

**Argument in favor of Measure “J”  
City of Menlo Park  
November 7, 2006 General Election**

Bayfront Park Fields, YES!

Our City desperately needs more play fields. Menlo Park is a very desirable place to live and good parks enhance our quality of life and property values. New families are moving in, our schools are thriving, and participation in sports programs is booming. Soccer, lacrosse, baseball, football, softball, and all field sports are growing in popularity. Sports leagues also keep youth healthy and out of trouble. Unfortunately our existing field space is overused and insufficient to meet this demand.

Compared to other communities, our play fields per resident ratio is low. We're at the point where children are being turned away from some sports leagues due to "overcrowding".

Providing play fields at Bayfront Park is a great opportunity and our only real option. Play fields have been envisioned at Bayfront Park since the late 1990's and conceptualized in the Recreation Master Plan since 1999. The idea is NOT new. It is time to move this vision forward. Other viable options do not exist.

Plans at Bayfront Park are viable. Independent consultants and engineering experts agree that these plans will work.

The play fields can be built without raising city taxes. The costs to construct these fields will be covered by dedicated existing and projected funds, and will not dilute other city services.

The play fields would only use 17 acres of a 160 acre park – about 10%. Bayfront Park is our largest city park. We can share a little of it with our children. The park's hills won't be impacted. The hiking and biking trails won't be impacted. The wildlife preserve won't be impacted. Strict environmental standards will be maintained. In fact, the addition of more restrooms and improved access will allow more people to enjoy this park.

**Vote YES to move forward on play fields.**

**Primary Argument Against Measure “J”  
City of Menlo Park  
November 7, 2006 General Election**

Measure “J” asks you, the voter to approve a **BLANK CHECK** to develop athletic fields at Bayfront Park while Menlo Park is suffering a financial crisis.

Measure “J” contains **NO LIMIT ON SPENDING** for construction or maintenance.

Preliminary cost estimates are enormous – **\$17 MILLION** – to develop 17 acres of the park. Actual costs will almost certainly be much higher. **NO COST ESTIMATES** are available for annual maintenance and operations. Measure “J” requires **NO CITIZEN OVERSIGHT** of these expenses.

**VOTE NO ON MEASURE “J”**. Stop this unwise spending and preserve Bayfront Park as natural open space, available to all.

**Why would fields be so expensive at Bayfront?**

- \* The park sits atop an old landfill, built years ago when there were few restrictions on dumping along San Francisco Bay. Sports field construction will require reopening the landfill, rebuilding the underlying methane gas collection system, and leveling the site. These actions are expected to unearth hazardous waste.
- \* Regulatory agencies will likely require expensive upgrades to monitor, control and dispose of leachate (toxic liquid) and methane gas. Costly precautions will be necessary to keep people and buildings safe from the invisible landfill gas.
- \* The landfill will continue to settle and shift as solid waste decomposes. Structures, paved areas and sports fields will require costly ongoing maintenance and repair due to landfill settling.

**How could all these extraordinary costs possibly be financed by a City in financial straits?**

- \* The City proposes using fees levied on new residential development, which could result in extensive development, and still wouldn't come close to paying for this boondoggle.
- \* Constructing fields at Bayfront could preclude funding for other voter approved (Measure T) high priority park and recreation projects.
- \* Other funding sources are merely speculative.

**VOTE NO ON MEASURE “J”**

**Rebuttal to Argument in Favor of Measure J**  
**City of Menlo Park**  
**November 7, 2006 Gubernatorial General Election**

**Vote NO on J! It's just too costly!**

Bayfront Park was planned and built as a hilly, open space for passive recreation. It is not suitable for intensive uses requiring many acres of flat land. Opening up Bayfront's landfill cap to create level athletic fields would be environmentally risky and extraordinarily expensive.

\* It's unwise and premature to give the City your approval for a project that has **no controls over construction costs, no estimates of maintenance costs, and no citizen oversight over spending.**

\* This plan will take many years and will not meet our immediate need for fields.

\* There's been no comprehensive study of the environmental threats from construction on the landfill including hazardous combustible gas, impacts to air and water quality, unique toxic hazards to humans and impacts to San Francisco Bay and the National Wildlife Refuge.

\* The costs of reopening the closed landfill and constructing an athletic complex would be exorbitant, and could preclude funding for other long-planned and voter approved (Measure T) park and recreation projects. These include the Burgess gymnasium and recreation center, which desperately need upgrading.

Other more convenient and reliable sites offer better and more cost-effective alternatives, including improvements to underutilized or deteriorated City and school fields as recommended by Menlo Park's Playing Fields Task Force. Taxpayers have already invested in these facilities. First, let's maintain and upgrade what we have.

**Vote NO on Measure J!** Say NO to extravagant spending and preserve Bayfront Park as open space.

**RECEIVED**

**AUG 25 2006**

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
CITY OF MENLO PARK

2:30 P.M.

Rebuttal Argument to Argument Against  
Measure J  
November 7, 2006, general gubernatorial election

Don't be fooled by the misleading arguments against this proposal.

1. Your "Yes" vote is not a blank check. **This is a non-binding advisory measure simply asking whether you favor the idea of building play fields on 10% of Bayfront Park.** Lots of planning, review, and approval cycles will lie ahead before any construction even begins.
2. The construction is possible, and has been done before. Play fields have already been built on closed landfills all over the Bay Area. We already regulate lechate and methane gas at Bayfront (you pay for this through increased garbage bills). An independent consultant has told us that these fields can be built and that getting the regulatory agencies' approval should not be a problem.
3. Because certain funds are set aside explicitly for parks and recreation, we will not have to use money from our city's general fund.

The argument against this measure fails to mention that **there are NO good alternatives** for building the play fields our city needs. Even if the needed 17 acres of land were available, the cost of purchasing it would be about \$68 Million. Add in the cost of developing the fields, and it becomes obvious that Bayfront Park is our most economical option. We own the land at Bayfront Park. We already spend over \$250,000 a year to maintain it.

This proposal represents an excellent way to leverage an underutilized, existing city asset for the benefit of all. It's time to move forward!

**Primary Argument In Favor Of Measure “K”  
City of Menlo Park  
November 7, 2006 General Election**

We face difficult choices about city services in Menlo Park.

Budget projections show a recurring shortfall of \$2.2 million in coming years. This is despite service cuts and other savings of \$5.5 million – including eliminating 35 full time city positions – already slashed from the budget since 2000.

While Menlo Park City Council has made aggressive efforts to find new sources of revenue – the new hotel to be built on Sand Hill Road is one example – other revenue sources have dried up. Car dealerships have closed on El Camino. People are buying more on the Internet. Sales tax reductions have put a big hole in our city budget.

Menlo Park continues to enjoy AAA bond ratings, but we must find sensible ways to fund our departments or face drastic cuts to core services.

City Council placed Measure “K” on the ballot by unanimous vote with broad community input. Measure “K” enacts a modest utility tax as 150 other California communities have done. \$200 in monthly utility bills would mean a \$7 tax, at most – less than a movie ticket – which could be erased completely by just small conservation efforts in your home.

These funds will be used for our police, emergency preparedness, libraries, street repairs, park maintenance, and senior and youth programs. Without these funds, current budget problems could mean each one of these programs would face severe cuts – some more drastic than others.

Extraordinary financial accountability features are included in Measure “K”. Every two years, the sitting City Council will review the measure and vote to continue, decrease or eliminate this tax going forward.

New taxes are never easy to accept. But the alternatives are much worse. **We hope you will join us in voting to do our modest but fair share. Please vote YES on Measure “K”.**