



City Council
Finance Committee

February 22, 2024
Packet Addendum #1

From: [Cathern H Smith](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Jeff Durbin](#)
Subject: 2024 Open Space Funding & Budget
Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024 10:54:56 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Dear Members of the Finance Committee,

With the passage of 2C, management of our Open Spaces in conformance with the standards established in the City Charter is possible. However, the staff recommendation before you tonight severely underfunds Open Space and fails to provide enough funding to comply with the Charter's mandatory management standards. At a minimum, both the fund balance and the general fund transfer should be split 50-50.

The City Charter mandates good stewardship and preservation of our Open Space, specifically calling out the preservation and promotion of native plants, native wildlife, and their habitats.

ARTICLE 15

OPEN SPACE

Section 15-1. Open Space Article - Purpose.

The purpose of this article is to establish management standards for City-owned open space lands that:

- (a) Are consistent with good stewardship and sound ecological principles;
- (b) Preserve and promote native plants, native wildlife, and their habitats; and
- (c) Preserve and promote cultural resources, agriculture, scenic vistas, and appropriate passive recreation activities.

All six subsections of the City Charter relating to Open Space can be found at pages 54 of the PDF (page 45 of the Charter) through page 59 of the PDF(page 50 of the Charter) available at <https://www.louisvilleco.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/64/635500284987870000> Note that the City Charter envisions 4 types of Open Space: (1) preserve land, (2) protected land, (3) visitor land for passive recreation, and (4) other lands (E.g., entryway features).

Please adequately fund Open Space so that we may live up to the standards established in the City Charter and preserve our beautiful lands and the diverse beings living up on it.

Best Regards,
May you walk in birdsong for all of your days,

Cathern Smith
Ward III, Louisville

PS - Did you know that credit rating companies include Open Space in their evaluations?

cc: Mayor Leh
Members of City Council Not Serving on the Finance Committee
City Manager Durbin

From: [Michiko Christiansen](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Michiko Christiansen](#)
Subject: Finance commtiee
Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024 12:25:27 PM
Attachments: [Doc1.docx](#)

==CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL==

This email originated from outside the City of Louisville's email environment. Do not click links or open attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe. Please contact IT if you believe this email is suspicious.

Dear Finance committee:

After studying the chart provided by Ryder and LOSA, I am impressed by LOSA's chart that provided a clear understanding of what this will project in the future, and I was able to understand it better. Ryder's chart is not clear and there are missing factors that is not included into the chart.

Finding out what Ryder's proposal is about, this proposal should be revise the budget amendment to reallocate the fund balance (old funds) and annual \$1M general fund transfer more evenly between OS and Parks to support both programs instead of investing in Parks and not in OS. I recommend start funding an acquisitions reserve which would follow the spirit and intent of 2C. Increasing the 2024 placeholder OS operating and capital expense budget **now** so OS can start building the program and installing wayfinding, for example, instead of waiting for the later budget amendments later in the summer. It doesn't serve our wild lands or community to continue to wait.

This will give a sustainable and fiscally responsible budget to approve for 2024, for both Parks and Open Space to have the support to grow in their programs.

Remember we have EDI and it is important all programs to be provided equally in any form of services.

Thank you,
M. Christiansen
Louisville Resident

Meredyth Muth

From: Cynthia Corne
Sent: Wednesday, February 21, 2024 7:05 PM
To: City Council; Jeff Durbin; Ryder Bailey
Cc: Meredyth Muth; Adam Blackmore; Shannon Mihaly; Abby McNeal
Subject: PPLAB Statement re: 2C Budget

Importance: High

Dear Mayor Leh and City Council, City Manager Durbin, Finance Director Bailey,
From: Cynthia Corne, Chair, PPLAB on behalf of PPLAB

At the February 7th, 2024 monthly Parks and Public Landscaping Advisory Board (PPLAB) Meeting, Finance Director Bailey provided a Ballot Issue 2C Finance update. Thank you.

- While buoyed that Louisville voters passed Ballot Issue 2C, the Parks Budgets, in these first-pass scenarios, will be tight.
 - As mentioned in the Special Session and in the Parks GMMP, the City of Louisville has executed a vision that has resulted in more parks per capita than most cities our size and, as also mentioned in the GMMP, yet with similar staff levels as cities our size. Our parks are a value to our community and economy.
- The Finance Committee meets tomorrow Feb. 22, 2024 to also continue to review the implications of the 2C Ballot Language (see bottom).
- As part of the PPLAB Bylaws, our role includes Article I, Section 3B, 3 - Purpose and Duties/Duties:
 - "To advise City Council and staff on the capital and operating budget as it relates to the Parks Division."

As such, with the early scenarios and information available now from Director Bailey and staff, PPLAB wishes to provide the following advisory statement to Finance Committee, Staff, and Council.

