Bringing Fair Elections to Berkeley
A Case Study

Hamsini Sridharan
January 2018
About MapLight

MapLight is a nonpartisan nonprofit that seeks to achieve a government that (actually) works for the people. We illuminate the influence of money in politics, facilitate informed voting and civic engagement, and advance reforms that make government more representative and responsive. Our innovative database, online tools, and original research expose the links between political money and legislative outcomes, helping to illuminate hidden influences on elected officials.

For questions about this report, contact info@maplight.org or call us at (510) 868-0894.

About the Author

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Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank the following supporters of the Berkeley Fair Elections campaign for taking the time to share advice for future efforts based on their inspiring work in Berkeley: Daniel Newman, Sam Ferguson, Kathay Feng, Jay Costa, Andrea Slater, Helen Grieco, Anna Callahan, Mark Capitolo, Aref Aziz, Catie Kelley, DeAnna Dalton, Alec Saslow, Bret Hendry, Laura Curlin, Ayça Guralp, and Chelsea Whitman.

Thank you also to MapLight’s donors, whose support made this report possible.
Foreword

When I began campaigning to introduce public financing for elections in Berkeley, California in 2004, people didn’t yet view money in politics as a top concern. That first campaign lost, and I went on to start MapLight to help build awareness of the ways that money skews our political system.

These days, poll after poll demonstrates that Americans see that wealthy individuals and special interests have too much influence on elected officials and that our democracy is facing major hurdles. Systems of public financing for elections—which provide candidates with public money to run for office and reduce their need to rely on donors with deep pockets—are not a magic bullet to fix all of our political problems. However, at any level of government, they can help lift up the voice of the people and reduce the undue influence of wealthy interests on politics.

In 2014, I led a new effort to bring public financing to Berkeley, joined by California Common Cause and other local activists. This time, we gained momentum for a successful 2016 ballot measure—Measure X1—that passed with 65% of the vote.

The Berkeley campaign will hopefully serve as a case study for other activists seeking to develop and pass public financing laws around the country. Of course, Berkeley is more liberal than most cities, and what works in Berkeley won’t translate perfectly to other parts of the country. However, the outlines of the campaign can still be instructive to activists in other cities and states—even those working across partisan boundaries—although the specifics of the policy and messaging may need to be adjusted.

I hope that this report demonstrates how a small group of dedicated activists with limited resources can effect meaningful change in the ways that local government works.

Daniel G. Newman
President & Co-Founder, MapLight
Introduction
The 2016 presidential election was particularly contentious, and in California, it was coupled with a ballot containing a daunting 17 initiatives for voters to consider. Amidst the cacophony of news and advertising surrounding these high-profile federal and state elections, a small group of activists in the City of Berkeley accomplished a major victory for local democracy: the passage of the Berkeley Fair Elections Act, creating a public financing system for local races.

Passed as a ballot measure—Measure X1—by 65% of Berkeley voters, the Fair Elections Act established a program that rewards candidates for only accepting small contributions and amplifies the voice of small donors. The Act will be implemented for the first time in 2018. With this program, Berkeley joins a small group of municipalities and states around the country that have committed to improving their elections by reducing special interest influence and promoting grassroots engagement.

The Berkeley Fair Elections Act didn’t pass on the first try—and it wasn’t a foregone conclusion that it would succeed in 2016. This report opens with a look at the history of attempts to pass public financing systems in Berkeley and analyzes what changed to make victory possible. This is followed by four sections breaking down important elements of the campaign: developing the ballot measure, structuring the campaign, strategies and tactics used to reach voters, and fundraising and spending. Each section concludes with a list of key takeaways—useful lessons for future efforts to reform elections.

This report was based on interviews with several members of the campaign and tells the story of how public financing came to be in Berkeley, what worked well, and what didn’t. It is meant to serve two purposes: 1) to demonstrate that, despite the challenges that democratic systems face, it is still possible to meaningfully improve government and 2) to offer support and guidance for others around the country seeking to reform political processes.

History of Public Finance in Berkeley
Measure X1 wasn’t the first effort to introduce a public financing system in Berkeley; twelve years earlier, in 2004, a group of concerned citizens persuaded the Berkeley City Council to place a public financing measure on the ballot. The measure did not pass, and follow-up attempts over the next 10 years also fizzled. However, starting in 2014, local activists were able to build momentum for a successful outcome in 2016.

Timeline
2004: Local activists worked with Berkeley City Council to place a public financing measure (Measure H) on the November ballot. The measure would have created a system that offered candidates block grants to fully fund their campaigns. Measure H failed with voters 41%-59%.
2006: An attempt to put public financing on the ballot failed to pass a City Council vote.
2014: For the 2014 election, local activists updated the 2004 measure, switching the policy from block grants to a small donor matching system that allows candidates greater flexibility against privately financed opponents and promotes small donor fundraising. City Council once again voted against putting it on the ballot.
2015: Activists continued to build on the relationships they had developed with City Council. They worked closely with officials to address concerns about the policy and build support for a 2016 ballot measure.
2016: Results from community surveys commissioned by City Council in early 2016 suggested that a public financing policy could be viable with voters. In May, after several rounds of negotiation and revision, councilmembers voted Measure X1 onto the November ballot. Over the summer, local activists formed the Berkeley Fair Elections Committee (BFEC) and launched a public campaign. As a result of these efforts, Measure X1, the Berkeley Fair Elections Act, passed with 65% of the vote.

2017+: The passage of Measure X1 marked the end of a successful campaign and the beginning of the process to ensure that the Berkeley Fair Elections Act is implemented successfully in 2018 and beyond.

What Changed?
Changes to the political environment between the 2004 and 2016 elections likely contributed to the success of Measure X1. In addition, organizers who worked on both campaigns drew on lessons from 2004 to improve campaign strategy for 2016.

National Awareness: In 2004, the public was less concerned about money in politics, and voters were not sold on the urgency of campaign finance reform. By 2016, money in politics had become a national political issue, and the American public was more dissatisfied than ever with the outsized influence of wealthy interests on elections and government. In fact, this was an animating issue behind the Bernie Sanders presidential campaign, which received 54% of Berkeley’s vote in the June 2016 Democratic Primary. In 2016, the Berkeley Fair Elections Committee (BFEC) was able to leverage this sentiment to drive support for Measure X1.

Local Opposition: In 2004, Measure H faced an unfavorable local climate. As one of the measure’s lead proponents, Sam Ferguson, noted, “The first time around, we got caught in a perfect storm. […] There was a lot of anger at City Hall for raising taxes, and we got caught in the anti-tax revolt.” Measure H faced organized opposition by groups such as Berkeleyans Against Soaring Taxes, who successfully swayed local voters against measures affecting city revenue. By 2016, this anti-spending furor—out of character for a city that normally supports taxing for public services—had long since quieted. Although some voters and lawmakers remained concerned about the cost of public financing, the campaign for Measure X1 did not have to contend with an organized opposition. In fact, no one filed an opposing ballot argument with the City Clerk—an unexpected boon for the BFEC.

Outreach and Messaging Strategy: In 2016, the BFEC used lessons from the 2004 campaign to inform more successful outreach and messaging efforts. In 2004, the campaign chose to target swing voters—the more moderate, wealthy, homeowners of the Berkeley hills—assuming that the younger, more progressive, and more diverse student and renter populations in the city flats would not require persuasion. By neglecting this voter base, the Measure H campaign failed to mobilize them and left them vulnerable to opposition messaging—while failing to gain sufficient traction with swing voters, who were more readily persuaded by anti-tax arguments.

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- Sam Ferguson, BFEC Co-Chair
In 2016, the Measure X1 campaign instead emphasized “Get out the vote” efforts and worked to reach the young voters, renters, and progressives of Berkeley with information about the measure.

**Takeaways**

- **Prepare for the long game.** It may take multiple election cycles to build sufficient support for public financing among elected officials and with the public, especially given factors beyond your control that influence the political environment.

- **Iterate.** If you fail the first time, analyze past mistakes, and use those lessons to inform future efforts.

- **Seize the moment.** Tailor your messaging to resonate with public sentiment about money in politics, and take advantage of external political opportunities.

**Making Measure X1**

By allowing candidates to draw on public money to fund their campaigns, public financing systems—in conjunction with other robust campaign finance regulations—help to counterbalance the undue influence of money in politics. These programs make it easier for candidates who lack deep pockets or wealthy networks to run for office, increase the amount of time candidates spend engaging voters rather than big donors, and reduce the disproportionate influence of moneyed interests on elections and policy outcomes. In doing so, public financing amplifies the voices of the people and can reduce the underrepresentation of minorities, women, and low-income groups in political office.

In Berkeley, the Fair Elections Act passed by Measure X1 created a program that matches small campaign contributions with public funds, providing qualified candidates who agree to only accept donations of $50 or less with six public dollars for every private dollar raised. This policy was modeled on established systems in New York City and Los Angeles, though specific provisions were adapted to the local context.

**Choosing a Model**

Early attempts to pass public financing in Berkeley worked to establish a “Clean Elections” grant system. Under this system, candidates who collected enough qualifying $5 contributions would receive a lump sum of public money to fully fund their campaigns. They would be barred from raising money from private sources, but could receive additional public funds if they were outspent by privately funded opponents or outside spending groups. However, the Supreme Court’s 2011 decision in Arizona Free Enterprise invalidated this type of trigger provision, making it harder for candidates with full public funding to remain competitive.

Meanwhile, programs that match small donor contributions with public funds were showing promising results in other cities, where they have been implemented for decades. A 2012 Brennan Center and Campaign Finance Institute study of New York City’s small donor matching system found that donors to publicly funded candidates in the 2009 City Council election came from more numerous and diverse neighborhoods than donors to 2010 State Assembly candidates who could not receive the public match. A 2010 study by the Brennan Center found that New York City’s publicly financed candidates tended to combine fundraising with voter outreach and relied more on small donors than nonparticipating candidates did.
From 2014 onwards, Berkeley organizers focused on passing a straightforward small donor matching system that rewards candidates for only accepting small contributions by matching contributions six to one with public money. Similar programs around the country had deployed lower ratios for matching funds, but these seemed likely to be less effective. For example, Los Angeles matched small donations one to one through 2011, but increased the match to four public dollars to one private dollar for general elections in 2013 in order to increase the usage and impact of the program. In Berkeley, public financing advocates chose to use the higher ratio seen in New York City, which significantly amplifies the value of small donor grassroots outreach to candidates.

Note: In 2015, Seattle passed a novel type of public financing—providing “democracy vouchers” that city residents could contribute to qualifying candidates, who would then redeem them for public funds (in exchange for adhering to certain contribution and spending limits). This model is promising because it empowers city residents who lack disposable income to participate in the political process as donors. However, when the Berkeley policy was developed, this type of program was still untested. Moreover, such voucher programs may be more expensive to administer than matching programs, especially in smaller cities.

**Berkeley’s Policy**

In Berkeley, the goal was to reduce the influence of wealthy donors while amplifying the voices of small donors. Berkeley’s public financing law was drafted by Campaign Legal Center, a nonpartisan election law organization, in partnership with local organizers. Measure X1 created two pieces of legislation: the Berkeley Fair Elections Act, which establishes the public financing program, and a charter amendment that funds the program by creating the Fair Elections Fund. Berkeley’s policy incentivizes candidates to participate by empowering them to run viable campaigns without relying on big-ticket donors. Participating candidates must agree to only accept donations of $50 or less from individuals (vs. the $250 contribution limit for non-participating candidates). Every dollar raised from Berkeley residents is then matched by $6 from the city fund. For example, a $10 contribution would pull in $60 from the city and thus be worth $70 to the candidate. The maximum contribution of $50 would be worth $350.

To qualify for public funds, candidates for City Council or mayor who wish to participate must receive a minimum of 30 donations of no more than $50 each from Berkeley residents, totaling at least $500. This requirement ensures that only serious candidates with local support can receive public money. Berkeley’s system limits the total amount of public money that a candidate can receive to $40,000 for City Council candidates and $120,000 for mayoral candidates (amounts chosen based on historical campaign spending). Candidates may continue to raise small contributions after they’ve maxed out their match.
The creation of the Berkeley Fair Elections Fund was a crucial element of the Berkeley policy. To ensure that the public financing program cannot be easily defunded by legislators—an issue that many programs around the country have faced—the Fund was created via an amendment to the City Charter, rather than as a simple law. The program is paid for through an allocation of $4 per Berkeley resident per year from the city’s existing revenues—approximately $500,000 annually, which represents 0.16% of Berkeley’s budget. (In other places, public financing programs may be funded by an increase in taxes.) The Fair Elections Fund can hold a maximum of $2 million, adjusted for population change and inflation.

A final critical component of the Berkeley Fair Elections Act was to include robust mechanisms for the administration and enforcement of the program’s rules. This ensured that once implemented, the public financing system would operate smoothly, and public monies wouldn’t be abused by candidates. Oversight of the program was given to Berkeley’s Fair Campaign Practices Commission, supported by city staff.

For more about the specifics of the X1 policy, including how it will be administered, refer to the FAQ in Appendix A. The full text of the charter amendment and the ordinance are available in Appendix B.

**Getting on the Ballot**

In California, city charters can only be amended by public vote; they cannot be directly changed by city councils. Because an important element of the public financing system was to establish the Fair Elections Fund via charter amendment, the Berkeley system had to pass via ballot measure. Organizers faced a choice between two paths for getting on the ballot: convincing City Council to refer the measure to the ballot or collecting signatures for a citizens’ initiative.

