



July 25, 2024

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

Dear Ballot Simplification Committee,

Thank you for your careful work to clarify the language on our ballots for all voters in regards to the Great Highway.

I write to ask for clarification on two specific points on the final ballot language for the ballot measure “Reserving the Upper Great Highway as Public Open Recreation Space.”

**1. Change the phrase “personal and commercial vehicles” to “private motor vehicles”**

The phrase “personal and commercial vehicles” is not accurate when describing the limitations on vehicles that are currently in effect on the Great Highway or that would be in effect should voters approve the space to become a full-time park. I request that you revert this language to “private motor vehicles” throughout the digest to match the intent of the draft ordinance provided by the city attorney.

***Reasoning***

Park shuttles are technically commercial vehicles as defined by the DMV and would be permitted to drive in the park.

Furthermore, commercial vehicles over 3 tons are already restricted on the Great Highway, so it is not necessary to understanding the measure to distinguish them as a separate category of vehicle.

The relevant distinction that voters should understand is between private and public vehicles – city vehicles including emergency response vehicles, park maintenance vehicles, and shuttles should be permitted to operate, while vehicles used for private purposes should not. The purpose of those private or public vehicles—personal travel or commercial use—are not relevant to the question being asked of voters, which is whether the land should be used as an open recreational space every day of the week.



**2. Change the NO statement to state that rejecting the measure means a voter does not want the space to be used as open recreational space**

***Reasoning***

The intent of this measure, clearly stated by the authors and the legal text of the ordinance, is to ask voters whether they want to reserve the Great Highway exclusively as open space for recreation. A voter could have any number of reasons for voting “no” on the measure that are not reflected in the current description of a “No” vote.

We suggest using the language: “If you vote “no,” you do not want the City to use the Upper Great Highway as public open recreation space, permanently closing it to private motor vehicles, with limited exceptions.”

An alternative would be to clarify: “If you vote “no”, you do not want the city to make these changes.”

This would better clarify the intent of the “no” vote to capture any reason that a voter might reject the measure. Furthermore, the legal text and authors’ intent is to ask voters whether the Great Highway should be used as “public open recreation space.” It is confusing to suddenly switch to telling voters that they are voting only on a road closure when rejecting the measure.

Thank you for your attention to these two issues, and for your work on behalf of the citizens of San Francisco.

Robin Pam  
KidSafe SF