

## MEASURE A

### COUNTY COUNSEL'S IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS OF MEASURE A

The County of Santa Clara operates and maintains parks throughout the county. Currently, the County Charter requires that the County set aside a portion of the property tax it collects and deposit that amount in the County park fund. The amount of the set aside is 1.425 cents per \$100 of assessed value of all real and personal property in Santa Clara County. The County must use at least fifteen percent of the set aside funds for the acquisition of real property for County park purposes, and at least five percent for park development. The County must use the remaining amount for the operation of County parks. These set aside and funding requirements expire on June 30, 2021.

Measure A would amend the County Charter to:

- extend the process of setting aside a portion of the property tax the County collects and depositing that amount in the County park fund for 11 years, until June 30, 2032. Beginning on July 1, 2017, this measure would raise the amount of that set aside to 1.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value of all real and personal property in Santa Clara County; and
- require the County to use at least ten percent of the set aside funds for the acquisition of real property and at least ten percent of the funds for park development for County park purposes. The remaining amount would be used for County park operations.

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors placed Measure A on the ballot.

A "yes" vote is a vote to extend the process of setting aside a portion of the property tax the County collects and depositing that amount into the County park fund from June 30, 2021 until June 30, 2032; increase the amount of that set aside beginning on July 1, 2017 from 1.425 cents to 1.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value of property in Santa Clara County; and require that at least ten percent of the set aside funds be used for the acquisition of property for park purposes, at least 10 percent be used for park development and the remaining amount be used for park operations.

A "no" vote is a vote to not make these changes, and to continue the set aside of a portion of the property tax the County collects and deposit into the County park fund until June 30, 2021 at the current rate of 1.425 cents per \$100 of assessed value of property, and to keep the current requirements that at least fifteen percent of the set aside funds be used for acquisition of property for park purposes, at least five percent be used for park development and the remaining amount be used for park operations.

Prepared by: /s/ Joshua S. White  
Deputy City Attorney  
City and County of San Francisco

On behalf of: /s/ Orry P. Korb  
County Counsel

## COMPLETE TEXT OF MEASURE A

### Complete Text of County of Santa Clara Charter Section 604 Amendment (Ballot Measure)

(1) The existing Section 604 of the County Charter shall remain in full force and effect until midnight on June 30, 2017, at which time subsections (2) through (6) of this section 604 below shall take immediate effect without further action.

(2) Beginning on July 1, 2017, the Board of Supervisors shall transfer from the general fund to the County Park fund an amount of money which shall not be less than an amount estimated by the Auditor-Controller to equal the amount that would be raised for that year by a tax of \$0.015 per One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) of assessed valuation of all real and personal property situated within the County of Santa Clara. In addition, the Board of Supervisors shall transfer into such fund all fees and revenues generated by the operation of County Parks and all other monies received from the United States Government, State of California, or any other public agency or any person for County park purposes. Any interest earned on the investment of money in the County Park fund shall be credited to the fund.

(3) The Board of Supervisors shall appropriate this money into the County Park fund for the acquisition, development, or acquisition and development of real property for County park purposes and for the maintenance and operation of County parks. At least 10% of the funds transferred from the general fund shall be set aside and used for park development for County park purposes, and at least 10% of the funds transferred from the general fund shall be set aside and used for the acquisition of real property for County park purposes, and the remaining funds shall be used for County Park operations.

(4) The county shall not acquire real property for any County park purpose until the Board of Supervisors has determined that the acquisition is in conformity with the adopted County Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan.

(5) This section shall be operative commencing with the fiscal year 2017-2018 (beginning on July 1, 2017) and shall be repealed at the end of fiscal year 2031-2032 (ending on June 30, 2032); provided, however, any unobligated monies remaining in the fund on June 30, 2032, shall be used only for the purposes set forth in subsection (3) of this section 604.

(6) The intent of this section 604 is to ensure that a minimum amount of money will be placed into the County Park fund for acquisition, development, operation and maintenance purposes. Nothing in this section shall be construed as a limitation on any additional amount of money the Board of Supervisors may transfer into the County Park fund for County park purposes or otherwise appropriate for County park purposes.

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE A

Vote YES on Measure A to protect, preserve, expand and enhance our outstanding Santa Clara County Parks.

