REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE F

Livable Cities Need Healthy Parks
Opponents of the Park Tax increase agree that we have “very deteriorated facilities,” yet urge you to vote no, because they take issue with the City’s overall budget. Yet delaying major maintenance only increases long term costs as buildings and facilities continue to deteriorate.

Currently, around $10 million is generated by the existing park tax. This is just over 3% of the City budget. The proposed tax increase would generate about $1.7 million or 0.5% of the City budget. Voting no on this measure will not change the City’s budget picture—but it will result in the deterioration or closure of some of Berkeley’s parks.

Berkeley has taken SIGNIFICANT steps to address the concerns raised by the opponents. Between 2009 and 2014, the City eliminated about 250 jobs—15% of the work force. Most city employees have not received a cost of living increase in three years.

Just as literacy is an important community value reflected in a special tax for our five libraries, so too is ensuring that our parks and recreation centers, our “outdoor living rooms,” are properly cared for and repaired. Measure F makes a modest investment in a legacy we inherited, parks and open spaces from our cherished Rose Garden to our smallest tot lots, built and cared for by Berkeley residents of every generation.

Support Healthy Living. Join the Sierra Club, City Auditor and a host of park supporters and VOTE YES FOR PARKS.

s/Nancy Bickel
President, League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville

s/Josh Daniels
Berkeley School Board President

s/Ann-Marie Hogan
City Auditor

s/Toni Mester
Vice-Chair, Parks and Waterfront Commission; Sierra Club No. Alameda Co. Executive Committee

s/Susan Wengraf
Berkeley City Council