

At-Large Council Candidate David Oh:

*Question 1*

Beyond the role that parks and recreation have traditionally played in cities, people today are increasingly concerned about quality of life, healthy living, and natural environments. They are making decisions, in larger part, based on access to parks, green spaces, and recreation for themselves and their families. Parks and recreation have a greater role to play in distinguishing a city as a place to live, work, and visit. That also means that parks and recreation should be clean, well maintained, attractive and safe. The more desirable the settings and activities, the more people will use them and the overall affect will be a growing population and more visitors, which will increase tax revenues and business profits.

*Question 2*

Funding for Philadelphia's parks and recreation has been cut to the bone and has lagged behind other Philadelphia City Departments for decades. In fact, Philadelphia's park related expenditure per resident is far less than Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Boston, Cincinnati and many other American cities. What steps would you take as a Councilmember to invest in Philadelphia's new Department of Parks and Recreation so that it can fulfill its role and potential?

I believe the Department of Parks and Recreation should be involved in our city's strategy to attract new residents, tourists and businesses. Parks and recreation are an important criteria in people's selection of a city as a home or place to visit. Because of this, companies are seeking to establish themselves in a city which offers great parks and recreation. This is particularly true of those that are involved in the creative economy. I would seek to enhance the experience people have in our parks through safety, activities, programs, settings and conveniences. I would license vendors and establish fee based programs in our parks and use the funds as a dedicated revenue stream for parks and recreation. I would also seek to adequately fund, through public/private partnerships and grants, the Department of Parks and Recreation to maintain and develop our parks and recreation to be the assets this city needs in order to be a 21st city.