It was a difficult choice, according to X1 advocate Jay Costa. Proponents needed to decide between persuading a majority of the nine city councilmembers to place public financing on the
ballot or go through the public by gathering valid signatures from 15% of Berkeley’s registered voters. Ultimately, they determined that gathering signatures would be prohibitively expensive and chose to focus on persuading public officials.

The initial goal was to get the public financing law on the ballot for the 2014 election. However, members of City Council and Berkeley’s Fair Campaign Practices Commission (FCPC) had concerns about the act that took several months to address.

Public officials’ primary concerns included the size of the budget and the perceived complexity of the system. As negotiations spilled into 2015, it became clear that to get on the ballot, the program’s scope would have to be curtailed. In 2014, the proposed public financing law was designed to apply to all elected municipal offices, including mayor, City Council, City Auditor, School Board members, and Rent Board commissioners. In late 2015, it was amended to cover only mayoral and City Council races. Additional changes to accommodate councilmembers’ concerns included allowing participating candidates to accept $50 contributions from outside Berkeley, increasing the cap on public monies from $100,000 to $120,000 for mayoral races, and building in an evaluation of the program after two election cycles.

Beyond concrete concerns, there was an issue of framing at stake. Certain councilmembers and commissioners argued that, given the city’s already low contribution limits, corruption wasn’t an issue in Berkeley, and therefore public financing wouldn’t be a responsible use of taxpayer money. As Costa, who attended several FCPC and City Council meetings, observed, “We shifted from a frame of solving the problem of corruption to investing in civic engagement and elevating a more diverse and inclusive set of voices across Berkeley” when working with public officials. This angle resonated far more powerfully with supporters in government—and was harder to counter by opponents, whose political reputations were at stake.

In May 2016, advocates finally garnered the necessary support for the measure, just in time for it to appear on the November ballot. Ultimately, five councilmembers—the minimum needed—voted in favor of referring the proposal to the ballot, two abstained, and one councilmember and the mayor voted in opposition.

**Takeaways**

− **Choose the right policy.** It is important to understand the different public financing models in order to choose one that suits your local context and goals. Demos offers one useful guide. It is also helpful to speak with people in other cities; for example, the Berkeley team learned much from the New York City Campaign Finance Board.

− **Incentivize candidates to participate.** Ensure that candidates can run a viable campaign through the public financing program, or they won’t voluntarily participate. This requires doing the math on historical campaign finance spending in your area.
- **Play defense in policy design.** Many public financing programs have come under attack around the country. A strong program will stay up to date on the cost of running a viable campaign, while being codified in a way that is difficult to defund.

- **Choose your legislative strategy wisely.** The paths to victory for public financing will vary depending on local laws. One possibility is to lobby the local governing body to pass a law. In places where ballot measures are an option (or requirement), there is often the need for a campaign to get on the ballot before the campaign to win over voters.

- **Work with local government, not against it.** Advocates in Berkeley worked closely with City Council and the FCPC to build support. If they hadn’t cultivated positive relationships with public officials or had been unwilling to adapt their proposal in response to concerns, public financing would likely not have made it onto the ballot.

### Structuring a Campaign

The Berkeley campaign was made possible by the committed leadership of local advocates; the support of reform organizations with capacity, expertise, and resources; paid staff; and passionate volunteers. The campaign wasn’t always a well-oiled machine; organizers had to assemble a large operation in the short amount of time between City Council’s vote on the measure at the end of May 2016 and the November election. Developing a decision-making structure, filling technical roles such as campaign treasurer, and recruiting volunteers all proved to be challenges. However, the Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition drew on a team of driven individuals who ultimately delivered a grassroots, people-centric victory.

### Campaign Plan

As X1 proponent and MapLight founder Daniel Newman observed, when embarking on a campaign, “There are 20 things you need to do. It takes a lot of work, and each component matters to your overall success or failure, but you won’t be able to do everything.” There are multiple moving pieces to manage in parallel, and it is unlikely that they will all be executed flawlessly. For this reason, taking the time to develop a plan as soon as possible is an essential part of structuring and running a campaign—even if things invariably go off script.

The campaign plan developed for Measure X1 can be found in Appendix C. This document includes sections on the team administering the campaign, research on the demographics and political leanings of Berkeley voters, an analysis of the unsuccessful 2004 effort, key messaging points, field outreach strategy, endorsements, earned and paid media goals, and the budget. Putting together the various components of the plan helped the BFEC to identify their strategy and targets. In addition, the document served as a valuable resource to share with potential funders, demonstrating the viability of the effort.

### Core Team

From a small group of advocates who worked for years to pass public financing, to the organizing staff at California Common Cause, to experienced, professional political consultants,
and a diverse group of volunteers who dedicated their time in the weeks before the election, numerous individuals were involved in the campaign for Measure X1.

A small group, including Daniel Newman, Jay Costa, and local California Common Cause staff and members drove the effort to develop the public financing program and persuade city officials to put it on the ballot—the campaign before the campaign. Afterwards, in the summer of 2016, this group and a handful of other volunteers developed the ballot argument for the measure that would be distributed to voters (Appendix B). In August, the Berkeley Fair Elections campaign began in earnest—later than ideal. This created a tight timeline for recruiting volunteers and structuring and executing a successful plan.

The Berkeley Fair Elections Committee was responsible for the creation and execution of the campaign plan and all related administrative duties. They initially employed a flat, consensus-driven steering committee structure, with all members participating in decisions via weekly calls. However, it quickly became apparent that they could not make all of the necessary decisions—from messaging to setting up a campaign bank account—quickly enough with the full group, especially as the team expanded over the course of August. As a result, the campaign began to get bogged down and behind schedule.

The BFEC sorely needed a more robust organizational structure. In early September, they created an executive committee comprised of Daniel Newman, Kathay Feng, and Sam Ferguson, who would delegate to other members of the steering committee and who had ultimate authority over campaign spending. By centralizing its decision-making processes, the campaign was able to act more efficiently and effectively.

In addition to a decision-making structure, the BFEC needed infrastructure to ensure that the steering committee could communicate with each other. They established weekly conference calls and a Google group for sharing email updates. In addition, they acquired office space to run the field campaign and store supplies, renting space from NextSpace, a coworking facility.

Mark Capitolo, an experienced political consultant, was brought on to drive the campaign’s paid media efforts, including direct mail and digital advertising, working to reach large swathes of the Berkeley electorate with compelling messaging about Measure X1. He agreed to work for the BFEC on commission only, bringing his services within the campaign’s budget—services that would otherwise have been unaffordable during a busy season for political consultants.

Andrea Slater took charge of the field operation, working with three organizers to mobilize a grassroots campaign to educate target audiences about Measure X1. She oversaw campaign contractor Jocelyn Anderson, Common Cause organizer Helen Grieco, who recruited student volunteers, and local organizer Anna Callahan, who worked to rally Bernie Sanders supporters.

Another major role in the campaign was the position of treasurer. Responsible for ensuring that all finances were disclosed to the City of Berkeley, it was essential that anyone who took on this position was a stickler for detail. Many campaigns hire professionals for this purpose; the X1 campaign relied on volunteers. The role proved so tricky that it required three people: Laura Curlin, the official Campaign Treasurer, assisted by Ayça Guralp and Chelsea Whitman.

Reform Organizations
Two democracy reform organizations played major roles in the effort to pass Measure X1, supplying subject matter and technical expertise, organizing infrastructure, and relationships in the field of campaign finance reform advocacy: MapLight and California Common Cause.
MapLight is a nonpartisan nonprofit based in Berkeley that uses data, tools, and journalism to reveal the influence of money in politics and help build a government that works for the people. It was founded in 2005 by Daniel Newman, a lead proponent of public financing in Berkeley, after the 2004 public financing measure failed to pass—in part due to the lack of public awareness about the impact of money on political outcomes. In addition to Newman, several members of MapLight’s staff volunteered on the campaign in various capacities, leveraging their expertise in campaign finance data and communications to make the case for reform, managing the campaign’s funds, helping to bring in endorsements, and taking part in field outreach efforts.

In 2014, California Common Cause joined the effort to introduce public financing in Berkeley. Common Cause is a grassroots democracy reform organization with local chapters across the country. In Berkeley, local Common Cause staff helped develop a robust policy proposal and provided organizing infrastructure for the campaign, helping to manage coalition building, volunteer recruitment, and field outreach. As Kathay Feng, the executive director of California Common Cause noted, “You need to have a passionate core of people, but also the support of a few well-known organizations that can be the public face of the coalition.” Common Cause played that role in Berkeley.

Beyond their institutional capacity and knowledge of campaign finance research, MapLight and Common Cause tapped into their networks of relationships with democracy reform funders and other advocacy groups locally and around the country to bring in financial support, endorsements, and other assistance. Campaign Legal Center provided policy guidance and legal drafting support, helping to adapt the small donor matching policy to Berkeley’s political and legal context. Other national reform groups endorsed the measure and emailed their local members about it. These groups greatly increased the credibility and reach of the campaign.

Volunteers

Recruiting volunteers to conduct field outreach—important to the campaign’s objective of reaching and mobilizing low-propensity voters—proved to be a substantial challenge for the BFEC. In a busy presidential election year, many people were already committed to other causes. As a result, although the campaign committee had planned to mobilize as many as 25 volunteers per week and bring on 50-75 people to fill shifts directly before Election Day, the actual number of people who showed up was consistently smaller than expected. Part of the problem was that organizers had focused heavily on getting on the ballot at the expense of taking time to build a local coalition from which to draw volunteers. Indeed, as Sam Ferguson said, “Day Two after we got on the

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– Kathay Feng, BFEC Co-Chair, CA Common Cause

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– Andrea Slater, BFEC Field Manager, CA Common Cause
ballot was spent panicking about who would do the legwork. It always felt like we were playing catch up.”

The campaign’s volunteer base was primarily comprised of students, Bernie Sanders supporters, and people from MapLight and the California Clean Money Campaign.

Involving students—who are themselves low-propensity voters—was a crucial part of field outreach; it was important for the campaign itself to be consistent with the principles of inclusivity underlying Measure X1. About 18 students from UC Berkeley, local community colleges, and even Berkeley High School volunteered regularly with the campaign. Organizer Helen Grieco observed, “I think we had some wonderful students. The most obvious downside of students is that their priority is getting an education. If you’re going to use student volunteers, you need a decent amount of them, or you’ll have significant fall-off.” To keep students engaged, it was necessary to provide them with an inspiring and educational experience. To do so, Grieco put together an internship program, holding pizza lunches, bringing in guest speakers, and offering trainings on advocacy skills. This was a time-intensive investment, but one that paid off. Andrea Slater attributed much of the campaign’s success to student involvement: “Student engagement gave us success. We had social media, all that stuff. But students made it more local, as opposed to canned campaign messages.”

Local organizer Anna Callahan was brought on board to recruit volunteers from the Bernie Sanders base—people who had significant ideological overlap with Measure X1. Callahan initially surveyed 250 politically active potential volunteers in September 2016, but found that most of them were already involved with other campaigns. “It was hard to get people to show up,” Callahan said, “because this wasn’t the top issue for them, or they didn’t think anything could be done about it.” Most people who did show up participated in fewer than three shifts.

Takeaways

- **Develop a campaign plan**—and be ready for the actual campaign to go off script. There’s a lot to do, from getting on the ballot to assembling a campaign team to conducting voter outreach to funding the campaign. It’s important to think through a plan as early as possible, while being prepared to adapt to changing circumstances.

- **Have a clear decision-making structure.** Even a small campaign takes several people, including organizers, volunteers, paid staff, and consultants. A centralized structure streamlines decision-making and facilitates management of roles better than relying purely on consensus.

- **Tap into national, state, and local reform groups** to build capacity by drawing on existing resources and expertise. Groups like MapLight, Common Cause, Every Voice, Represent.Us, Democracy Matters, Campaign Legal Center, ReThink Media, and others can offer support in areas including policy development, grassroots organizing, email outreach and endorsement, messaging, and networking with funders.

- **Volunteer engagement takes work.** Grassroots outreach requires a base of dedicated volunteers. The best way to achieve this is by focusing early on coalition building with organizations that can mobilize members to do the legwork of the campaign. Students are another fantastic resource, but may require additional effort to keep engaged and inspired. Volunteers may also be busy with other causes, especially in presidential election years, affecting their commitment.
Reaching Voters

What did it take to get a strong majority—65%—of Berkeley voters to support Measure X1? The BFEC had to work strategically within limited financial resources and a tight timeframe. Advocates used polling and intuition to define campaign targets, messages, and tactics. They focused outreach on young people and renters: groups that would likely benefit from the public financing program and were more inclined to support it. The major goals of the campaign were to educate and mobilize this base while continuing to persuade undecided likely voters. The campaign maximized its limited resources through a scrappy grassroots field operation and judicious use of paid media, including mailers and digital ads.

Target Audiences

When planning a campaign, it is important to understand local voters. Where do they stand on public financing? What are their key demographic characteristics, and how do these affect their interests? To determine who to target and what they needed to hear, the BFEC looked to surveys conducted by the Berkeley City Council, U.S. Census data, and learnings from the 2004 campaign.

In March and April 2016, City Council sponsored two surveys, administered by Lake Research Partners, to evaluate potential ballot measures—including public financing—for the November election. At first blush, the measure seemed unpopular: according to the April survey, only 39% of respondents supported public financing, while 26% opposed it, and 35% were undecided.

However, when respondents heard arguments for and against the program, support jumped to 52%-55% (depending on the argument), while opposition increased to 33%-35%, and the “Undecided” camp shrank. It was clear that the measure was viable if advocates could reach a sufficient margin of undecided voters with positive information about public financing: about 6,000 people, according to an analysis in the campaign plan.

