



# PROS and CONS

## Local Measures

March 3, 2020 PRIMARY ELECTION

### Alameda County Measure C

County ordinance, Sales tax  
Simple majority vote required for passage\*

#### Children's Health and Child Care initiative for Alameda County

##### The Question

"Alameda County Care for Kids. To improve critical early health and education for Alameda County children by: protecting local children's healthcare safety net and Level 1 Pediatric Trauma Center; and increasing access to high quality, affordable childcare and preschool to improve kindergarten readiness, school success and high school graduation rates; shall a County of Alameda ordinance enacting a 20-year half-percent sales tax providing approximately \$150,000,000 annually with citizens' oversight and mandatory annual audits be adopted?"

##### The Situation

Child care and early education services that are partially or fully funded by government are provided at schools and licensed centers, in homes caring for up to 14 children, and in informal settings. Child care and early education providers have varying requirements for staffing and facilities. All must meet basic health and safety standards.

The need for affordable services by low and middle income families in Alameda County far exceeds the supply. Subsidies do not cover the full costs of quality care.

Most child care workers are poorly paid and struggle to earn decent livings. Those who are employed at centers and as family care assistants are covered by state and municipal minimum wage laws. Low wages lead to high staff turnover and difficulty in finding and keeping qualified staff.

The Alameda County Early Care and Education Planning Council serves as a forum to address the child care needs of all families and in all child care programs, both subsidized and nonsubsidized, in Alameda County. The Council's major responsibilities are ... 1) provide a forum for the recommendation of local priorities for child care funding and the development of policies to meet the needs identified within those priorities when appropriate and requested; and 2) advise the County Board of Supervisors (CBS) and County Superintendent of Schools (CSS) on child care program and policy issues." Council membership includes members of the Board of Supervisors as well as individuals knowledgeable about the care and education of very young children.

The Council has taken the lead to develop and present to the Board plans for the expenditure of prospective county funds for child care and early education. Key plan components are "new high

quality child care and early education scholarships for Alameda County families,” and improvement in the quality and compensation of child care and early education providers. The Alameda County Children and Families First Commission (“First 5”) was created after passage of Proposition 10 in 1998, which imposed a 50 cents a pack tobacco tax to fund child care. First 5 works with other agencies and organizations to provide child care, early education, and health services for children 0-5 years of age and their families. Prop. 10 funds have declined over 40 percent since 2000 as the number of smokers decreases.

Alameda County’s rates of traumatic injury among children and youth are higher than those in other areas. The Alameda County Emergency Medical Services for Children program includes Children’s Hospital Oakland, one of just six Level 1 pediatric trauma centers in the state, as key to improving and expanding the county’s capacity to respond to individual and community health emergencies.

Children’s Hospital is a critical component in the area’s pediatric care safety net. Approximately 70 percent of children receiving Children’s Hospital services are on Medi-Cal or uninsured.

### **The Proposal**

Measure C will enact a half-percent sales tax (.5%) effective for 20 years, beginning July 1, 2020. Proceeds from the tax will be deposited in a special fund entitled the **Children’s Health and Child Care for Alameda County Fund**. The fund will comprise two subaccounts:

1. Twenty percent (20%) to the Pediatric Health Care Account
2. Eighty percent (80%) to the Child Care, Preschool, and Early Education Account

The Fund will be subject to annual audits, which will be “made available to the public.”

The Board of Supervisors will expend moneys in the **Pediatric Health Care account** for strengthening and expanding the child health safety net and the pediatric trauma center. Moneys cannot supplant funds currently being expended by the county for health services.

Moneys from the **Child Care, Preschool, and Early Education account** will be appropriated by the Board for purposes “consistent with the Child Care, Preschool, and Early Childhood Program Plan and Budget (“the Plan”).” These include expanding the number and quality of child care and early education providers; increasing the number of children receiving quality, subsidized care; paying child care workers at least \$15 an hour; providing training for providers and workers in the care and education of young children

The Board will establish a **new** 11-member council, the Child Care, Preschool, and Early Education Community Advisory Council (“the Council”) composed of stakeholders, including workers and parents. The Council will “develop policy and programmatic recommendations related to the Child Care, Preschool, and Early Education account and its implementation.” These include recommendations to the Administering Agency (see below) about the Plan and the Annual Expenditure Plan for Measure C funds, “initiatives to improve the quality and the capacity-building of service providers,” and strategies to enhance community engagement in the planning and implementation of services,” and to review the annual audit of the account.

The First 5 Commission will serve as the Administering Agency “to develop, administer, and implement all of the programs and services” paid for by the Measure C Child Care, Preschool, and Early Education account. Its responsibilities will include developing the Plan and the Annual

Expenditure Plan, and “developing, implementing, administering, and overseeing all programs and services paid for by the...account.”

