

## Text of proposed amendment to the Charter

### Sec. 2.02 Powers of the County Board

K. To sell, lease or otherwise dispose of park property upon such terms as it considers best in the public interest. In the event the intended use is not consistent with park purposes, before disposal of any real property for such inconsistent use, the county board shall hold a public hearing as the intended use of the property, after first providing at least twenty days written notice of the hearing date to the municipality in which the property is located and to all owners of land within 1,000 feet of the real property to be disposed.

Before the sale, lease or disposal of park property for any inconsistent use, the county board shall adopt, by resolution, a policy providing for no net loss of park, recreational or open space land and facilities. At a minimum, the policy shall provide that park, recreational and open space land acquired for such purposes may not be converted to another use unless such land and recreational facilities are replaced in an equivalent amount and of similar quality.



## Vote YES on Nov. 8 for this amendment

*"Shall the Ramsey County Home Rule Charter be amended to require the County Board to maintain a policy which provides for no net loss of park, recreational or open space land and facilities?"*

### Recommendation:

The Charter Commission recommends you vote **YES** on this amendment.

For more information, contact:



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## Ramsey County Charter Commission

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Information on the  
proposed amendment to the  
Ramsey County Charter

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## Vote YES on no net loss of Parks and Open Space



# Vote YES

## On the amendment for No-Net-Loss of Park and Open Space

This information was prepared to explain the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed amendment to the Ramsey County Home Rule Charter on No-Net-Loss of Park and Open Space.

### Executive Summary

On May 10, 1993 (with a subsequent language amendments on September 20, and December 13, 1993), the Ramsey County Charter Commission approved the following question for inclusion on the 1994 general election ballot:

*“Shall the Ramsey County Home Rule Charter be amended to require the County Board to maintain a policy which provides for no net loss of park, recreational or open space land and facilities?”*

At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the “Process for Educating Public about Proposed Charter Amendments.” This process is based on the proposition that the Commission’s most important responsibility is to make sure that the public understands what is being voted on; that is, that the public is given both pro and con information about the proposed amendment.

## Current

The Home Rule Charter authorizes the County Board to sell or lease park property. When the property is intended to be used for non-park purposes, the Board must hold a public hearing. Any conveyance of park land must be by ordinance. All ordinances require an additional public hearing and are subject to referendum.

In March of 1993, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners established by resolution a policy requiring park or open space land or facilities converted to another use be replaced in an equivalent amount, in a comparable location and of similar quality. Unlike the Charter, this resolution can be rescinded or amended by a vote of four county commissioners.

### What will your vote mean?

A YES vote will mean:

The County Board must maintain a policy requiring no net loss of park or open space before it can convert county park or open space to other uses.

A NO vote will mean:

The County Board can sell or lease park or open space property for non-park purposes.

## Those who SUPPORT this amendment say that the amendment:

- maintains, at a minimum, the current acreage of park and open space in Ramsey County;
- requires in the Charter, that the County Board have a "No Net Loss Policy" with minimum standards;
- ensures the protection of park lands as pressure for urban development grows.

## Those who OPPOSE this amendment say that the amendment:

- limits flexibility in responding to changing urban needs within a fully developed county;
- limits the range of decisions elected officials can make in park policy matters;
- The requirement contains subjective limits on action, which open the process to legal interpretation.
- introduces special interests into the Charter.