But how to reach the right audiences? Berkeley is a city where the political spectrum mainly ranges from liberal to progressive. According to U.S. Census data, on the whole, the population is affluent, but the majority of residents (59%) are renters. A substantial group—38%—are young people between the ages of 15 and 30. The major demographic splits in the city are between students and residents and between the hills and the flats. Residents of the Berkeley hills are relatively more likely to be affluent, own homes, hold moderate political views, and vote regularly than residents of the flats, who are more likely to have low incomes, rent their homes, be more progressive, and vote infrequently. The latter also tend to be younger and more ethnically diverse than residents of the hills.

Traditional campaign strategy would have dictated focusing on persuading likely voters. However, according to BFEC Co-Chair Sam Ferguson, who helped lead the first campaign, in 2004, public financing advocates wrongly assumed that residents of the flats would actively support the measure, neglecting to mobilize them and leaving them vulnerable to the opposition’s arguments. They focused their efforts on the “swing” voters in the hills, but failed to persuade this audience, who were more moderate ideologically and more likely to be swayed by the anti-tax campaign. In 2016, the surveys sponsored by City Council suggested that the initiative was still most strongly favored by renters, progressives, students, and residents of Council districts in the flats; the base of support for public financing hadn’t changed from 2004.

BFEC Co-Chair Kathay Feng noted that these learnings helped them identify three universes of voters: those who were impossible to convince because they fundamentally opposed the
concept; high-propensity voters—generally, residents of the hills—who needed some convincing; and low- to medium-propensity voters—generally, residents of the flats—who were largely inclined to support public financing. To Feng, the key question for the Berkeley campaign was how to allocate their efforts between high-propensity voters who needed persuasion and people who were more likely to support public financing, but who “needed to be convinced to show up to vote, get down to that part of the ballot, and mark it.”

This time around, advocates devoted more energy to mobilizing their base of renters, progressives, and students, focusing their field outreach program on the flats. However, they did not neglect the undecided voters, instead reaching them via direct mail and social media.

**Messaging Strategy**

The surveys run by the city suggested that many people were unfamiliar with public financing systems, and their support would depend on whether the policy was explained to them—and what they heard about it. The campaign thus needed to reach a large number of voters and frame the issue in ways that resonated.

Advocates sought messaging advice from reform groups around the country. They spoke with national organizations like Every Voice and ReThink Media (which has a campaign finance reform messaging guide for activists based on extensive research), as well as with Honest Elections Seattle, the coalition that successfully passed Seattle’s democracy voucher program in 2015. Through this research, they identified two main themes for talking about public financing:

1) reducing the influence of wealthy donors on candidates and promoting more competitive elections (the “fight Big Money” theme) and 2) promoting candidate diversity and grassroots political participation (the “lifting up all voices” theme).

But how could they apply these themes in ways that resonated in Berkeley? For small campaigns, it isn’t always possible to test messages before committing. For example, when the BFEC explored conducting a phone poll with a sample size of 500, they were told that the margin of error would be too large to differentiate between choices. A survey that used Facebook ads to test campaign taglines received too few responses to have meaningful results.

With no conclusive polling data beyond the City Council surveys, advocates had to move forward with outreach and adapt their talking points based on people’s responses in the community. They found that messages about the ways that public financing promotes political participation and candidate diversity resonated particularly well with progressives, students, renters, and low-propensity voters.

Although there was no organized opposition to Measure X1, advocates soon found that many people in Berkeley viewed money in politics as a federal or state-level problem—not one that affected their city. To illustrate the need for reform, the BFEC turned to volunteers from MapLight, leveraging their expertise with campaign finance data to analyze money in Berkeley elections. This revealed that in 2012 and 2014, more than half of the money in mayoral and City Council races came from fewer than 350 households—less than 1% of Berkeley. Moreover, local elections were expensive, but not competitive. These data points were published in a press release that was picked up by local news outlets, featured in presentations to help win endorsements, and shared in conversation with voters (Appendix D).

Beyond messaging about the values behind the measure, the BFEC devoted considerable effort to persuading organizations and individuals trusted by Berkeley residents to sign on to
Measure X1. Endorsements provide a way for voters to easily evaluate ballot choices based on the assessments of people and institutions they respect. Members of the BFEC steering committee leveraged their networks and reached out to potential endorsers via email, phone calls, and presentations during group meetings. They contacted a variety of national and statewide campaign finance reform organizations, local Democratic and Green Party chapters, student groups, and progressive grassroots organizations, as well as local media outlets, city officials and candidates, and high-profile individuals.

Measure X1 was endorsed by 26 groups, including the ACLU of Northern California, the NAACP Berkeley branch, the Berkeley Tenants Union, the local Sierra Club chapter, Greenpeace, three news outlets, and 35 individuals (full list available in Appendix E). Endorsements were listed on all promotional materials, and representatives from many endorsing organizations signed on to the ballot argument printed in the official voter guide. When former U.S. Secretary of Labor and current UC Berkeley professor Robert Reich, a popular figure in progressive politics, endorsed Measure X1, the campaign featured him on a mailer sent to Berkeley households, with the quote: “I am voting Yes on Measure X1 because it is an exemplary public campaign finance measure. If more communities, states, and even federal government adopt policies like Measure X1, we can finally make real strides toward getting big money out of our politics.”

Field Outreach
Marshaled by Andrea Slater and led by organizers Helen Greeco, Jocelyn Anderson, and Anna Callahan, BFEC volunteers dedicated hundreds of hours to connecting with Berkeley’s communities of renters, progressives, and students, concentrating on City Council districts 1, 2, 3, and 4 (the flats) as well as 7 (student-heavy). Despite having fewer volunteers than expected, they spoke with over 5,500 low-propensity voters, distributed over 10,000 pieces of literature around Berkeley, and educated the public at several local events.

To Slater, it was vital for the campaign to be community-driven, inclusive, and grassroots, aligning with the principles underlying Measure X1: “We didn’t want to be outsiders coming in.” It was important to reach out to activists who were deeply rooted in the Berkeley community. For instance, a 15-minute conversation with Dr. Vicki Alexander—a lead proponent behind the passage of the country’s first soda tax in Berkeley—generated a number of contacts at local grassroots organizations. Working with Dr. Alexander and Paul Cobb (publisher of the weekly Oakland Post newspaper), Slater’s team identified a crucial gap in the BFEC’s strategy: language access. In response to this finding, the team quickly developed bilingual materials, distributing more than 300 cards to Spanish speakers.

The campaign’s organizers used a voter file to direct volunteers to the addresses and phone numbers of registered voters. Each week, they distributed lists to volunteers for two- to three-hour door-knocking and phone-banking shifts. By November 1, the BFEC’s intrepid volunteers had knocked on nearly 3,400 doors and made over 5,000 phone calls to Berkeley voters.

These tactics were effective, but not efficient. Often, Berkeley residents weren’t home (or, by November, were sick of being contacted by campaigns). However, volunteers generally received positive reactions from those they did reach, encountering more curiosity than
opposition. Slater later reported that among the student volunteers, “Each debrief, although mixed with tales of inaccessible apartment buildings, missing voters and closed doors was also filled with stories of the interesting people met while precinct walking and talking to voters each week.” Volunteers and community members alike were enriched by these interactions, building public support for Measure X1.

Beyond knocking on doors and calling voters, volunteers approached Berkeley residents in public and coordinated with other campaigns to distribute flyers and postcards. They distributed campaign literature at public transit entrances and tabled at events such as local street fairs. Jesse Arreguin’s mayoral campaign teamed up with the BFEC to distribute Measure X1 packets during their own outreach efforts. According to Slater’s report, leafletting by volunteers led to “friendly competition” between the students and MapLight, Clean Money Campaign, and Berkeley for Bernie volunteers that “helped spread the word faster as we left literature on any flat surface we could find in Berkeley on the way to targeted voters’ homes.”

Election results bore out the success of field efforts. Citywide, 65% (nearly 34,000 people) voted “Yes” on X1, including substantial majorities in every district—but the districts targeted by volunteers (1, 2, 3, 4, and 7) saw higher majorities than the districts in the hills. There was, however, lower turnout and more blank votes in student-heavy areas, which accords with national trends among youth voters and could be expected even with the campaign’s targeted outreach. This table shows the detailed breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% of Votes Yes</th>
<th>% of Ballots Blank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (flats)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (flats)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (flats)</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (flats)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (hills)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (hills)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (students)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (hills)</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citywide</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mail and Digital Campaign**

Given that the public’s lack of understanding about public financing was the main barrier that the campaign had to overcome, the success of Measure X1 is also due to the campaign’s mass media communication efforts, executed by political consultant Mark Capitolo. Where grassroots outreach allowed the campaign to connect in depth with a few thousand people, paid media advertising enabled the BFEC to reach tens of thousands of people with information about Measure X1. A major part of the campaign’s budget was allocated to mailing the city’s registered voters and conducting a cost-effective digital campaign targeting registered voters.
Capitolo coordinated between the executive committee and vendors to execute the campaign’s major direct mail investments, from concept and graphic design to obtaining voter data to printing and mailing. Starting in October, a postcard (Appendix F) was sent to all households of Berkeley registered voters in two waves. It featured the campaign’s prominent endorsements and a simple outline of the measure and its goals. The first wave was targeted to 35,000 households of voters who chose to vote by mail, timed to reach them alongside their ballots. This was followed by a mailing to 8,000 households identified as people who voted at the polling booth, sent closer to Election Day.

Beyond this direct mail investment, the BFEC also paid for slate mailers (mass mailings sent out by campaigns and companies with a list of paid recommendations) from Latino Family Voter Guide, Californians Vote Green, the Sierra Club, Democratic Voters Choice, Budget Watchdogs Newsletter, California Senior Advocates League Voter Guide, and California Voter Guide.

The Measure X1 digital campaign consisted of the website, social media, and paid digital advertising. The Yes on X1 website listed the campaign’s endorsements, information about the policy, links to news coverage, an email list sign-up form, a contact form for potential volunteers, contact and financial disclosure information for the campaign committee, and a donate button. Built using a straightforward WordPress template by MapLight developer Shane Dosch, the site allowed visitors to quickly and easily find all of the key functions they needed to engage with the campaign (Appendix E).

In addition to its website, the campaign built a social media presence on Facebook. The Measure X1 Facebook page alerted followers to news and events and housed several promotional videos developed for the campaign by Bret Hendry, a member of MapLight’s communications team, in conjunction with the campaign consultant. These videos (available on the campaign’s Facebook page) included a guide to the measure, as well as testimonials from supporters of the campaign, including two mayoral candidates, a local NAACP leader, the executive director of the ACLU of Northern California, and several Berkeley students and residents. People connected strongly with these messages from their community; several of the videos received thousands of views.

The BFEC invested heavily in digital advertising. Aref Aziz, a consultant working with Capitolo, wrote in a summary memo, “The goals of the digital ad campaign for Yes on Measure X1 were very simple: To reach likely Berkeley voters ‘where they are’ online, in a manner targeted to the voter file, with greatest reach and lowest cost.” To achieve this, the campaign consultants turned to Facebook’s ad-buying platform, matching Facebook and Instagram users to data on Berkeley registered voters from the voter file. Making 47 purchases of banner and video ads, they gained more than 340,000 impressions at a cost of $15 per thousand impressions (not counting the buying commission and cost of ad development). These ad impressions translated into 58,600 video views. In addition, they used the ad buying platform RTBIQ to achieve an additional 260,000 ad impressions on a range of websites, at a cost of $31 per thousand impressions. These platforms enabled the campaign to reach large numbers of Berkeley voters with greater precision and lower cost than TV, print, or direct mail advertising.

**News Coverage**

Due to the often-limited reach of local media, the BFEC decided to allocate more time and money to mailers, online advertising, and grassroots outreach, rather than generating media coverage. Nonetheless, the Measure X1 campaign received favorable press in local outlets in the lead up to the election.
The editorial boards of three local papers—the San Francisco Chronicle, the Daily Californian (a student-run newsroom), and the East Bay Express—endorsed the measure, with the Chronicle describing Measure X1 as “a worthy experiment in a better democracy.” In addition, the campaign’s analysis of local campaign finance data was picked up by Berkeleyside and the Daily Californian, helping to make the case for reform through facts about money in local politics. The campaign also placed two op-eds, one by BFEC Co-Chair Kathay Feng in the East Bay Times and one by Berkeley Rent Board Chair Jesse Townley in Berkeleyside.

Beyond the Campaign
Of course, factors beyond the campaign’s activities affected its success. In Berkeley, one factor acted in favor of the BFEC: no group filed an opposing ballot argument or mounted an opposition campaign. As the City Council surveys in the spring of 2016 showed, voters found both supporting and opposing arguments to be persuasive (although supporting arguments were more so). In the absence of public opposition, the BFEC was free to focus on voter education and mobilization, rather than having to counter negative messaging—unlike in 2004, when anti-tax opposition contributed to the failure of the public financing measure.

A second factor may have worked against the campaign to a small degree: Measure X1 was positioned toward the end of a long ballot with 17 statewide propositions, one countywide measure, and 11 municipal initiatives. Many voters simply dropped off before reaching the end, compounding the impact of those who left the measure blank because they were unaware of the policy. Indeed, Measure X1 received the lowest number of votes (for or against) of any of the citywide ballot measures in the November election, according to official election results.

Takeaways
− **Identify targets—and don’t neglect your base.** Use polling and knowledge of local demographics to break voters into groups: the ones who will support you, the ones you can persuade, and the people who are diametrically opposed. This breakdown will be different in every city. Keep in mind that while it is important to persuade people who are undecided, it may be equally important to mobilize your supportive base.

