

# **Sunnyvale and Santa Clara County Measures**

**November 8, 2016 Election**

---

**Michael Lusk & Susan Hough**



LWVCS.ORG

*The League of Women Voters of Cupertino Sunnyvale*

# League of Women Voters

## Local Ballot Measures Pro and Con

This event is intended to provide facts about these Measures to help voters make voting decisions.

We are here to

- Give you the tools you need to examine these measures
- Explain what they say and present the supporting & opposing elements – not take sides



# **PROS & CONS**

# **Sunnyvale Measures**

**November 8, 2016 Election**

---

**Measure N – Utility Users Tax Update**

**Measure BB – SSD Parcel Tax Extension**

**Measure M – Public Lands Act**



# **Measure N Sunnyvale Essential Services Protection**

- **Placed on the Nov. '16 ballot by the City Council**
- **Requires a simple majority to pass**



# **Background: Sunnyvale's Utility Users Tax**

- **The UUT is a 2% levy on electricity, gas, and intrastate landline telephone service**
- **It furnishes about 5% of general fund revenue**
- **Landline revenue has dropped steeply, due to displacement by new telecom technologies**



# What does Measure N do?

- **Brings new telecoms technology under the UUT, e.g. mobile, VOIP, prepaid phones**
- **Does not tax internet access charges or downloads, email**



# Measure N – Finances

- **Retains the current 2% tax rate (SC county average UUT is 3.7%)**
- **Would raise an est. \$1.5M/year**
- **Proceeds go to the General Fund**



# Measure N – Pro

- **The City has not significantly updated its UUT ordinance in over 40 years and the telecoms portion is badly outdated. The changes proposed in the measure would ensure that all taxpayers, regardless of the technology they use, will be treated fairly, and that everyone pays their fair share.**





# Measure N – Con

- **There is no public opposition**



# **Measure BB**

## **Sunnyvale School District Parcel Tax**

- **Put on the Nov. '16 ballot by the District**
- **Extends the current Measure B parcel tax by seven years**
- **Requires a 2/3 majority to pass**



# Sunnyvale School District

- **SSD serves 6,800 students, about 2/3 of S'Vale's preK-8 students**
- **Enrollment is growing**
- **Cost per student/year is \$13.5k (nat'l average is ~\$12k)**
- **Average class size: 24**



## Sunnyvale School District (2)

- **56% of SSD students are considered proficient in math and reading**
- **3,600 are English learners, meal aid recipients, and/or foster youth**
- **Large disparities in family income**
- **[greatschools.org](http://greatschools.org) rates SSD at 7 (out of 10, where 10 is best)**



# Sunnyvale School District Finance

- **SSD is a 'basic aid' district. It is mostly financed by local property taxes, not the state**
- **Basic aid districts generally have higher revenues, but historically more revenue uncertainty, requiring reserves**



**Enrollment growth is not automatically funded**

# Sunnyvale School District Finance (2)

- **Total projected revenue: \$77.5M**
- **Total expenditures: \$77.5M**
- **SSD 'Economic Uncertainty' reserve fund: ~\$11.8M**



# What will Measure BB do?

- **Extends the current Measure B parcel tax another 7 years. Takes effect on 7/1/18, when B expires**
- **Levies \$59/year per parcel, for a total of \$413 over the life of the tax**
- **Will raise ~\$1M/year**



**Exemptions for seniors**

# What will the money be spent on?

- **Educational operations, classroom programs, teacher compensation**
- **No funds to be spent on admin**
- **Expenditures to be overseen by a citizen oversight committee**





# Current SSD Measures Financed by Property Taxes

- **Parcel Tax Measure B (2011) - \$59/parcel/year**
- **Bond Measure G (2013) - max \$15/year per \$100k assessed value**
- **Bond Measure P (2004) - max \$30/year per \$100k assessed value**



## **Measure BB – Pro**

**BB will help protect programs such as math, English and science, maintain computers and other tech used in the classroom, attract excellent teachers, and keep class sizes small.**

**Quality schools give our kids a leg up and enhance property values**



## Measure BB – Con

**Between FY 13-14 and FY 14-15, SSD revenues jumped by \$4.6M and spending per student increased \$1,049. SSD is flush, so why does it need more money? It's time we said no to the tax and spend special interest crowd.**



