



July 22, 2021

Dear Measure X Community Advisory Board Members:

As a Councilmember for the City of El Cerrito, I am writing in support of Measure X funds that could provide for an expanded county library budget and directly support the increase in hours of operation, staffing and collection development. I believe this request easily follows the purposes of the key targets for Measure X in Contra Costa County by:

- supporting crucial safety-net services;
- investing in early childhood services;
- protecting vulnerable populations; and
- funding other essential services.

And, like the other recent recommendation made to the Advisory Board by the El Cerrito City Council to fund the Community Crisis Initiative, I believe also requesting assistance for our growing county library needs would help rectify local equity concerns in many cities, like El Cerrito, which may be experiencing difficult financial circumstances at this time.

The Contra Costa County Library's per capita operating income falls woefully short of the median for libraries statewide, and particularly that of other Bay Area County libraries. El Cerrito has stepped up to add some additional hours but at the cost of other services and needs, amid very contentious community debate.

Equitable funding from Measure X will help to provide additional service hours where they are most needed and help to close the equity gap where wealthier cities can rely on well-funded community donations to enhance their library programs.

Additional Measure X funds for El Cerrito would offset our local funds for other critical city needs while we plan to rebuild and create a modern library to meet the needs of El Cerrito and the surrounding communities. Should ongoing Measure X funds be established for county libraries, it would assist our efforts for a new library facility. In addition to possible state and federal funds, I believe an ongoing commitment for additional county funds could importantly assist in establishing a much improved and safer library experience for all our county residents.

Thank you for your consideration using Measure X funding for this worthy county cause.

Sincerely,

Lisa Motoyama
Councilmember, City of El Cerrito

CC: El Cerrito Council Members, Michael Alan Fischer, Supervisor John Gioia, Contra Costa County Librarian