− **Close the knowledge gap.** With policies such as public financing for elections, it is necessary to educate as well as persuade voters. Lack of understanding about what these programs are and how they work can be a major barrier to winning support.

− **Try messages out as you go.** It is important to frame public financing in ways that resonate with the groups that you are trying to reach. However, for small campaigns, message testing isn’t always an option. Instead, take guidance from national groups that have conducted research and tested ways to talk about public financing, try them out, and adapt based on the responses you receive in your community.

− **Highlight the problem you want to fix** using quantitative and qualitative information. Analyses of local campaign finance data like the one done for the Berkeley campaign help illustrate the need for reform. Does most money in local elections come from a handful of wealthy donors? Do the candidates with the most money tend to win? The numbers can tell a story that really hits home.

− **Endorsements matter.** Seek endorsements from local and national sources that voters in your jurisdiction trust, and feature them on campaign materials. Endorsements are a
useful heuristic for voters, allowing them to judge whether a policy is one they are likely to support based on which well-known people and institutions support it.

- **The personal touch makes a difference.** Grassroots field outreach is labor intensive, especially if you are low on volunteers. However, this work is essential when approaching low-propensity voters and campaigning for a policy that is meant to promote grassroots engagement and political participation. Learning from community activists, walking precincts, talking to people at events, and coordinating with other local campaigns all helped advocates to build support for Measure X1.

- **Run a cost-effective mass campaign.** Digital advertising is the most cost-effective way to reach a large number of voters, especially when targeted to the right audiences using voter data (so you don’t advertise to people who don’t live in your city, for example) and paired with compelling content. Because digital advertising only reaches a portion of the electorate, it is good practice to also invest in at least one piece of direct mail.

### Raising (and Spending) Money

The campaign to pass Measure X1 raised and spent $76,000, including $9,000 of in-kind contributions. This does not include the countless hours invested by volunteers, from members of the steering committee to skilled communications and software development professionals to the volunteers who filled phone-banking shifts and knocked on the doors of Berkeley residents.

#### Fundraising

With only six months from the City Council vote referring Measure X1 to the ballot through Election Day, BFEC organizers had to work frantically to pull in sufficient funding to run their campaign. The steering committee connected with major state and national democracy reform donors and made asks for concrete goals—such as funding for digital advertising and direct mail—raising enough money just in time to execute the campaign plan.

Of the $67,000 in monetary contributions received by the campaign, 95% came from eight contributors giving over $1,000. The campaign received four contributions over $10,000, with the largest monetary gift coming in at $20,000. Many of these top donors were non-local and supported the campaign due to their interest in political reform nationwide. The remaining 5% of the campaign’s money came from 27 individuals making contributions of $400 or less and about $265 in unitemized contributions (gifts under $50 that did not have to be individually reported, per Berkeley law). Many of these donations were received through a portal on the Yes on X1 website, powered by Democracy Engine.

As the chart below shows, the bulk of the campaign’s funding came in between 9/20/16 and 10/31/16—less than eight weeks before the election. This meant that the campaign could not commit to major expenses such as mailers or digital advertising until the end of September. As BFEC Co-Chair Daniel Newman notes, if funding had come in sooner, they would have been able to send mailers out earlier and had greater impact.
The campaign also received a significant amount of in-kind contributions ($9,000), mostly accounting for California Common Cause staff time and resources spent on the field campaign.

**Budget and Spending**

In the campaign plan, the steering committee set a budget of $70,000. This included $22,000 for the field campaign and miscellaneous expenses, $28,000 for direct mail, $18,000 for digital advertising, and $2,000 for slate mailers (Appendix C).

The campaign actually spent $76,000, including in-kind contributions by California Common Cause and others. The chart below displays the campaign’s itemized expenses, broken down by category. The lion’s share—40%—went to mailers, of which $4,205 was spent on slate mailers and $25,916 was spent on the campaign’s own direct mail efforts. Another $15,820 (21%) went to digital advertising. Staff time for the field campaign made up $15,669 (21%), split between California Common Cause staff and the two organizers contracted by the campaign.
Among its smaller expenses, the campaign spent about $3,008 (4%) on flyers, buttons, and other promotional materials. Another $2,918 (4%) went to graphic design for logos, banners, mailers, digital ads, and more. Polling and voter data cost the campaign about $2,700 (3%), including an in-kind contribution of the voter file by the California Clean Money Campaign. The BFEC spent about $1,708 (2%) on the website, much of which went to an early version that was later replaced by volunteer Shane Dosch. About $1,604 (2%) was spent on volunteers—mostly accounting for food. Office space and supplies cost the campaign $1,326 (2%). Finally, $1,052 (1%) went to fees—in particular, $952 in donation processing fees from Democracy Engine.

All told, the campaign’s direct mail and digital advertising costs were slightly under budget. The field campaign and miscellaneous expenses wound up costing more, although much of this was provided as in-kind contributions. Of course, these expenses do not reflect the time and services provided by volunteers, who assisted with everything from data analysis to communications to web development. Tapping into the skillsets of these volunteers provided the campaign with significant cost savings.

**Treasury and Disclosure**

The BFEC’s finances were tracked meticulously by the three volunteers serving as campaign treasurers. The role of treasurer requires substantial knowledge about state and local campaign finance rules—or the ability to learn quickly. Always a challenging role in small campaigns, this is an especially important position for a campaign finance reform measure undergirded by the principles of good government.

Laura Curlin, Ayça Guralp, and Chelsea Whitman began serving as treasurers after the campaign had already begun; they had to learn how to file complicated disclosure paperwork on the fly, relying on trainings from state and city staff to get up to speed while ensuring that they did not miss reporting deadlines for the rapidly moving campaign. They helped set up the website for donations and communicated with steering committee members on an ongoing basis to report donations and expenses—which, Curlin reported, was a significant challenge despite a best practices memo they circulated to the campaign team. Curlin suggested being
particularly careful about taking cash donations, saying “Cash can be more trouble than it’s worth,” depending on local regulations and reporting software. Required to regularly file disclosure reports with the city and make sure that funding disclaimers appeared on all ads, the BFEC treasurers helped ensure that the campaign adhered to local transparency laws.

While the rest of the BFEC disbanded after the victory in the November election, the treasurers had to continue filing reports well into 2017. As Whitman noted, “We didn’t realize how much there would be to deal with after the election to reconcile accounts and close the committee.”

Takeaways

− **Start raising money as soon as possible.** This makes it easier to plan major expenses, such as digital advertising and direct mail. Campaigns often operate on tight timelines, but funders need time to decide whether to contribute. It’s important to get a head start.

− **National funders can help.** It’s not always possible to raise sufficient funding for a campaign from local sources. However, there are a number of individuals and organizations that are interested in funding democracy reform campaigns around the country; you may be able to tap into them by networking with reform organizations.

− **Budget heavily for paid media and field outreach.** Digital advertising lets you reach your target audiences for a fraction of the cost of other communication methods. Mailers are more expensive, but help to reach a large number of voters. Field outreach is the priciest tactic and has lower reach, though the quality of voter engagement is high.

− **Recruit skilled volunteers.** People with professional experience in various campaign functions may be willing to donate their services, which can lead to cost savings.

− **Support the campaign treasurer.** This is a challenging role, especially for volunteers in small campaigns. The duties of ensuring that bills are paid, that the campaign adheres to local laws and regulations, and that finances are appropriately disclosed are important and require significant cooperation from all members of the campaign.

Conclusion

The story of public financing in Berkeley doesn’t end with the passage of the ballot measure. Now that the Berkeley Fair Elections Act has become law, the next step is to work with the government bodies charged with implementing it to ensure that the intent of the program is achieved. The first elections under the new public financing program will be held in 2018, and it remains to be seen what impact it will have on local political participation.

Meanwhile, the success of the campaign for Measure X1 holds national significance. It shows how a small group of activists, working with limited time and resources, can transform the way that local government works. Moreover, it offers a model for reducing the influence of wealthy interests and lifting up the voices of the people that can be taken up not only in large cities like New York City, Los Angeles, or Seattle, but in smaller communities. In a political climate where trust in government is lower than ever, the Berkeley campaign shows how people can make important and lasting changes to our communities, our governments, and our democracy.
Notes


v “Presentation and Discussion of Second Community Survey Results.” Berkeley City Manager’s Office. 5/10/2016. http://records.cityofberkeley.info/Agenda/Documents/ViewDocument/5_10_2016%20CLK\%20Report\%20(Public)%20CITY\%20MANAGER\%20REGULAR\%20PRESENTATION.pdf?meetingId=183&documentType=Agenda&itemld=2178&publishId=4164&isSection=false.


Precincts in the Alameda County Statement of Vote were matched to Berkeley City Council districts. “Votes Yes” is “Yes” votes as a percentage of all votes cast on Measure X1 in a district. “Ballots Blank” is the percentage of total ballots cast in a district that did not make a choice on X1.


What is the Berkeley Fair Elections Act?
The Berkeley Fair Elections Act is a proposed City of Berkeley law that would create a voluntary system of publicly funded elections. It would allow qualifying candidates to run for office without raising large amounts of private funds. If a candidate chooses to participate in the system and qualifies for public funds, the candidate raises funds only in small donations ($50 or less per donor). He or she receives matching payments from the City's Fair Elections fund at a ratio of 6 to 1 for every contribution that he or she raises from Berkeley residents.

What is the goal of the Fair Elections public financing system?
Running for elected office in Berkeley is expensive. Seven of the last eight City Council races went to the candidate who raised the most money, as did the last mayor’s race. We need a system where qualified candidates can successfully run for office even if they don’t have connections to wealth. By breaking down financial barriers to running for office, this measure would encourage a more diverse, grassroots-oriented pool of candidates for Mayor and City Council, limit the influence of special interests, and help ensure that the issues that matter most to Berkeley voters are at the forefront of debate.

New York City, Los Angeles, other cities, and several states have publicly funded election campaigns. Since the disastrous Citizens United Supreme Court decision in 2010, laws like the Berkeley Fair Elections Act are the best way to combat the effects of campaign fundraising and to break down barriers to running for office.

What restrictions must candidates agree to?
In exchange for receiving Fair Elections funding, participating candidates must agree to accept only donations of $50 or less and may not spend more than $50 of their personal funds on their campaign. Also, participating candidates may not accept donations from political action committees.

What offices are covered by the Berkeley Fair Elections Act?
The city races covered are Mayor and City Council.

How do the matching funds work?
Donations from city of Berkeley residents are matched 6 to 1 by the Fair Elections fund. For example, if a participating candidate receives a donation of $20 from a Berkeley resident, he or she also receives $120 from the Fair Elections fund. The maximum contribution a participating candidates may receive is $50, which is matched by $300 from the Fair Election fund.

Instead of “dialing for dollars” to only those who can afford $250 campaign donations, the Fair Elections system encourages candidates to do grassroots campaigning and ask for small donations. These small donations, plus the matching fund, are sufficient to fund a campaign. Once a Fair Elections candidate is elected, he or she is accountable only to the voters, who are also the candidate’s grassroots, small donors.

What is the maximum amount of Fair Election funds that a candidate may receive?
Candidates for Council may receive a maximum of $40,000 in Fair Election funds, and candidates for Mayor may receive a maximum of $120,000 in Fair Election funds.

How were the maximum amounts chosen?
The maximum amounts were determined based on historical campaign spending and reflect the amount of money required to run a viable campaign. In addition, information from past campaigns indicates that
only candidates with substantial community support will raise the many small donations needed to receive the maximum amount of Fair Elections funding.

**What happens if a candidate receives the maximum amount allowed by the Fair Elections system?**
If a candidate receives the maximum allowable amount for his or her office, he or she may continue raising money in contributions of $50 or less per donor. However, any further donations received will not be matched by payments from the Fair Elections fund.

**May participating candidates raise money from outside the City of Berkeley?**
Yes, candidates who participate in the Fair Elections system may accept contributions from individuals living outside of Berkeley, in contributions of $50 or less per donor. However, they cannot accept contributions from political action committees or any other entity besides human persons. Only contributions from Berkeley residents are matched by Fair Elections funding.

**Are candidates required to participate in the Fair Elections system?**
No, participation is voluntary. Candidates who choose not to participate may raise funds according to Berkeley’s current campaign finance laws.

**How do candidates qualify for Fair Elections funding?**
After meeting ballot access requirements, each candidate who wishes to participate must collect at least 30 small contributions (at least $10 and not more than $50), amounting to a total of at least $500, from residents of Berkeley. If a candidate meets these qualifications, he or she will be eligible to receive payments from the Fair Elections fund.

These qualifying contributions are meant to ensure that Fair Elections candidates have community grassroots support. This is to prevent taxpayer money from going to candidates who are not serious. Concerns that this system will attract frivolous candidates have been unfounded in New York City, Maine, Arizona, and the other locations that have implemented systems of public financing.

**May incumbents run under the Fair Elections system?**
Yes. Incumbents who run under the system are free to spend their time in office responding to their constituents’ needs, rather than fundraising.

**How will the system be funded?**
The system will be funded by an allocation of $4 per Berkeley resident per year from existing city revenues (the General Fund) to the Fair Elections fund. This amount is 0.16% of the City’s budget, a small cost to insure that Berkeley’s laws and funds spent are responsive to the needs of Berkeley voters.

Other sources of revenue for the fund include any money that remains unspent by a participating candidate following the election, fines levied by the Fair Campaign Practices Commission, voluntary donations made to the fund, and interest accrued by the fund.