# Measure BB – Proponents

**Nancy Tivol** - fmr executive director,  
**S'Vale Community Services**

**Michael Klein** - S'Vale small business  
**owner**

**Melinda Hamilton** - president, S'Vale  
**Education Foundation, fmr S'Vale mayor**

**Dean Chu** - fmr S'Vale mayor

**Patricia Castillo** - fmr S'Vale mayor

**Gustav Larsson** - S'Vale vice mayor



# Measure BB – Opponent

**Mark Hinkle (of Morgan Hill) - president,  
Silicon Valley Taxpayers Assoc.**



# **Measure M**

## **The Sunnyvale Public Lands Act**

- **Placed on the Nov. '16 ballot by citizen's petition. Signatures were collected by the 'Yes on Public Lands for Public Use' committee**
- **Triggered by the City's 2013 agreement to sell the Raynor Activity Center to Stratford Schools**

**LWV** Requires a simple majority to pass

# What would Measure M do?

- **Requires citywide elections to approve sales, leases, lease renewals and extensions, swaps, and transfers involving parks and ‘Community Service Amenity’ (CSA) land.**
- **CSA includes city hall and admin buildings, libraries, swimming pools, community centers, performing arts venues, gardens, golf courses, zoos and others**



# Currently

- **Land decisions that would require elections under M are now made by the City Council**
- **The Council is constrained by city policy and state law when selling or conveying land out of City ownership**
- **In the past 10 years, there has been one sale of park or CSA land**



# How frequently would city land transactions require an election under M? And how much do elections cost?

- **Minimum \$174K for each measure, if held on a bi-yearly general election**
- **\$174K = est. \$100K content generation cost + at least \$74K balloting cost**
- **Minimum \$800K, if held on a special election**



# How frequently would city land transactions require an election under M?

- **Uncertain and disputed**
- **Would depend partly on how land transaction measures are bundled**
- **Of 110 transactions now in effect, 31 to 46 (mostly leases) would have required a ballot measure under M**
- **In the past 3 years, 1 sale and 16 lease transactions would likely have required a ballot measure under M**



# Other costs and losses of revenue

- Probable loss of lease revenue due to leases cancelled, not entered into, or not renewed
- At least \$100K legal costs each time M is used to challenge a land transaction in court
- May be necessary to hire an additional city attorney at \$210K/year



# Measure M – Proponent Arguments

- **The cost and scarcity of land in this area puts the Council under increasing pressure to sell city land to private interests. Such land is extremely difficult to replace**
- **Current safeguards are, or will be, not enough to withstand these pressures**



# Measure M – Proponent Arguments (2)

- **M elections will be rare and well worth the cost, particularly if the City makes adjustments**
- **Council members come and go, but we have to live with land decisions a long time. The voters should have a voice in the disposition of city lands**



# Measure M – Opponent Arguments

- **M is unnecessary. Sales of city land have been rare. The city has actually gained 6.6 acres of parkland in the past 4 years**
- **M is unworkable and costly. It would require elections for routine land transactions**



# Measure M – Opponent Arguments (2)

- **M would likely cause loss of lease revenue**
- **M would invite endless litigation**



# Measure M – Some Proponents:

**Richard D. Hayden**, former S'Vale Mayor and State Assemblyman

**David Whittum**, former S'Vale Vice Mayor

**Pat Meyering**, S'vale Councilmember

**Henry Alexander III**, Chair, S'vale Parks and Recreation Commission

**Andy Frazer**, former Commissioner, S'vale Sustainability Commission

**Ro Khanna**, former Deputy Assistant Secretary, United States Department of Commerce





# Measure M – Some Opponents:

**Glenn Hendricks, Gustav Larrison, Jim Griffith, Jim Davis, Tara Martin-Milius, Larry Klein, S'vale Councilmembers**

**Don Eagleston, President, S'vale Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce**

**Ben Picard, Superintendent, SSD**

**Mary Bradley, former S'vale Finance Director**

**Howard Chuck, former S'vale Parks & Recreation Commissioner**

**Nancy Tivol, former Executive Director of S'vale Community Services**



# Measure M – Opponents (cont.)

South Bay AFL/CIO Labor Council

Democratic Club of Sunnyvale

Sunnyvale Silicon Valley Chamber of

Commerce

Santa Clara County League of

Conservation Voters

Silicon Valley Association of Realtors

LC



# For more information:

- Proponent website:  
[SunnyvalePublicLandsAct.com](http://SunnyvalePublicLandsAct.com)
- Opponent website:  
[SaveOurSunnyvale.com](http://SaveOurSunnyvale.com)
- City Council's impact study:  
Search on 'sunnyvale 9212 2015'



