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AND PARKS

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January 24, 2024

Honorable Paul Krekorian, Chair
Ad Hoc Committee on City Governance Reform
City Clerk, Room 395, City Hall
Attention: Michael Espinosa

**RESPONSE TO COUNCIL FILE 23-1027 RELATIVE TO RECREATION AND PARKS
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHARTER AMENDMENTS**

Background:

On December 12, 2023, City Council adopted the Ad Hoc Committee on City Governance Reform amended report relative to best practices for future Charter Reform processes, options to create a commission to evaluate and provide recommendations on Charter reform for future ballots and related matters.

The Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) was requested to report recommendations for identifying and prioritizing sections in the Charter that would benefit from reform to modernize the City's organizational infrastructure and or support more strategic citywide policies.

Analysis / Findings:

A well-crafted city charter serves as the cornerstone for efficient governance, and its profound impact extends to RAP, fostering a vibrant and sustainable park system. Our current City Charter secures dedicated funding to RAP and provides essential protections that ensure the preservation of green space.

RAP appreciates the opportunity to provide input regarding Charter Reform and acknowledges that these recommendations can be further discussed as some may pertain to Recreation and Parks directly and/or other sections in the City Charter.

Section 593 - Financial Support

Under the Charter, RAP receives an appropriation equivalent to 0.0325% of assessed value of all property as assessed for City taxes annually. This allocation provides baseline funding for RAP's operating budget, but has also been increasingly used to support RAP's "indirect costs" which were previously paid for by the city. Under the Charter, the Library Department's funding



is structured similarly. However in 2011, voters approved Measure L - the Public Library Funding Charter Amendment - which increased the Library's Charter-required funding by more than 40% from .0175% of assessed value on all property in the city to .0300 of assessed value on all property in the city over a four year period. This Charter amendment helped stabilize funding for the Library and provided enough funding for the Library Department to adequately pay for all "indirect costs."

RAP has not had the benefit of a similar Charter amendment. RAP recognizes the significant fiscal challenges that the City currently faces, which may not allow for an immediate increase in the Charter-mandated appropriation. That said, in the context of Charter reform discussions, this topic should be given consideration as we strive to provide high-quality recreational programs, maintain parks, and create a welcoming environment for residents and visitors.

Recommendation:

Explore the possibility of increased appropriation.

Section 594 - Control and Management of Recreation and Park Lands, (c) Restrictions on Transfer of Dedicated Parks

The Charter allows RAP to lease properties with the County of Los Angeles, the State of California, and the United States (federal government) consistent with park purposes. Adding LAUSD to this list of agencies would benefit the City by allowing mutually agreeable land use arrangements that support enhanced recreational access.

Recommendation:

In section 594 (c)(2) Include Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) as an agency that RAP can lease to, with the same requirements we have of the County, State, or US.

Part Time Employees - various sections

A significant portion of the RAP work force are part time employees with negotiated benefits. These part time employees are limited to work 1040 hours per year. Although this is a change that can occur in the Administrative Code, RAP understands that may affect various sections of the charter including but not limited to Section 1001 regarding Exemptions. Given the unique nature of part time employees to recreation and parks, we would limit this request to Recreation and Parks only.

Recommendation: create language allowing part time employees with negotiated benefits to work more than a work schedule of half-time (1040 hours) or more in any service year, but less than full-time.

Sincerely,



JIMMY KIM
General Manager

CC: Honorable Members of Ad Hoc Committee on Governance Reform