**Will unused money be used for other city purposes?**
Yes. If the cost of the Fair Elections system is less than the total amount of money available, money will accumulate in the Fair Elections fund up to a maximum of $2 million. Any funds above this amount will be returned to the City’s general fund.

**What happens if the City runs out of money for Fair Elections candidates?**
If the Fair Elections fund runs out of money for Fair Elections candidates, qualifying candidates will be notified that they will no longer receive matching payments from the city, and they will be released from
the fundraising restrictions of the Fair Elections system.

**How many Fair Elections candidates may run for each office?**
As long as a candidate qualifies to participate in the Fair Elections system, they may run. There is no limit per office.

**Can Fair Elections candidates receive funding for special elections?**
Yes, candidates in special elections may qualify for participation in the Fair Elections system.

**What other jurisdictions have this system?**
New York City has implemented a similar system of matching funds in its municipal elections, as has Los Angeles. Several other cities and states have also implemented systems of public funding, including San Francisco, Richmond, Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut. The Berkeley measure is based on best practices learned from all these states and cities.

**How is the Berkeley Fair Elections Act written? Is it a charter amendment or an ordinance?**
To protect the system’s funding source from political maneuvering on City Council, the funding mechanism for the system is written as an amendment to the City Charter. Those funds can still be accessed by a supermajority of City Council in the case of fiscal emergency.

All other areas of the measure, including the offices covered and the payout caps to candidates, are written as amendments to the Berkeley Election Reform Act. As such, they may be amended by a supermajority of City Council and the Fair Campaign Practices Commission should the need arise.

**Safeguards and Protections**

**Who oversees the implementation and enforcement of the Fair Elections system?**
The Berkeley Fair Campaign Practices Commission (FCPC) directs the implementation and enforcement of the Fair Elections system.

**How will we know if adjustments to the system are needed?**
The Berkeley Fair Elections Act is modeled after municipal measures that have been successful in New York City and Los Angeles. The Fair Campaign Practices Commission will review the system after each of its first two elections, check for any potential issues, and make recommendations for any necessary changes for the future.

**What are the penalties for violating the provisions of this ordinance?**
Violators of the provisions of the Berkeley Fair Elections Act are subject to various penalties including criminal prosecution. If a candidate knowingly or willfully receives Fair Elections funding in violation of the Act, they will be required to repay the fund in an amount twice the value of what was unlawfully accepted or spent.

**If candidates collect the required number of qualifying contributions, but are not sincere about running for office, what will prevent those candidates from using Fair Elections funding for personal use, for example, for items that can be difficult to distinguish from campaign expenses such as rent, telephone or auto expenses?**
Existing laws regarding proper use of campaign money still apply. Participating candidates must follow accounting and reporting procedures that the FCPC specifies and candidates’ books are open for inspection at any time. Moreover, the Act specifies that all funds be used only for direct campaign purposes. Violators are subject to criminal prosecution.
Will there be a label on the ballot saying “Fair Elections Candidate?”
No. There will be no indication on the ballot of participation or nonparticipation in this voluntary system.

Can write-in candidates participate under the Fair Elections Act and receive campaign funding?
No. Candidates must meet ballot access requirements as well as Fair Elections requirements to receive public funds.

What may organizations and individuals do to be involved in participating candidates’ campaigns?
Public participation in campaigns has not changed, except for contribution limitations. Individuals may give a $10-$50 qualifying contribution to a qualifying candidate. All “grassroots” and volunteer activities remain available to individuals and organizations.

How may a candidate use Fair Elections Funds?
A candidate may only use Fair Elections funds for direct campaign purposes. A candidate may not use the funds for indirect campaign purposes, including personal use or making independent expenditures.

Can a candidate use Fair Elections funds to pay for legal defense?
No.

What may a candidate do with debt from a previous campaign as a nonparticipating candidate, after deciding to run as a participating candidate?
Candidates may not use Fair Elections funds to repay a debt from a previous campaign. They may continue to raise funds to repay the debt from a previous campaign, but must set up a separate bank account from the Fair Elections bank account to do so.

What may candidates do with surplus funds from a previous election cycle?
Candidates who did not participate as a Fair Elections candidate from a previous elections cycle may not use surplus funds once they decide to run as a Fair Elections candidate. They may return surplus funds to their contributors, use the funds to retire a previous campaign debt, or contribute the surplus to the city Fair Elections fund.

If a participating candidate does not use all of the Fair Elections funding, may the candidate retain the balance for the next election cycle?
No. A candidate must return all excess Fair Elections funds he or she retains at the end of a campaign.
This measure was placed on the ballot by the City Council. The measure would amend the City Charter and Municipal Code to establish an optional public financing program (Program) for candidates for Mayor and City Council. The amendments would allocate $4.00 per Berkeley resident – approximately $500,000 per year – from the General Fund to a newly-created Fair Elections Fund (Fund). The total amount in the Fund would be capped at $2,000,000. The Fund could pay up to $250,000 in administrative and enforcement costs in any four year election cycle.

Under current City law, the maximum permitted contribution amount is $250, which may be accepted only from natural persons. Under the Program, candidates who collect at least 30 contributions of $10-$50 from natural person residents of Berkeley, totaling at least $500, and agree to only accept or solicit contributions of $50 or less by natural persons and to not make any contribution or loan to their campaign that exceeds $50, would be eligible for payments from the Fund of six times the amount of contributions from Berkeley residents, up to $120,000 (Mayor candidates) and $40,000 (Council candidates). After reaching these caps, participating candidates would continue to be restricted to contributions of $50 or less.

A participating candidate who is refused payment must receive a written determination specifying the basis for non-payment and an opportunity to petition for reconsideration, and could seek judicial review.

Payments from the Fund would be limited to direct campaign purposes, and could not be used for costs of legal defense in any enforcement proceeding under the Berkeley Election Reform Act (BERA), or indirect campaign purposes (e.g., personal support or compensation to the candidate or his or her family, clothing or related items, capital assets of more than $500 with a useful life beyond the end of the election, contributions or loans to another candidate, a party committee, or another political committee, independent expenditures, or payments or transfers for which compensating value is not received).

Candidates not participating in the public campaign financing program would continue to be regulated by existing provisions of BERA.

Existing provisions of BERA regarding enforcement and penalties would apply to participating candidates, except that participating candidates who violate program requirements would be required to repay twice the value of public funds unlawfully accepted or spent, and significant violators would be prohibited from participating in the Program for four years. All amounts recovered would be deposited in the Fund.

Financial Implications
The measure would not increase taxes, but would require the Council to appropriate approximately $500,000 per year from the General Fund to the Fair Elections Fund, up to $2,000,000 per four-year election cycle. If administration and enforcement costs exceed the $250,000 provided for by the measure, additional costs would be paid from the General Fund.

All dollar amounts, including the per-resident allocation, fund cap, administrative allowance, qualifying contribution, and total payment cap would be adjusted by the Consumer Price Index.

s/ZACH COWAN
Berkeley City Attorney
ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE X1

Vote YES on Measure X1. Our democracy is not for sale. Big money dominates politics — even in Berkeley. More than half of Berkeley campaign funds come from fewer than 350 households — less than 1% of Berkeley. That’s a system that’s out of balance and out of touch with everyday people in Berkeley. Measure X1, endorsed by the Sierra Club and California Common Cause, restores balance. It gives the other 99% of us a stronger voice in local government.

Right now, special interests contribute money to candidates and expect something in return. In fact, one-third of the Mayor and Council’s campaign funding comes from outside Berkeley.

With Measure X1, candidates are rewarded for engaging with Berkeley residents. Candidates with broad support who refuse money from special-interest PACs and accept only small contributions — $50 or less — receive a limited amount of matching funds. No special-interest funding means no special-interest favors to pay back once elected.

Measure X1 ensures that all candidates with good ideas who speak for their communities can run for office, not just those with access to wealth. Let’s draw from the talent and energy of everyone to elect the best leaders, not just the best fundraisers.

Measure X1 does not raise taxes. Instead, funding comes from existing city revenues equal to 0.16% of the budget. That’s a modest but critical investment for sound and inclusive democracy.

Voters can’t hold their representatives accountable unless they have alternatives. Seven of the last eight City Council races went to the candidate who raised the most money, and not a single district City Council member has lost their seat since 1997. Let’s give voters real choices. Berkeley has always been a leader on important issues. Let’s join the growing number of cities making democracy work for everyone.

www.YesOnX1.org

s/IGOR TREGUB  
   Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter Vice Chair

s/ROY ULRICH  
   Berkeley Spokesperson, California Common Cause

s/EMILY RUSCH  
   Executive Director, CALPIRG

s/STEFAN ELGSTRAND  
   Secretary, Berkeley Tenants Union

s/WILL MORROW  
   President of the Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC)
FULL TEXT OF MEASURE X1
AMENDMENTS TO CITY OF BERKELEY CHARTER ARTICLE III (ELECTIONS) AND MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 2.12 (ELECTION REFORM ACT) TO CREATE A FAIR ELECTIONS PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING SYSTEM

Section 1. FINDINGS
The People of the City of Berkeley find that the City of Berkeley’s current campaign finance system:
A. Discourages many otherwise qualified candidates from running for office because of the need to raise substantial sums of money to be competitive;
B. Fuels the public perception of corruption and undermines public confidence in the democratic process and democratic institutions;
C. Creates a danger of actual corruption by encouraging elected officials to take money from private interests that are directly affected by governmental actions;
D. Forces candidates to raise larger and larger percentages of money from interest groups that have a specific financial stake in matters before Berkeley City government to keep pace with rapidly increasing campaign costs;
E. Diminishes elected officials’ accountability to their constituents by compelling them to be disproportionately accountable to the contributors who finance their election campaigns;
F.Violates the rights of all citizens to equal and meaningful participation in the democratic process;
G. Disadvantages challengers, because campaign contributors tend to give their money to incumbents, thus causing elections to be less competitive;
H. Burdens candidates with the incessant rigors of fundraising and thus decreases the time available to carry out their public responsibilities; and
I. Necessitates the creation of a Fair Elections public financing system to address these concerns.

Section 2. The People of the City of Berkeley hereby amend the following sections of the Charter of the City of Berkeley as follows:
Section 2.1. Section 6½ of Article III (“Elections”) of the City of Berkeley Charter is recodified as Section 6.1, and all references to “Section 6½” in the Charter are recodified as “Section 6.1.”
Section 2.2. Section 6.2 is added to Article III (“Elections”) of the City of Berkeley Charter to read as follows:

Section 6.2. Fair Elections Fund.
(1) Establishment of Fair Elections Fund.
A special, dedicated, non-lapsing Fair Elections Fund shall be established by the City Council for the purpose of:
(a) Providing public financing for the election campaigns of certified participating candidates;
and
(b) Paying for the administrative and enforcement costs of the Berkeley Fair Campaign Practices Commission (“Commission”) and City staff related to the Fair Elections Fund public campaign financing program. The administrative and enforcement costs shall not exceed $250,000 in any four year election cycle.

(2) Appropriations to the Fair Elections Fund.
(a) The City Council shall appropriate $4 per Berkeley Resident per year, as determined by the most recent official United States Census Bureau Population Estimate for the City of Berkeley, from the City General Fund to the Fair Elections Fund.
(b) Other sources of revenue to be deposited in the Fund shall include:
   i) Unspent funds distributed to any participating candidate who does not remain a candidate until the election for which they were distributed, or such funds that remain unspent by a participating candidate following the date of the election for which they were distributed;
   ii) Fines levied by the Commission against candidates for violation of election laws;
   iii) Voluntary donations made directly to the Fair Elections Fund;
   iv) Other funds appropriated by the City Council;
   v) Any interest generated by the Fund; and
   vi) Any other sources of revenue determined as necessary by the City Council.
(c) The amount in the Fair Elections Fund shall not exceed $2 million at any time. In order to comply with this limitation, revenue that would otherwise be deposited in the Fair Elections Fund pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) shall instead be deposited in the City General Fund.
(d) The City Council may, by adoption of an ordinance by not less than two-thirds vote of its membership, make an official declaration of fiscal emergency and suspend or reduce the amount of the annual appropriation specified in subsection (a). Any such ordinance suspending or reducing the annual appropriation shall be effective for no more than one year.

(3) Cost of Living Adjustments.
The Commission shall adjust the dollar amounts specified in subsections (1)(b), (2)(a) and (2)(c) of this Section upward or downward, for changes in the cost of living, by the percent change in the Consumer Price Index.
Section 3.

ORDINANCE NO. #,### - N.S.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BERKELEY AMENDING CHAPTER 2.12 OF THE BERKELEY MUNICIPAL CODE TO CREATE A PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING SYSTEM

The people of the city of Berkeley ordain as follows:

Section 3.1. That Berkeley Municipal Code Section 2.12.051 is hereby amended as follows:

2.12.051 Amendment or repeal of chapter.

This chapter may be amended or repealed by the procedures set forth in this section. If any portion of subsection A is declared invalid, subsection B shall be the exclusive means of amending or repealing this chapter.

A. This chapter, including the amendments adopted by Ordinance No. #,###-N.S. and its successors, may be amended to further its purpose by ordinance passed by a vote of the City Council of not less than two-thirds vote of its membership, following a public hearing, if at least thirty days prior to passage the amendment has been approved by the Berkeley Fair Campaign Practices Commission by not less than two-thirds vote of its membership, and has been distributed to the news media and to every person regularly receiving communications from the commission.

B. This chapter may be amended or repealed by initiative approval of the voters of the City of Berkeley.

Section 3.2.

