

To: San Francisco Youth Commission (Commission)

**Re: Sign-on Letter Requesting the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Produce a Responsible Budget and Scrutinize Sharp Park Golf Course Finances**

Thank you for this opportunity to present to the Commission and for your important work representing youth concerns in the City, including ensuring that the City's recreation offerings meet resident and neighborhood needs. We thank you for your past engagement on this topic, specifically passing the resolution that "...urges the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to restore the land at Sharp Park for the Habitat of the San Francisco Garter Snake and the California Red-legged Frog." This new request to participate in the sign-on letter supports the Commission's resolution and is consistent with ensuring that the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department prioritizes the needs of city residents.

Sharp Park golf course, which lies in the city of Pacifica, is owned by the City of San Francisco and managed by the San Francisco Recreation & Parks Department – it is located within the legislative boundary of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (managed by the National Park Service).

Sharp Park Golf Course continues to be an ecological and economic liability for the City of San Francisco. San Francisco youth and recreation budgets are being slashed, yet the City is proposing to operate Sharp Park golf course that costs San Francisco tax payers hundreds of thousands each year and millions going into the future. Because of this, we believe it is important that the golf course budget be scrutinized so that the best budget decisions are made for city and youth services.

**The capital costs** for San Francisco to keep the Sharp Park golf course as a functioning golf course will be around \$50 million, including \$32 million for armoring the eroding seawall, an estimate provided by expert Coastal Civil Engineer Bob Batallio; \$12 million for revitalizing the Sharp Park Golf Course, an estimate provided by the City's own consultants; \$5.1 million for an irrigation project, an estimate provided by SF PUC.

**The legal costs** for San Francisco to keep the Sharp Park golf course could be in the millions of dollars, as the owner of that property is responsible for protecting two endangered species and preventing the discharge of pollutants in the ocean, under the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act respectively. This San Francisco owned golf operation is violating both of these federal laws. To meet the Endangered Species Act requirements and still have a golf course, millions of dedicated funding is required to meet standards set by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Sharp Park Loses Money Nearly Every Year.** The San Francisco taxpayers are subsidizing a Pacifica course that loses between \$30,000 and \$300,000 each year since 2004 once the general fund subsidy is removed and is projected to lose between \$62,000 and \$124,000 in the next fiscal year. Meanwhile San Francisco-based recreation and park centers are being closed or having services reduced.

San Francisco Recreation and Park Department surveys of San Francisco residents show that the #1 recreational demand is more hiking trails, while golf ranks 16<sup>th</sup> out of 19 options. There is an oversupply of golf in the Bay Area, yet the demand is not there. By scrutinizing the Sharp Park Golf Course budget, the SF Board and public can make more informed decisions on how to spend limited resources on recreational opportunities that city residents desire.

Attachments:

- Analysis of Sharp Park's operations budget
- City of San Francisco survey on residents' recreational demands
- Coastal Civil Engineer Bob Batallio's financial analysis of a sea wall