“The Administering Agency, in collaboration with the [Advisory] Council, shall develop the Child Care, Preschool, and Early Education Program Plan and Budget (“Plan”), including an annual budget, on a five-year cycle... The Plan shall be approved by First 5 Alameda County Commission...and the Board of Supervisors.” The Board “shall appropriate funds necessary to carry out the plan on an annual basis.”

The main goals of the plan are “to increase access to child care, preschool, and early care services by increasing the number of subsidized and enhanced spaces/slots to serve children,” and to improve workforce compensation and professionalization. Measure C has a strong emphasis on building quality care and providing professional development and support for the child care and early education workforce.

Measure C has provisions that enable union organizing by requiring neutrality by employers who receive Measure C funding, and prohibiting the use of public funds either to oppose or support organizing.

### **Fiscal Effects**

The half percent sales tax is expected to raise \$150 million a year for children’s health and care services.

The additional half percent will bring the combined state and county sales tax rate to 9.75% as of July 1, 2020.

### **Supporters say:**

- Measure C will substantially increase the availability of needed services to children of low and middle income families.
- Better compensation and professional recognition will give early childhood care and education an increasingly stable workforce, a key component of quality programs.
- Placing Measure C sales tax proceeds in special accounts will make it easier to track funds and ensure that they are used appropriately.

### **Opponents say:**

- Sales taxes are regressive; there should be a better way to fund needed services.
- Early childhood funding should be restricted to licensed schools and centers.
- Health funding should be subject to additional oversight and accountability.

## Oakland City Measure Q

City ordinance, Parcel tax  
Two-thirds vote required for passage

### **2020 Oakland Parks and Recreation Preservation, Litter Reduction, and Homelessness Support Act**

#### **The Question**

“Measure Q. Shall a measure to provide: homeless support services and programs to help homeless individuals move into shelters and housing; trash removal from parks and creeks; safe, well-maintained parks and trails; clean, accessible park restrooms; improved water quality; and park facilities repairs, by enacting an annual \$148 parcel tax for single-family parcels, and other parcels as specified, for 20 years, raising approximately \$21,000,000 annually with exemptions for low-income seniors, be adopted?”

#### **The Situation**

Oakland’s parks and recreation facilities have been funded since 1989 by a parcel tax of \$103 (Landscaping Lighting Assessment District - LLAD). Unlike the parcel taxes enacted since 1997 for various other purposes, this assessment has had no adjustments to account for inflation or for increasing costs due to growing population, additional facilities, and ongoing maintenance. As a result, the LLAD budget is annually underfunded by approximately \$8 million, despite dramatic cutbacks in staffing, services, and maintenance of city parks, recreation centers, and public areas. Staffing has been halved from its highest point; Oakland now has no dedicated park staff, i.e., staff assigned to a single location. The City has exhausted its ability to use money from the general fund to bridge the funding gaps.

City residents too often find their parks and centers in disrepair, unclean, and unsupervised, and not open at times they are needed. Streams and creeks, Lake Merritt, and the Estuary are plagued by debris and garbage as well as pollution.

Many factors have led to increases in the population of unhoused and unsheltered residents in Oakland. Efforts are being undertaken to meet this crisis, but they remain inadequate and underfunded.

State and federal funds for homelessness programs as well as for environmental protection efforts often require matching funds in order to be accessed first by local jurisdictions.

#### **The Proposal**

Measure Q will enact a special parcel tax to generate funds for staff, maintenance, and improvements for city parks and recreation facilities; compliance with federally mandated standards on trash and litter removal associated with clean water goals; and directed services to unhoused persons, especially those sheltering in parks, including support for implementation of Oakland’s Permanent Access to Housing (PATH) Plan. The tax will be imposed for the 2020-21 fiscal year and remain in effect for 20 years.

Tax receipts will be spent as follows: 64% to parks and recreation, 30% to services to the homeless, 5% to water quality, and 1% for administration of the tax.

The tax for single family residences will be \$148; for each unit in multiple residential parcels \$108.08; amounts according to frontage and square footage for non-residential properties.

Residential and transient hotels will be taxed according to established formulas. Low income seniors, very low income households, and distressed households may apply for exemptions to the tax. Affordable housing projects will receive a 50% reduction in the tax, and tenants of foreclosed properties who have paid a passed through tax can receive rebates of half the tax paid.