That Article 2 (“Definitions”) of Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 2.12 is hereby amended to add the following sections:

2.12.123 Election Cycle.

“Election cycle” means the period beginning on the day after the date of the most recent general election for the specific office or seat that a candidate is seeking and ending on the date of the next general election for that office or seat.

2.12.137 Fund.

“Fund” means the Fair Elections Fund created by City Charter Article III Section 7.

2.12.138 General Election.

“General election” means an election held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday of November pursuant to City Charter Article III Section 4.

2.12.156 Nomination Period

“Nomination period” means the period specified by state law during which candidates must submit nomination papers for City offices.

2.12.158 Participating Candidate.

“Participating candidate” means a candidate who qualifies for Fair Elections campaign funding.

2.12.167 Qualified Contribution.

“Qualified contribution” means a contribution not greater than fifty dollars ($50) made by a natural person resident of the City of Berkeley.

2.12.168 Qualifying Period.

“Qualifying period” means the period beginning on the day after the date of the most recent general election for the specific office or seat that a candidate is seeking and ending at the close of the nomination period.

Section 3.3. That Berkeley Municipal Code Section 2.12.283 is hereby added:

2.12.283 Campaign statement—Additional Information Required From Participating Candidates.

Each participating candidate shall file reports of receipts and expenditures of Fair Elections funds at such times and in such manners as the Commission may by regulation prescribe, including, but not limited to, reports containing information necessary to verify that qualified contributions received by participating candidates and Fair Elections funds spent by participating candidates comply with the restrictions and requirements of this chapter.

Section 3.4. That Section 2.12.435 of Berkeley Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

2.12.435 Excess amounts—Payment to City required.

If any person is found guilty of violating the terms of this chapter, each campaign treasurer who received part or all of the contribution or contributions which constitute the violation shall pay promptly, from available campaign funds, if any, the amount received from such persons in excess of the amount permitted by this chapter to the City for deposit in the general fund Fair Elections Fund of the City.

Section 3.5. That Berkeley Municipal Code Section 2.12.465 is hereby amended to read as follows:

2.12.465 Actions for compliance—Disposition of amounts recovered.

If a judgment is entered against the defendant or defendants in an action brought under Section 2.12.450, the plaintiff shall receive fifty percent of the amount recovered. The remaining fifty percent shall be deposited in the general fund Fair Elections Fund of the City. In an action brought by the Commission or the City Attorney, the entire amount recovered shall be paid to the general fund Fair Elections Fund of the City.

Section 3.6. That Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 2.12, Article 8, is hereby added to read as follows:


2.12.490 Title and Purpose.

This Article shall be known as the Berkeley Fair Elections Act of 2016. Its purposes are to:

A. Diminish the public perception of corruption and strengthen public confidence in the governmental and election processes.

B. Eliminate the danger of actual corruption of Berkeley officials caused by the private
financing of campaigns.
C. Help reduce the influence of private campaign contributions on Berkeley government.
D. Reduce the impact of wealth as a determinant of whether a person becomes a candidate.
E. Foster more meaningful participation in the political process.
F. Provide candidates who participate in the program with sufficient resources with which to communicate with voters.
G. Increase the accountability of elected officials to the constituents who elect them, as opposed to the contributors who fund their campaigns.
H. Free candidates from the time needed to raise campaign money, and allow officeholders more time to carry out their official duties.

2.12.495 Offices Covered.
Candidates for the offices of Mayor and City Council shall be eligible to participate in the public campaign financing program established by this chapter.

2.12.500 Eligibility for Fair Elections Campaign Funding.
A. To be eligible to be certified as a participating candidate, a candidate must:
   1) During the qualifying period for the election involved, choose to participate in the Fair Elections program by filing with the Commission a written application for certification as a participating candidate in such form as may be prescribed by the Commission, containing the identity of the candidate, the office that the candidate seeks, and the candidate’s signature, under penalty of perjury, certifying that:
      a) The candidate has complied with the restrictions of this chapter during the election cycle to date;
      b) The candidate’s campaign committee has filed all campaign finance reports required by law during the election cycle to date and that they are complete and accurate; and
      c) The candidate will comply with the requirements of this Act during the remainder of the election cycle and, specifically, if certified an eligible participating candidate, will comply with the requirements applicable to participating candidates.
   2) Meet all requirements of applicable law to be listed on the ballot;
   3) Before the close of the qualifying period, collect at least 30 qualified contributions of at least ten dollars ($10), for a total dollar amount of at least five-hundred dollars ($500).

b) A contribution for which a candidate has not obtained a signed and fully completed receipt shall not be counted as a qualified contribution.

4) Maintain such records of receipts and expenditures as required by the Commission;
5) Obtain and furnish to the Commission any information it may request relating to his or her campaign expenditures or contributions and furnish such documentation and other proof of compliance with this chapter as may be requested by such Commission;
6) Not make expenditures from or use his or her personal funds or property or the personal funds or property jointly held with his or her spouse, domestic partner, or unemancipated children in connection with his or her election except as a qualified contribution to his or her controlled committee;
7) Not accept contributions in connection with the election for which Fair Elections funds are sought other than qualified contributions and contributions not greater than fifty dollars ($50) made by a natural person non-resident of Berkeley;
8) Not solicit or direct contributions in connection with any election during the election cycle in which Fair Elections funds are sought other than qualified contributions and contributions not greater than fifty dollars ($50) made by a natural person non-resident of Berkeley to such candidate’s controlled committee.

B. At the earliest practicable time after a candidate files with the Commission a written application for certification as a participating candidate, the Commission shall certify that the candidate is or is not eligible. Eligibility can be revoked if the candidate commits a substantial violation of the requirements of this Act, in which case all Fair Elections funds shall be repaid. Such a determination shall be made by the Commission.

a) Each qualified contribution shall be acknowledged by a receipt to the contributor, with a copy retained by the candidate. The receipt shall include the contributor’s signature, printed name, home address, and telephone number, if any, and the name of the candidate on whose behalf the contribution is made. In addition, the receipt shall indicate by the contributor’s signature that the purpose of the qualified contribution is to help the candidate qualify for Fair Elections campaign funding and that the contribution is made without coercion or reimbursement.
upon a two-thirds vote following a hearing held pursuant to Section 2.12.230.

C. The Commission’s determination is final except that it is subject to a prompt judicial review pursuant to Section 2.12.235.

D. If the Commission determines that a candidate is not eligible, the candidate is not required to comply with provisions of this Act applicable only to participating candidates.

2.12.505 Fair Elections Fund Payments.

A. A candidate who is certified as an eligible participating candidate shall receive payment of Fair Elections funds equal to six-hundred percent (600 percent) of the amount of qualified contributions received by the candidate during the election cycle with respect to a single election subject to the aggregate limit on the total amount of Fair Elections funds payments to a candidate specified in Section 2.12.505.B.

B. The aggregate amount of Fair Elections funds payments that may be made to a participating candidate during an election cycle may not exceed:

1) $120,000 for a candidate running for the office of Mayor;
2) $40,000 for a candidate running for the office of City Council.

C. A participating candidate’s application for Fair Elections funds, including an initial request submitted with an application for certification as a participating candidate, shall be made using a form prescribed by the Commission and shall be accompanied by qualified contribution receipts and any other information the Commission deems necessary. This application shall be accompanied by a signed statement from the candidate indicating that all information on the qualified contribution receipts is complete and accurate to the best of the candidate’s knowledge. The Commission shall verify that a candidate’s qualified contributions meet all of the requirements and restrictions of this Act prior to the disbursement of Fair Elections funds to the candidate. A participating candidate who receives a qualified contribution that is not from the person listed on the qualified contribution receipt shall be liable to pay the Fair Elections Fund the entire amount of the inaccurately identified contribution, in addition to any penalties.

D. The Commission shall make an initial payment of Fair Elections funds within four business days of the Commission’s certification of a participating candidate’s eligibility, or as soon thereafter as is practicable.

E. The Commission shall establish a schedule for the submission of Fair Elections funds payment requests, permitting a candidate to submit a Fair Elections funds payment request at least once per month. However, the Commission shall schedule a minimum of three payment request submission dates within the thirty days prior to an election.

F. The Commission shall provide each participating candidate with a written determination specifying the basis for any non-payment of Fair Elections funds. The Commission shall provide participating candidates with a process by which they may immediately upon receipt of such determination petition the Commission for reconsideration of any such non-payment and such reconsideration shall occur within five business days of the filing of such petition. In the event that the Commission denies such petition then it shall immediately notify the candidate of his or her right to seek judicial review of the Commission’s denial pursuant to Section 2.12.235.

2.12.510 Candidate Statement Notice.

A candidate certified as a Fair Elections program participant shall be identified as such by a notice printed on the same page as the candidate’s statement of qualifications distributed to voters pursuant to City Charter Article III Section 6.1.


During the first election cycle that occurs after Council implementation of this Act, a candidate may be certified as a participating candidate, notwithstanding the acceptance of contributions other than qualified contributions before the date of enactment that would, absent this Section, disqualify the candidate as a participating candidate, provided that any funds other than qualified contributions accepted but not expended before the effective date of this Act shall be:

A. Returned to the contributor;
B. Held in a special campaign account and used only for retiring a debt from a previous campaign; or
C. Submitted to the City for deposit in the Fair Elections Fund.

2.12.520 Special Municipal Elections.

The provisions of this chapter apply to special municipal elections as defined in City Charter Article III Section 4. The Commission shall adjust the deadlines in this Act to account for the circumstances of the special municipal election.

2.12.525 Campaign Accounts for Participating Candidates.

A. During an election cycle, each participating candidate shall conduct all campaign financial activities through a single campaign expenditure and contribution account as required by Section 2.12.250.

B. A participating candidate may maintain a
An independent expenditure; 

2.12.540 Insufficient Funds in the Program.

If the Commission determines that there are insufficient funds in the Fair Elections Fund to fund adequately all participating candidates, the Commission shall notify participating candidates that the Commission will not likely be capable of distributing to all participating candidates the maximum aggregate amount of Fair Elections funds payments permissible under Section 2.12.505.B. Under such circumstances, at such time as the Commission is unable to fulfill a valid application for Fair Elections funds submitted by a participating candidate pursuant to Section 2.12.505.C, the participating candidate may solicit for such candidate’s controlled committee and accept any contributions permissible under City law and shall no longer be subject to the restriction on use of personal funds established by Section 2.12.500.A.6.

2.12.545 Cost of Living Adjustments.

The Commission shall adjust the dollar amounts specified in Sections 2.12.167, 2.12.500.A.3, 2.12.505.B and 2.12.530.B.2.c for cost of living changes pursuant to Section 2.12.075 in January of every odd-numbered year following Council implementation. Such adjustments shall be rounded to the nearest ten dollars ($10) with respect to Sections 2.12.167 and 2.12.530.B.2.c and one thousand dollars ($1,000) with respect to Sections 2.12.500.A.3 and 2.12.505.B.

2.12.550 Fair Elections Act Penalties

In addition to other enforcement and penalty provisions of this Article:

A. It is a violation of the law for candidates to accept more Fair Elections Act benefits than those to which they are entitled or misuse such benefits or Fair Elections funding.

B. If a participating candidate knowingly or willfully accepts or spends Fair Elections funding in violation of this Act, then the candidate shall repay to the Fair Elections Fund an amount equal to twice the value of Fair Elections funding unlawfully accepted or spent.

C. The Commission shall, after a hearing held pursuant to Section 2.12.230, have the authority to impose the fine created by this section upon a two-thirds vote.

2.12.555 Violation—Persons Ineligible for Public Funds—Time Limit

No person who commits a substantial violation of this chapter shall be eligible to receive public funds for a period of four years from and after the date that the Commission determines, upon a two-thirds vote, that such a violation has occurred, following a hearing held pursuant to Section 2.12.230. The Commission shall by regulation state the criteria to be satisfied in order to make a finding of a substantial violation.

2.12.560 Review by Commission

After each of the first two election cycles that occur after Council implementation of this Act, the Commission shall review the Fair Elections program and make recommendations to Council for policy changes to improve and refine the program.

Section 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

All provisions of this Act will take effect immediately.
Section 5. SEVERABILITY
In the event any court of competent jurisdiction holds any provision of this Act invalid or unenforceable, such holding shall not invalidate or render unenforceable any other provisions hereof.
Yes on Measure X1

Campaign Plan Overview
Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition  
Measure X1 Campaign Plan Overview  
Sept. 19, 2016

1. Administration

A. Campaign address

The campaign address is:

Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition  
2124 Kittredge St. #250  
Berkeley, CA 94704

The campaign website is www.YesOnX1.org.

B. Staff

Executive Committee:  
Mark Capitolo, Campaign Manager, Duffy & Capitolo Political Consulting  
Kathay Feng, Co-Chair, Executive Director, California Common Cause  
Sam Ferguson, Co-Chair  
Daniel Newman, Co-Chair, President & Co-Founder, MapLight

Steering Committee, which includes Executive Committee plus:  
Andrea Slater, CA Common Cause State Program Manager  
Helen Grieco, Northern CA Common Cause Organizer  
Trent Lange, President, California Clean Money Campaign  
Ayca Guralp, Treasurer  
Alec Saslow, Communications  
Laura Curlin  
Chelsea Whitman

2. Campaign Background and Research

A. Characteristics of Berkeley

Racial Demographics: According to the 2010 Census\(^1\), Berkeley has a population of 112,580. Its racial demographics include a majority white population (59.5%) with substantial communities of Asians (19.3%), African Americans (10%) and Hispanics/Latinos (10.8%).

Age: The city has a large population of young people. 38.2% of the city is between the ages of 15 and 29, with age groups both above and below those clusters relatively well distributed throughout the population. (The high number of young people is largely due to students who attend UC Berkeley.)

