

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE Z1

Berkeley is facing an unprecedented housing crisis. Market rents have increased roughly 60% over the past three years. This is affecting our economic and cultural diversity. Skyrocketing rents have disproportionately affected middle and low income residents, African Americans, Latinos, students and seniors. We have gotten to a point where our school teachers and librarians can no longer afford to live in the City they work in. Key to preventing displacement and keeping Berkeley diverse is creating new affordable housing.

While the City of Berkeley government is not directly involved in building affordable units, it does provide funding to non-profit developers through the Housing Trust Fund. These funds are necessary to leverage other funds to create new low income housing. The types of projects funded through our Housing Trust Fund include new construction, acquisition and rehabilitation of existing housing and limited equity cooperatives. These projects are rented as affordable to households at 65% of the Area Median Income or less for the life of the project.

The California Constitution requires voter approval of the construction of low income housing under Article 34. In 2000, Berkeley voted overwhelmingly to support Measure Z which asked voters to authorize 500 new affordable units. Since 2000, roughly 421 affordable units have been created, with many more planned in the future. In this housing crisis, it is critical that Berkeley create more affordable housing.

A recent citywide survey revealed that Berkeley voters view affordable housing as the most important priority for our city. This measure reaffirms Berkeley's commitment to diversity and social equity and will allow 500 new affordable units to be created.

Measure Z1 was placed on the ballot by a unanimous Berkeley City Council. VOTE YES ON MEASURE Z1

s/Jesse Arreguin
Berkeley City Councilmember; former Chair, Housing Advisory Commission

s/Laurie Capitelli
Berkeley City Councilmember, District 5

s/Dan Sawislak
Executive Director, Resources for Community Development

s/Brendan Darrow
Chair, Housing Advisory Commission

s/Carole S. Norris
Chair, Board of Commissioners, Berkeley Housing Authority