Measure Q outlines objectives for the use of the tax revenue. These include “the equitable distribution of maintenance services to parks and recreational facilities throughout Oakland;” improving and increasing “maintenance, tree, and landscape services;” maintaining “fixed assets within parks and recreational facilities to avoid more costly repairs;” increasing “services to unhoused and unsheltered persons within Oakland, with an emphasis on those living in or adjacent to City of Oakland parks, to reduce homelessness and its impacts to public health;” and improving “water quality through actions that include the maintenance and cleaning of stormwater trash collection systems and reducing trash and litter in our parks, creeks, and waterways.” The measure also specifies numerous programs and services to further those objectives. Among these are frequent mowing of sports fields, collecting trash and litter several times per week, including weekends, and providing dedicated staff at major parks; “providing programs and services that enable unsheltered and unhoused residents to access temporary shelters, transitional and supportive housing, and permanent housing;” and “expanding illegal dumping enforcement and education to reduce trash in our creeks, storm water system, and waterways.” *(Please refer to the text of the measure to review the extensive list of related programs and activities for which funds may be used.)*

The City Council will designate one or more existing boards or commissions to provide citizen oversight of Measure Q funds and programs. The City Auditor will provide a biennial audit to ensure that Measure Q funds are used in accordance with the law and its objectives. An annual independent financial audit is also required.

All Measure Q funds will be deposited in one or more special funds in the City treasury, and may be appropriated and expended only for the purposes and uses authorized by the ordinance.

### **Fiscal Effects**

Measure Q is expected to raise approximately \$21 million in 2020-21. This will increase annually by a cost of living factor; in recent years the rate of increase has been 3%.

### **Supporters say:**

- Measure Q will ensure that all of Oakland’s parks and recreation centers in all parts of the city are clean, safe, and available to all residents – and will continue to be.
- Services to unhoused and unsheltered Oakland residents will be targeted and expanded to help respond to the area’s homeless crisis.
- Oakland’s waterways will be free of garbage and debris, and able to meet federal and state water quality standards.
- The City will have matching funds with which to access additional funding for homelessness and environmental programs.

### **Opponents say:**

- The City has yet to account for how previously approved tax proceeds have been used.
- Measure Q provides insufficient oversight for the use of funds.

## Oakland City Measure R

Charter amendment  
Simple majority vote required for passage

### The Question

“Shall a measure amending Oakland’s City Charter to eliminate obsolete requirements for designation of the City of Oakland’s Official Newspaper, and authorizing the City Council to establish procedures by ordinance to designate the City of Oakland’s newspaper or newspapers be adopted?”

### The Situation

The Oakland City Charter specifies that legal and other required notices be published in a designated “official newspaper,” and that this newspaper must be printed and published in Oakland and have a daily circulation of 25,000. No newspaper has met these criteria since the closure of the *Oakland Tribune* in 2016.

### The Proposal

Measure R will eliminate the production and circulation requirements and require the City Council to establish by ordinance procedures for designating a newspaper or newspapers as Oakland’s official newspaper for purposes of legal and other required notices.

### Fiscal Effects

The City Auditor has determined that costs for implementing Measure R will be immaterial.

### Supporters say:

Measure R “allows the Oakland City Council to establish a thoughtful public process to adapt our noticing provisions to accommodate changing circumstances and practices ...”

*No argument against Measure R was submitted.*

## Oakland City Measure S

City ordinance  
Simple majority vote required for passage

### The Question

“Shall the measure increasing the appropriations limit under Article XIII B of the California Constitution (which limits city expenditures of tax proceeds) to allow the City of Oakland to continue to expend revenues from taxes previously approved by Oakland voters for emergency medical services, library services, public safety and violence prevention services, homeless services and other lawful government purposes, without increasing or imposing new taxes, be adopted?”

### The Situation

The California State Constitution limits the amount of tax revenues that state and local governments may spend in any fiscal year. Known as “the Gann limit,” this ceiling may be adjusted every four years to allow the City to spend moneys it receives from tax measures voters have already approved.

Since 1997, Oakland voters have approved eight tax measures. Income to the City from those measures increases every year because of inflation and increases in the number of taxpayers. The City will soon reach the appropriations limit set in 2016.

**The Proposal**

Measure S will increase the City's appropriations limit to the amount generated by taxes approved in previous years plus income generated by investment of those funds, thereby enabling the City to spend these moneys for the purposes for which they were approved. The increase will be for four years, until 2024.

**Fiscal Effects**

Approved appropriations for 2019-20 of \$642.66 million are approximately \$22 million below the current limit of \$664.87 million. Tax revenues for 2020-21 will likely exceed the limit unless voters approve raising the limit through Measure R.

**Supporters say:**

The City must be allowed to spend tax revenues which have been approved by the voters in order to meet the needs and purposes for which the taxes were approved.

**Opponents say:**

The City must be held more accountable for its spending.