Home Ownership: The majority of Berkeley residents (59.1%) rent their homes, with a substantial minority who own their homes (40.9%).

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\(^1\) More statistics from the census bureau on Berkeley can be found at [http://factfinder.census.gov/](http://factfinder.census.gov/)
Income: It is an affluent city. The median family income is $114,720, while the mean family income is $151,523. 57% of families earn over $100,000 per year.²

Political Affiliation: 80,963 people are registered to vote in Berkeley. 65% of registered voters belong to the Democratic Party, compared to just 4% in the Republican Party and 3% in the Green Party. 17% of voters are Independent, and 11% belong to other parties.³ The city is also quite liberal. 54% of Democratic primary voters voted for Bernie Sanders, compared to 46% who voted for Hillary Clinton.

Geography: There are two rough demographic splits in the city — students/residents and hills/flats. Residents who reside in the Berkeley hills, compared to the flats, tend to be whiter and more affluent than those who live in the flats. While solidly democratic, they tend to vote as moderates in local elections, often opposing tax increases and progressive measures such as cannabis legalization, living wage increases, and rent control measures.

B. The 2004 Campaign

In 2004, Berkeley voters were given the chance to adopt a clean elections system for the city. Unfortunately, Berkeley voters were not persuaded then of the need for public financing of elections, and the measure failed to pass by a margin of 59 to 41, with 49,534 votes cast. Though the defeat was a setback, there are three key lessons that we learned from that campaign that we have taken into consideration moving forward:⁴

1. We were hard-pressed to find enough volunteers to help the campaign, as many resources were diverted to the Presidential election between George W. Bush and John Kerry, which drew sympathetic volunteers away. We will likely face a similar problem this year, with a high-stakes and polarizing election between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. In an effort to solve this problem, we have increased our student and community outreach for more volunteers, and have sought more volunteers earlier. We have also increased our coalition building efforts, and are utilizing coalition partner resources to help with the campaign more than last time. Jesse Arreguin, for instance, is distributing our literature along with his own in his campaign for mayor. This partnership will dramatically reduce the cost and work involved to distribute our literature, compared to paying for mailings or organizing our own volunteer base.

2. In 2004, we targeted what we believed were moderate swing voters in the Berkeley hills, the more well-to-do area of the city, assuming that our progressive base of support in the flats would support the initiative without being contacted. This strategy turned out to be incorrect. In this campaign, we will instead focus our efforts on targeting and mobilizing our base of supporters in the more progressive areas of the city.

3. We failed to implement a GOTV strategy in the 2004 election, relying on the erroneous advice of our former paid campaign manager that the election would either be won or lost by Election Day. Despite this advice, several campaign volunteers targeted and mobilized students on Election Day, resulting in a large spike in votes clustered around the UC Berkeley campus. In this campaign, we

² Source: http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF.
³ Source: http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/City_Manager/Home/AB_How_We_Live.aspx.
⁴ Though the 2004 measure was different — it was a system for full public financing of elections in block grants, rather than a matching funds system, and it covered the offices of School Board, Auditor, and Rent Board, where the current system only includes Mayor and City Council — we do not believe that the mechanical differences then and now will impact the campaign plan moving forward.
intend to devote significant resources to a GOTV campaign, by identifying likely voters in a door-knocking campaign, and following up closer to Election Day to remind them to vote for the initiative. We also plan to target likely undecided voters — mainly students — on Election Day to catch their vote before they go to the polls.

C. Polling

Prior to placing the measure on the ballot for voters to consider this November, the City Council commissioned two polls testing the popularity of various measures, including public financing of elections. In an initial poll conducted in March of 500 likely voters, respondents were asked whether they would support a Fair Elections system at a cost of $500,000/year. 39% of voters supported the measure, 31% were against and 30% were undecided. In a subsequent City Council-commissioned poll in April, respondents were presented with three questions. First, respondents were read the ballot question and asked how they would vote on the initiative if they election were held today. The support rate was similar to the March poll, with 39% in support of the measure, 26% against, and 35% undecided. After this initial question, respondents were read both a brief statement in support and a brief statement in opposition. The statements increased both voter support of and opposition to the measure, and decreased undecided respondents. Support increased to either 55% or 52% and opposition increased to either 35% or 33%, depending on which pair of support/opposition arguments was presented. Undecided respondents dropped from 35% to 13%.

The polling indicates two important findings: First, a substantial portion of Berkeley voters have no opinion on the measure. However, second, once voters are exposed to a statement in support, they are likely to support the measure—even if they also are exposed to opposition arguments. This means that our primary task this campaign is to educate the large percentage of Berkeley voters who will be undecided on this measure.

If the polling is accurate, we can expect approximately 19,000 voters to be in favor of this measure (39% of the 50,000 likely voters on the initiative, using the number of voters from the 2004 initiative as a baseline of likely voters on the ballot question). That means our task is to secure at least an additional 6,000 voters from the undecided voters to bring us to victory.

D. Demographic Targeting

Both polls sponsored by the City Council also included demographic breakdowns among the respondents. Of those with an opinion for or against, the polls showed that the initiative is favored most strongly among:

- Renters
- Men
- “Progressives” (as opposed to those who identify as “liberals”)
- “No Party” or other party identification (as compared to Democrats)
- Students
- Council Districts 1, 2, and 3

The statistical power of these subgroup preferences, however, is not known, due to the limited sample size of the polls.

E. Messaging

We will stress four points in this campaign:
1. The current system is out of balance. Less than 1% of Berkeley contributes over half the money to Berkeley political campaigns. We need to restore balance.

2. Measure X1 will increase the diversity of candidates in Berkeley and ensure that elections are based on the strength of ideas and organizing, not a candidates’ access to money. It will also increase the power and diversity of ordinary voters, engaging more citizens with their democracy.

3. Measure X1 will reduce the influence of special interests on local politics by freeing office holders from being forced to raise money from those with interests before the city.

4. Measure X1 will improve accountability by ensuring that office holders routinely face challengers when running for re-election.

We have consulted with many people on messaging including communications staff from Every Voice and principals in the 2015 Honest Election Seattle measure.

3. Field Plan and Outreach

A. Targeting and Overall Strategy

Given that the polling indicates a high number of undecided voters in Berkeley, as well as significant support amongst renters; Council Districts 1, 2, and 3; students; and progressives, our primary task is voter outreach to reach and educate likely voters among those who lean in favor of the initiative.

Council Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4 are the most ethnically diverse areas of the city, as well as the more progressive areas of the city and the areas with high proportions of renters. Voter outreach efforts will be concentrated in these areas, as they are the most likely voters in our favor. Outreach will also be targeted at UC Berkeley students, who tend to be in favor of the measure and are less inclined to consider the tax burden of local measures, even if they live in other council districts than 1, 2, and 3.

Social media outreach will also focus on these demographic targets, through targeting features of Facebook and other social media outlets.

B. Volunteer Activities

In order to accomplish our objectives of voter education and voter mobilization, this campaign needs to be volunteer intensive. Mobilization has begun and by October 1 we expect to mobilize 25 volunteers per week. Also, we aim to attract 50-75 individuals to do 100+ volunteer shifts during the four days before Election Day. If we are able to attract this level of volunteer support, we will be able to do these activities, most of which have already begun:

- Walk 75% of the city, with priority in Council Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4, as well as close to UC Berkeley;
- Conduct phone banks to reach likely voters in lower priority precincts and to get second hits in the most important precincts;
- Identify likely voters in favor of the measure through door-knocking and phone banking;
- Conduct phone banks later in the campaign for GOTV;
- Have tables and visibility at important locations in the city in late September and October;
- Do voter mobilization and final educational push on Election Day.
4. Endorsements

B. Endorsements Received as of Sept. 19

Last week we earned the endorsement of our #1 aspirational endorsement target, Robert Reich, the former Secretary of Labor, who lives in Berkeley and is extremely well-known and respected in Berkeley.

The measure also is endorsed by both major candidates for Berkeley mayor.

**Organizations**
- California Common Cause
- Berkeley Tenants Union
- CalPIRG
- Associated Students of University of California (ASUC)
- American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California (ACLU-NC)
- Berkeley Progressive Alliance
- California Clean Money Campaign
- Campaign Legal Center
- Courage Campaign
- Democracy Matters
- East Bay Young Democrats
- Every Voice
- Green Party of Alameda County
- Greenpeace, Inc.
- Free Speech for People
- MAYDAY.US
- NAACP, Berkeley Branch
- People For the American Way
- Public Citizen
- Represent.Us
- Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter
- Wellstone Democratic Club

**Individuals**
- Robert Reich, Chancellor’s Professor of Public Policy, UC Berkeley, Former U.S. Secretary of Labor
- Joan Blades, Co-Founder, MoveOn.org* and LivingRoomConversations.org*
- Annie Leonard, Executive Director, Greenpeace USA*
- Dr. Naomi Wolf, Co-Founder, DailyClout.com*

Berkeley City Council Member Jesse Arreguin
Berkeley City Council Member Laurie Capitelli
Berkeley City Council Member Lori Droste
Berkeley City Council Member Darryl Moore
Berkeley City Council Member Kriss Worthington

Nanci Armstrong-Temple, Berkeley City Council candidate
Ben Bartlett, Berkeley City Council candidate
Mark Coplan, Berkeley City Council candidate
Cheryl Davila, Berkeley City Council candidate
Fred Dodsworth, Berkeley City Council candidate
Sophie Hahn, Berkeley City Council candidate
Stephen Murphy, Berkeley City Council candidate
Rebecca Saltzman, BART Director*
John Selawsky, Rent Board Commissioner*
Alejandro Soto-Vigil, Rent Stabilization Board Commissioner* and Delegate for the California Democratic Party*
Jesse Townley, Chair, Berkeley Rent Board*
Igor Tregub, Vice Chair, Zoning Adjustments Board, Housing Advisory Commission*

* for identification purposes only

5. Earned Media

There are many people and groups involved in this campaign that would like to see us do high profile media. This, to some extent, conflicts with the following facts about doing an electoral campaign in a city the size of Berkeley:

- Regional media outlets are rarely interested in Berkeley electoral campaigns;
- Berkeley voters, voting on municipal causes, are relatively unlikely to be influenced by a 15 second mention on TV, though we could work for weeks to get that mention;
- In terms of direct influence, written material put in the hands of voters (whether through mail or door-to-door work) is likely to achieve greater results.

None of this means we should not do unpaid media. However, to the extent possible the campaign will concentrate on relatively non-labor-intensive work, such as:

- Maintaining relationships with Berkeley beat reporters at the *Daily Californian, Berkeley Voice, SF Chronicle, and Oakland Tribune*;
- Having editorial meetings with potential endorsing media;
- Ensuring that we have at least some letters to the editor in all papers that Berkeley citizens read;
- Getting on local radio stations such as KPFA, KALX, Klaw, and KQED (longer-format shows preferred);
- Having representatives at forums where press are already likely to be.

There are other desirable media-oriented activities that our allied organizations, if they are willing and able, could do on our behalf:

- Contacting the *New York Times, the Nation*, and other national media who will be interested in the campaign and have a Berkeley audience;
- Maintaining relationships with a wider list of reporters than the campaign has time for, including statewide reporters and columnists or editorial writers at the local papers.

6. Paid Media

The attached campaign proposal from Duffy & Capitolo political consulting covers the paid media areas of the campaign, including direct mail, Facebook and other electronic advertising, and other paid outreach. Note that the Duffy & Capitolo proposal attached was reduced in budget and scope from $60,000 to $48,000 based on subsequent discussions of campaign strategy and priorities, and the revised, $48,000 amount is reflected in the campaign budget below under the budget subheading “Paid Media.”
7. Budget and Fundraising

A. Contribution Limits

There is no contribution limit for initiative campaigns. The City of Berkeley requires that all donors above $50 be publicly identified on FPPC forms.

B. Campaign Budget

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field/Misc.</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Manager</td>
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<td>Volunteer Coordinator</td>
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<td>Phones</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event/Action Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL Field/Misc.</strong></td>
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<table>
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<td>Slates</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL Paid Media</strong></td>
<td><strong>$48,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **TOTAL Campaign Budget**    | **$70,000** |

C. Funding Sources

- $15,500 raised to-date from local efforts (as of Sept. 19)
- $9,000 requested from Piper Fund by CA Common Cause (decision pending)
- $45,000 requested from Victory 2021 funders
Appendix D

New Analysis Shows Outsized Role of Money in Berkeley Elections
Over Half of Berkeley Campaign Funds Come from Fewer than 350 Households

Berkeley, CA - A new analysis of campaign finance data for elections in Berkeley illustrates the prominent role of money in the city’s elections for Mayoral and City Council candidates. A review of City of Berkeley campaign finance data performed by the Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition found that more than half of Berkeley campaign funds come from fewer than 350 households, less than 1% of Berkeley. The analysis also found that one third of contributions to current elected City Council members and the Mayor came from outside of Berkeley.

This election Berkeley voters will have a chance to vote to implement a new system of public financing of Berkeley elections known as Measure X1, or the Berkeley Fair Elections Act. Under Measure X1, candidates with broad support who refuse money from special-interest PACs and accept only small contributions – $50 or less – receive a limited amount of matching funds. Other public financing measures are on the ballot this year in Washington and Howard County, Maryland.

The review of campaign finance data from the Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition reveals an election system in Berkeley dominated by large contributions-- and few competitive races. Additional findings include:

Candidates are reliant for their campaign funding upon a small group of donors.

