



Oakland Measure DD Community Coalition

January 27, 2015
Members of the Oakland City Council
City of Oakland
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mayor Schaaf and Council Members:

Oakland's Measure DD Community Coalition voted on January 19, 2015 to advocate budget allocations that protect the substantial investment in Measure DD improvements at Lake Merritt.

The Measure DD Community Coalition was formed in 2003 and sanctioned by the Oakland City Council to provide public input concerning projects and expenditures designated in the 2002 The Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks Measure DD Bond. It is an inclusive coalition with active participation by community members and 22 Oakland organizations and agencies.

Enormous excitement, increased visitation, and media attention have focused on the popular Lake Merritt and Channel improvements, and have spurred interest in nearby development. However, these enhancements require upkeep that by law cannot be funded by Measure DD bond proceeds, which are restricted to capital projects. The taxpayers' longterm investment requires maintaining landscaping and providing attractive, clean, park facilities to enhance recreation, tourism, and commerce. Yet, existing maintenance budgets have proved insufficient.

We therefore strongly support an appropriate budget augmentation to preserve and maintain the new Lake Merritt and channel facilities, which represent a public investment of more than \$100 million from the bond and nearly \$40 million from matching grants.*

The city is in an ENA with a developer for the 12th St. remainder parcel. At the outset of the ambitious project to reconceive 12th Street/Lake Merritt Boulevard, the Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt realized that such a remainder parcel would result. We envisioned that its sale could help support the continued improvement of the Lake Merritt environment. **Now, we respectfully request that funds from the sale be devoted to the longterm maintenance and repair of the Measure DD improvements.**

With our huge expenditure and with increased usage of park areas, we must safeguard the investment with upkeep. We urge that the sales proceeds be deposited with Public Works as a Lake Merritt Improvements Maintenance Fund.

It was with a farsighted and optimistic view to the future of Oakland that almost 80% of its citizens voted for this bond measure. We must ensure we don't threaten the improvements with neglect. We should strongly support the public's investment and faith in its city government by funding maintenance at a sustainable level.

Sincerely,

Naomi Schiff, on behalf of the Oakland Measure DD Community Coalition

*of \$60 million in grants so far, \$40 was for Lake Merritt and Lake Merritt Channel. Of \$100 million allocated by the bond measure to Lake Merritt and channel openings, about \$85 million has been spent to date.