.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote “no,” you do not want do not want the City to permanently close the Upper Great Highway between Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard this way to private motor vehicles.

- **Omitting Discussion of Unrelated Road Closure Projects.** “The Way It is Now” section references multiple pandemic-era street closures. This measure only relates to the Upper Great Highway; we respectfully request that the paragraph be amended to reference only the Upper Great Highway. References to other closures may lead voters to inaccurately think that this measure impacts areas other than the Great Highway between Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard. We suggest the below edits to clarify that this measure affects only the Great Highway between Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City closed ~~certain public streets~~ the Great Highway between Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard (“Upper Great Highway”) to private motor vehicles, reserving the street land as public open space for recreational purposes. ~~These closures included the Upper Great Highway between Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard (“Upper Great Highway”).~~

Respectfully submitted,

Lucas Lux
President, Friends of Great Highway Park