

From: Christopher Mckay

Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 12:51 PM

To: BCDC PublicComment <publiccomment@bcdc.ca.gov>

Subject: January 11, 2024 Enforcement meeting general comments

Hello, I would like the attached document to be included in the meeting and shared with the Commissioners. It's regarding the available funding and lack of enforcement for keeping Union Point Park in Oakland free of encampments.

Thank you,

Chris

Chris McKay

Association Coordinator

Embarcadero Neighborhood Association

Over the past three years our Union Point Park has been cleared of encampments and reoccupied numerous times. This is unfair to our residents and visitors and also to the unhoused people that are allowed in the park and then forced to move out. These closures are costly to the city, require the use of resources that could be used elsewhere and do nothing to prevent the City from being fined \$6000 a day by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission for not keeping the park free of encampments. This is even more disheartening when an [audit just released by the City Auditor](#) shows the City had over **\$5 million in unspent funds** for 2023 directly allocated to **”fund park maintenance, litter reduction and homelessness intervention in and around City parks”**. The exact problems that we have in our park.

Measure Q was approved by the voters of Oakland in March 2020 by a 64% margin specifically to protect our parks. It has collected \$82.5 million in revenue. The report provides 16 recommendations to improve the performance measures for City managers and acknowledges that parks are still full of litter, occupied with homeless encampments and in need of maintenance while the City accumulated an unspent fund balance of \$22 million as of June 30, 2023. Why can't this money be spent on **prevention**? The only solution to protecting our parks.

In 2018 the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation, a non-profit organization that supports our parks, stated that the poor maintenance in our parks was due to a "lack of ongoing funds" and were only able to provide "C+" maintenance services and additional funds were required to provide "A" services. Well Measure Q provided the funds so can't we expect "A" services? We understand staffing is a challenge in all departments and encourage the City to prioritize the Parks in their hiring since funds are available.

The report mentioned Raimondi Park in West Oakland and Holly Park in East Oakland as two parks that were lacking services and had encampments in and around the park. They didn't mention Union Point Park, possibly because the audit took place during the few days our park was not occupied, but today our park is again occupied with huge structures, tents, a motorhome in the parking lot, fire pits and trash spread everywhere and the lawn is torn up from trucks being driven in the park.





You can read the report [HERE](#) and you will see a lot of recommendations and further study as expected but they do mention “having dedicated staff at each park”. That’s an excellent idea and even a part time person could surely be covered by the funding available. This could **prevent** encampments from forming in the first place and not require the overloaded Encampment Management Teams involvement. The many signs in the park that say “No Encampments” could be pointed out and the rules enforced.

Voters in Oakland love their parks and have voted to tax themselves to protect them. They deserve better than “C” work. Our Embarcadero Neighborhood Association has seen significant improvements in our neighborhood but keeping our park clean for the use of our residents has not been one of them. Please put Measure Q funds to work in protecting our parks and our City.