- Director Bailey and City Clerk Muth - please include the PPLAB statement, as pertinent, in the attachments for 2C-related Finance/Other Council discussions. As we learn more in the months and years ahead, we will communicate further as needed. Thank you.

=====

February 7th meeting, February 21st communication: Statement from PPLAB for Council and Finance Committee:

"In November 2023, Louisville voters voted to sustain the current level of support for Parks and Open Space. PPLAB supports a structurally-balanced budget which will maintain the current level of support and maintenance for Parks. PPLAB would not like to see cuts to Parks to re-balance with Open Space at this time.

PPLAB encourages the City to commit funds for Open Space planning at this time. PPLAB encourages staff to remain iterative and collaborative on the budget for future years."

=====

On a related note, encouraging a “Buy Louisville. Buy Local” campaign to exceed Sales Tax projections, is another possible implication of tight budgets. More \$ will make choices easier.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Parks and Public Landscaping Advisory Board

Ballot Language:

Louisville Ballot Issue 2C: Open Space and Parks Sales Tax increase, extension

What it asks: “Shall the City of Louisville taxes be increased \$1,500,000 in the first full fiscal year and by such amounts as may be generated annually thereafter, beginning Jan. 1, 2024, and automatically expiring after 10 years, by the imposition of an additional .125% sales and use tax to be used solely to acquire, restore, preserve, protect and maintain open space and mitigate wildfire risks within open space areas; and shall the current .375% sales tax approved by the voters in 2012 for open space and parks purposes be extended from its current expiration date of Dec. 31, 2023, for an additional 10 years, to be equally divided between separate parks and open space funds, with the open space funds used for the purposes described above and parks funds used solely to acquire, improve and maintain parks; and shall all such sales and use tax revenues be collected, retained and spent as a voter-approved revenue change under Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution or any other law?”

==CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL==

This email originated from outside the City of Louisville's email environment. Do not click links or open attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe. Please contact IT if you believe this email is suspicious.

From: [H M](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Jeff Durbin](#); [Ryder Bailey](#)
Subject: 2/22/24 Finance Committee Budget Amendment Resolution Issues
Date: Tuesday, February 20, 2024 10:32:06 AM

To: Finance Committee members, City Council members, City Manager, and Finance Director

From: Louisville Open Space Advocates (LOSA)

Date: February 20, 2024

Re: 2/22/24 Finance Committee Budget Amendment Resolution Issues

Thank you for continuing the work to implement Ballot Measure 2C. After reviewing the agenda for the February 22 Finance Committee meeting, we are very concerned because the proposed budget perpetuates the historical underfunding of Open Space. Not only would the recurring annual \$1 million General Fund transfer be given fully to Parks, but over 70% of the one-time Fund Balance transfer would go to Parks as well. Thus, of the \$2+ million in 2024 funds, Parks would receive over \$1.8 million and Open Space would receive just a little over \$300,000 and no seed money for Open Space acquisition. Further, this annual \$1 million General Fund transfer to Parks is designed to grow and continue to occur year after year with no provisions for an Open Space allocation.

We recognize that Parks has important ongoing needs; Open Space does as well. Not only does Open Space need a more robust budget for current requirements, but it requires catch-up funding to address the years'-long lack of budget for managing and restoring habitat through an ecologically sound, scientifically based ongoing program. The motion to approve the status quo placeholder Open Space budget as business as usual for 2024 perpetuates the problem. Postponing the increase to the Open Space operating and capital budgets until the second quarter will result in at least six months of planning, hiring, purchasing, and service delays.

In addition, this proposed allocation provides no seed funding for an Open Space property acquisitions fund. As we know from past experience, if priority parcels become available, the city must move quickly to preempt private offers for property.

The existing funds and budgets were created during the original .375% sales-tax term. Ballot Measure 2C renewed this tax and established an equal division of this portion of the tax between Open Space and Parks. It follows that a 50-50 split is an equitable approach to the fund allocations of these tax revenues, fund balances, and general fund transfers. It also respects the intent and structure approved overwhelmingly by Louisville voters.

In summary, working with city staff to develop a revised resolution that includes

- an equitable 50-50 reallocation of funds between Open Space and Parks

- a budget amendment that immediately increases the Open Space operating and capital budgets in proportion to the additional revenue to support planning and program development
- an acquisition reserve

would provide an immediate and strong return on the voters' tremendous and continuous investment in our open space and parks. We believe that revising this resolution would give the Council a sustainable and fiscally responsible budget to approve for 2024, continue to support Parks, and make progress on protecting and preserving Open Space in Louisville.

Thank you,
Louisville Open Space Advocates (LOSA)

==CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL==

This email originated from outside the City of Louisville's email environment. Do not click links or open attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe. Please contact IT if you believe this email is suspicious.