Thanks to community support, we have beautiful open space, trails and parks right here in our community making it a wonderful place to live. Whether you use Alviso Marina on the Bay; Mt. Madonna and Uvas Canyon in the Santa Cruz Mountains; urban parks like Vasona, Hellyer, and Ed Levin; remote Grant Ranch and Coyote-Bear Ranch; or trails such as at Rancho San Antonio or along Los Gatos Creek, Penitencia Creek, and Coyote Creek, or just want to walk your dog—we all enjoy the benefits of county parks!

Measure A does NOT increase taxes.

Since 1972, voters have repeatedly approved the Park Charter Fund to provide stable, locally-controlled funding to protect our parks, trails and open space. This essential local funding now needs to be renewed. Your YES vote to renew is critical.

Measure A renews the only guaranteed, local source of funding we have for our Santa Clara County parks. Measure A protects and improves the investment we have already made. We need your YES vote.

YES on A to Protect Our Parks

- Maintains water quality by protecting land around rivers, lakes and streams
- Updates the restrooms and park facilities and keep them clean and safe
- Protects and preserves our local parks
- Updates aging roads, parking lots, and trailheads
- Improves access to multiuse trails
- Improves access to natural areas and open space

Measure A funds will stay here in our community, protecting our parks, trails and open space in Santa Clara County.

Vote YES on A—maintain and improve over 50,000 acres of incredible landscapes and open space right here in Santa Clara County.

/s/ Dave Cortese  
President, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

/s/ Blanca Alvarado

/s/ Rod Diridon, Sr.  
Chair, Santa Clara County League of Conservation Voters

/s/ Carl Guardino  
President & CEO, Silicon Valley Leadership Group

/s/ Yoriko Kishimoto  
President, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

## REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE A

To clarify, Measure A is not a new tax but the commitment of a portion of the county government's general fund to particular purposes.

The trouble with committing portions of a budget to particular purposes is that there is only so much money to go around. In general, elected officials should be free to allocate funds based on current priorities and efficiencies overall.

At the federal government level, most of the annual budget has already been established by laws-leaving members of Congress to fight over other spending. The persistence of this "non-discretionary spending" has contributed to annual budget deficits and a national (government) debt of over \$19 trillion.

I am not suggesting that the county government is necessarily as WASTEFUL as the federal government or even other local agencies in handing out salaries, benefits and private-sector contracts.

Here locally, we have a Santa Clara Valley Water District that has so much money it can hand out "golden parachutes" to retiring employees and add unnecessary chemicals to the drinking water-such as hydrofluoric acid.

For another example, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), funds projects that are quite inefficient and go way over budget. Despite its poor record, the VTA is planning to ask voters for still more money this November!.

There is only so much money to go around. We must look at the bigger picture.

/s/ W. Dito  
Resident of Milpitas

## ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE A

How many residents (and non-residents) use county parks each year?

How much money is raised by this parcel tax?

How is the money used?

The County of Santa Clara government spends a fortune every year on fat salaries and costly benefits for many of its 15,000 full-time employees and on lucrative private-sector contracts.

It is time (indeed, long overdue) that the County government explain to voters exactly why it needs so much money-including from this parcel tax.

/s/ W. Dito  
Resident of Milpitas

## REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE A

Thanks to Mr. Dito for asking some clarifying questions. Here are the facts:

**Measure A is NOT a parcel tax:** it is a small set aside of the existing property tax to support county parks.

**Measure A will not increase your taxes.**

**Measure A restores** the small fractional rate-cut made in 2006 and increases the portion that goes to capital improvements.

**Measure A is the only guaranteed, local source of funding for our Santa Clara County Parks.** This funding has been in place for 43 years by voters' support.

**Measure A is essential.** Measure A will fund essential repairs, upgrades and patrols to keep our parks open and safe.

**Our beloved parks are well-used by local residents.** Over 3 million visitors of all ages enjoy our parks each year.

**Measure A stays local.** All funds will stay right here in our community, protecting our parks, trails and open space in Santa Clara County.

**Measure A protects the investment we have already made.** Our community has supported and protected local parks for many years. We need to continue this commitment for ourselves, and future generations.

**Community leaders agree—we need Measure A.** Measure A is supported by community leaders, seniors, business leaders, parents and residents throughout Santa Clara County.

**Join us**—vote YES on Measure A for our parks, *without* increasing taxes.

/s/ Cindy Chavez  
Santa Clara County Supervisor

/s/ Zoe Lofgren  
Congresswoman

/s/ Gloria Chun Hoo  
Chair, Leagues of Women Voters of Santa Clara County

/s/ Mike Wasserman  
Santa Clara County Supervisor