# **PROS & CONS**

# **Countywide Measures**

**November 8, 2016 Election**

---

**Measure A – Affordable Housing**

**Measure B – Transportation**



# A

---

## **\$950 Million Bond for Affordable or Supportive Housing** *Bond Act*



- **County to raise \$950 M in bonds for housing**
- **Paid for with property tax**
  - **Cost ~ \$64 per year per \$500,000 of assessed value**
  - **30 year bonds**
- **Requires 2/3 vote to pass**
- **Oversight committee**

- **\$800 M – extremely, very low, and low income**

**Goals: 3600 long term units  
2400 transitional units**

- **\$150 M – moderate income**
  - **Up to \$50 M may be used for first time homebuyers**

- **Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors**
- **Leagues of Women Voters of Santa Clara County**
- **Veterans Voice of Santa Clara County**
- **Habitat for Humanity Silicon Valley**
- **Santa Clara County Senior Care Commission**

**[www.YesonAffordableHousing.org](http://www.YesonAffordableHousing.org)**





- **Santa Clara County has the fourth largest homeless population in the US.**
- **The county needs an additional \$220 M annually to meet the affordable housing needs of low income households.**
- **Measure A will create housing opportunities for our most vulnerable community members**

- **Silicon Valley Taxpayers Association**
- **John M Inks, Councilman- Mountain View City**

- **Sets a bad precedent of taxing business based on property valuation, and not per parcel**
- **Does not address the need for adequate workforce housing**
- **Could pay for this out of the existing budget and defund other projects thus indicating this is not a high priority**

# A: Housing

---

## Questions



# B

---

## **Santa Clara County Traffic Relief & Road Repair**

***1/2 Cent Sales Tax Increase***



- **Will increase the sales tax by ½ cent for 30 years**
- **Generate an estimated \$6.3 billion (in 2017 dollars)**
- **Requires 2/3 vote to pass**

## **B: Where the money goes**    Transportation

---

- **Local street and road improvements - \$1.2 B**
- **BART, four station expansion from Berryessa to Santa Clara- \$1.5 B**
- **Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian safety - \$250 M**
- **Caltrain Improvements; capacity and grade separation - \$1 B**



## **B: Where the money goes** Transportation

---

- **Highway improvement - \$750 M**
- **Expressway improvement - \$750 M**
- **85 Corridor improvements - \$350 M**
- **Transit operations for bus and light rail - \$500 M**





- 
- **Silicon Valley Leadership Group**
  - **Leagues of Women Voters of Santa Clara County**
  - **10 Chambers of Commerce**
  - **Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition**
  - **Cities Association – Santa Clara County**

- **Reduced GHG**
- **New transit options for seniors, disabled, students and low-income workers**
- **Repairs streets**
- **Relieves congestion on expressways and highways**
- **Improves bicycle and pedestrian safety**



- **Gladwyn D'Souza**
- **Silicon Valley Taxpayers Association**
- **John M Inks, Councilman- Mountain View**
- **BayRail Alliance**
- **Elizabeth C. Brierly**

- **Population has increased since 2001 while bus ridership has declined**
- **Bart expansion from Berryessa to Santa Clara could eat up all the tax money**
- **"VTA may modify this program for any prudent purpose." There is no commitment to the projects listed.**

# B: Transportation

---

## Questions



# League of Women Voters

**Join the League**

[www.lwvcs.org](http://www.lwvcs.org)

- Membership is open to **men** and **women** of all ages
- Learn about crucial issues in your community
- Gain knowledge and experience through the study and discussion of timely and important topics
- Contribute valuable service to the community





LWVCS.ORG

# Agenda

---

- **Measure A – Affordable Housing**
- **Measure B – Transportation**