- More than half of Berkeley campaign funds to the current Mayor and City Council members come from fewer than 350 households — less than 1% of Berkeley.
- The current Mayor and City Council members raised $99,959 outside of Berkeley, one third of all campaign funds.
- 60% of the district City Council members’ campaign funds in their last elections came from donors contributing the maximum amount ($250).
- For the mayor, 70% of campaign funds in his last election came from donors contributing the maximum amount.

*Source: Campaign finance data from the most recent election for each sitting member of the City Council and the Mayor.

Candidates who are able to raise more money have a competitive advantage over others.

- Seven of the last eight district City Council races went to the candidate who raised the most money, as did the last mayor’s race.

Elections in Berkeley are expensive, but not competitive.

- Fifty-eight percent of contests for City Council and Mayor in the last ten years have been uncompetitive (defined as races where no challenger raised at least 50% as much as the winner, as well as races where the winner ran unopposed).
- Looking at all competitive Berkeley City Council races over the last 10 years, the winning district City Council candidate raised over $30,000 on average.
- The winning mayoral candidate raised $133,574 on average since 2002.
- In 2002, mayoral candidates raised $423,765 – or $10.56 per vote.
- Since 1997, not a single incumbent district City Council member has run and lost their seat.
“This analysis confirms that Berkeley’s elections face many of the same challenges as the rest of the country - big-money donors and not enough power for everyday residents,” said Kathay Feng, a member of the Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition and Executive Director of California Common Cause. “Fortunately, voters have an opportunity to usher in a new system that will strengthen their voice and bring greater accountability to Berkeley government. Berkeley should vote Yes on Measure X1.”

Measure X1 is supported by a diverse coalition of Berkeley citizens and organizations, including the Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter, California Common Cause, the Berkeley Tenants Union, NAACP Berkeley and many more. Learn more about Measure X1 at http://www.yesonx1.org/.
Appendix E

Screenshots of Yes on X1 Website

Vote YES! on Measure X1
Prioritize people over special interests.
Bring more diversity & accountability to City Hall.

I am voting Yes on Measure X1 because it is an exemplary public campaign finance measure. If more communities, states and even the federal government adopt policies like Measure X1 we can finally make real strides toward getting big money out of our politics.
—Robert Reich, Chancellor’s Professor of Public Policy, U.C. Berkeley, Former U.S. Secretary of Labor

Endorsed by these organizations:

Berkeley Progressive Alliance
Berkeley Tenants Union
CALPIRG

Supported by these Berkeley City Council Members:
Max Anderson
Laurie Capitelli
Darryl Moore
Jesse Arreguin
Lori Droste
Kriss Worthington

MONEY is the single biggest threat to Democracy

But here in Berkeley, we can vote Yes on Measure X1 to keep big money out of local politics and lift the voice of every voter.

Under Measure X1
Candidates for Mayor and City Council who Pledge:
To accept no more than $50 per person.

Are Rewarded With:
$6 of public funding for every $1 raised from everyday Berkeley residents.

Measure X1 uses a small amount of existing City of Berkeley funds and does not raise taxes.
Endorsers

Groups

ACLU of Northern California
California Common Cause
CalPIRG
NAACP, Berkeley Branch
Sierra Club Bay Area Chapter
Alameda County Democratic Party
Associated Students of University of California (ASUC)
Berkeley Citizens Action
Berkeley Progressive Alliance
Berkeley Tenants Union
CA-Clean Money Campaign
Campaign Legal Center
Course Campaign
Democracy Matters
East Bay Young Democrats
Every Voice
Green Party of Alameda County
Greenpeace, Inc.
Free Speech for People
Friends of Meline
MyDay.US
People for the American Way
Public Citizen
Represent.UX
The Rockefeller project at Demand Progress
Wellstone Democratic Club

Media Organizations

Daily Californian
East Bay Express
San Francisco Chronicle

Individuals

Robert Rathe, Chancellor’s Professor of Public Policy, U.C. Berkeley; Former U.S. Secretary of Labor
Joon Hahm, Co-Founder, VoteThemOn* and LivingRoomConversations*
Amie Leinard, Executive Director, Greenpeace USA*
Dr. Naomi Wolf, Co-Founder, DailyCheat.com*
Daniel O. Newman, Founder & President, MapLight*
Berkeley City Council Member Max Arias
Berkeley City Council Member Jesse Arreguin
Berkeley City Council Member Lauren Capitelli
Berkeley City Council Member Leilani Douillet
Berkeley City Council Member Deryl Moore
Berkeley City Council Member Kris Washington
Nancy Armstrong-Temple, Berkeley City Council candidate
Ben Bartlett, Berkeley City Council candidate
Mark Cohan, Berkeley City Council candidate
Cheryl Davis, Berkeley City Council candidate
Fred Doolittle, Berkeley City Council candidate
Sophie Hahn, Berkeley City Council candidate
Stephen Murphy, Berkeley City Council candidate
Rebecca Saltzman, BART Director*
John Selatsky, Rent Board Commissioner*
 Alejandro Soto-Vigil, Rent Stabilization Board Commissioner* and Delegate for the California Democratic Party*
Jesus Tonnely, Chair, Berkeley Rent Board*
Igor Trogel, Vice Chair, Zoning Adjustments Board, Housing Advisory Commission*
James Albert
Evan Berlin, Our Revolution*
Nancy Biddle
Linda Franklin
Franklin Greenland
Bonnie Hughes
Matthew Lewis, UC Berkeley Progressive Student Association*
Rebecca Perry
Alan Ross
Mark Van Landuyt, The Jimmy Dean Show*
Mid Warwick
Margo Williamson, Friends of Adaline*

*For identification purposes only
Please come join us every **Tuesday 4-7pm, Thursday 4-7pm and Saturday 10am-1pm** to volunteer at our campaign office, located at NextSpace, 2081 Center St, Berkeley, CA 94704. You can also make phone calls from home and set your own hours. Contact Andrea Slater.

Get Involved!

Donate your time or skills in a number of areas, including canvassing, voter registration, fundraising and social media.

**First Name**

**Last Name**

**Email**

**Phone**

**How can you volunteer?**
- [ ] Voter Education/Tableing
- [ ] Phone Banking
- [ ] Registering Voters
- [ ] Fundraising
- [ ] Host a House Party
- [ ] Walking Precincts
- [ ] Get Out the Vote
- [ ] Social Media

[Submit]
People in Berkeley have found a solution to their political problems.

November 4, 2016 - Money is the lifeblood of political campaigns, but it shouldn’t be the decisive one. Here’s how one group of Berkeley residents is trying to change that.

The Daily Californian: Berkeley’s solution to the problem of money in politics.

October 31, 2016 - An analysis reviewing past Berkeley elections conducted by local nonprofit concluded that money is a significant advantage in city elections. The Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition, which conducts the analysis, found that candidates who received more than $2,000 in campaign contributions were more likely to win than those who did not. The coalition also found that candidates who received money from fewer donors were more likely to win than those who received money from more donors. The analysis was funded by Berkeley residents who believe that money should not be the deciding factor in city elections.

Berkely’s Public campaign finance advocates find “outsized role” of money in post-2016 Berkeley elections.

October 27, 2016 - A new analysis of campaign finances from past Berkeley elections has found that more than half of the contributions to winning candidates came from fewer than 5% of Berkeley households, and that three-fifths of the contributions came from outside the city. The analysis was conducted by the Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition, which is a group of Berkeley residents who believe that money should not be the deciding factor in city elections.

The Daily Californian: Yes on X1.

October 29, 2016 - Vote yes on X1 to ensure that Berkeley residents can vote with a direct contribution to candidates of their choice. Click here to read the full story in the Daily Californian.

The Daily Californian: Measure X1 introduces possibility for Berkeley public campaign financing.

October 24, 2016 - The upcoming special election will feature a measure that would enable public campaign financing in Berkeley. The measure would require candidates to meet a minimum contribution of $100,000 from the general fund, which would be allocated to the candidates in the election. The measure would also require candidates to meet a minimum contribution of $1,000 from the general fund, which would be allocated to the candidates in the election. The measure would also require candidates to meet a minimum contribution of $1,000 from the general fund, which would be allocated to the candidates in the election.

San Francisco Chronicle: Yes on Measure X1.

October 19, 2016 - Berkeley residents have overwhelmingly approved a measure that would enable public campaign financing in Berkeley. The measure would require candidates to meet a minimum contribution of $100,000 from the general fund, which would be allocated to the candidates in the election. The measure would also require candidates to meet a minimum contribution of $1,000 from the general fund, which would be allocated to the candidates in the election. The measure would also require candidates to meet a minimum contribution of $1,000 from the general fund, which would be allocated to the candidates in the election.

East Bay Times: Commentary: California’s answer to big money elections.

October 14, 2016 - In the Bay Area and across California, voters have immediate options this election to send a powerful message about the role of campaign contributions in our democracy. Two ballot measures, one on all California ballots and another in Berkeley, offer an opportunity to send a message to our country’s money-in-politics problems. Click here to read the full story in the East Bay Times.

East Bay Express: Endorsements for Election Day.

October 10, 2016 - Public funding is in another common-sense boss government practice, and we support this measure, which would allocate $2 million over three years to a public campaign for seniors and schools. Public funding is in another common-sense boss government practice, and we support this measure, which would allocate $2 million over three years to a public campaign for seniors and schools. Public funding is in another common-sense boss government practice, and we support this measure, which would allocate $2 million over three years to a public campaign for seniors and schools.

Daily Californian: Fundraising margins continue to widen between mayoral candidates.

October 10, 2016 - Berkeley mayor candidates Laurie Capitelli and Jose Arreguin have reached a fundraising goal of $40,000. The mayoral candidates have reached a fundraising goal of $40,000. The mayoral candidates have reached a fundraising goal of $40,000.

Former U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich Endorses Berkeley Fair Elections Act, Measure X1.

October 5, 2016 - Berkeley, CA: UC Berkeley Professor of Public Policy and former U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich has endorsed a ballot measure in Berkeley that would create a system of public financing for elections for Berkeley Mayor and City Council. By supporting Measure X1, the Berkeley Fair Elections Act, Reich joins a growing coalition of Berkeley citizens and organizations, including the Sierra Club of San Francisco, California Common Cause, the NARAL Pro-Choice Berkeley and many more. Currently, more than half of all campaign funds for Berkeley elections come from less than 1% of Berkeley households, and the third of those come from outside Berkeley. Measure X1 creates a voluntary system of public financing for Berkeley elections to ensure that all candidates have equal access to the tools they need to win and that all candidates have equal access to the tools they need to win and that all candidates have equal access to the tools they need to win.

Contact Us:
350 Market St.
Public in Berkeley Fair Elections
Coalition for Measure X1
350 Market St.
Berkeley, CA 94710

Campaign office (and voter assistance headquarters)
2221 Shattuck Street
2nd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704

FPPC # 1391925

Mayor Landrieu Endorses X1:
Columbia, SC: Mayor of Columbia, SC, and former New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu endorsed the Fair Elections Act, Measure X1, for Berkeley, saying, “I’m excited to support Berkeley’s public financing of elections. This is a common-sense reform that will ensure that all candidates have a fair chance at winning and that all voters have a voice in who represents them. By supporting Measure X1, we can ensure that Berkeley remains a beacon of good government and a model for the rest of the country.”
Learn More

Keep Big Money Out of Berkeley Elections

Big money's influence on our politics is worse than ever. Fighting for fair elections and a government that is accountable to the people are values that Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton have been fighting for all year. They are also Berkeley values.

So, while they continue the fight to overturn Citizens United and special interests like the Koch Brothers, we can take action right here in Berkeley to protect fair elections in our city.

Yes on Measure X1

Voting YES on Measure X1 ensures that the people of Berkeley – not special interests – are the top donors to candidates for Mayor and City Council.

Measure X1 encourages candidates to limit contributions to their campaigns to no more than $50 per person and only from Berkeley residents.

Measure X1 then rewards these candidates with six dollars of public financing for every one dollar they raise from everyday Berkeley residents. Measure X1 uses a small amount of existing funds and does not raise taxes.

Diversity & Accountability in City Government

Measure X1 will limit the influence that wealthy special interest donors have in our local politics. Measure X1 will also level the playing field for grassroots candidates running for office, and will bring more diversity and accountability to City Hall.

Frequently Asked Questions
Contact Us

Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition for Measure X1
2124 Kittredge Street #250, Berkeley, CA 94704

Stay Informed!
Join our email list to get the latest news and events for the Yes on X1 campaign.

Email Address*

First Name

Last Name

* = required field

SUBSCRIBE

Contact Us:
Mailing Address:
Paid for by Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition for Measure X1
2124 Kittredge Street #250, Berkeley, CA 94704

Campaign office (and volunteer headquarters):
NextSpace
2081 Center St.
Berkeley, CA 94704

Mayor Endorsement Provided By:
California Common Cause – Yes on 54 and 59 (nonprofit:501(c)(4), Los Angeles, CA, $1,033,14; Sean Eldridge, Garrison, NY, $20,000; Jonathan Soros, New York, NY, $10,000; Jim Hehrwagen, Los Gatos, CA, $10,000.

FPPC # 1390315
MONEY is the single biggest threat to Democracy

But here in Berkeley, we can vote Yes on Measure X1 to keep big money out of local politics and protect fair elections for everyone who chooses to serve.

UNDER MEASURE X1

Candidates for Mayor and City Council who pledge: To accept no more than $50 per person.

Are rewarded by the City of Berkeley with: $6 of public financing for every $1 raised from everyday Berkeley residents.

Measure X1 uses a small amount of existing City of Berkeley funds and does not raise taxes.

Vote Yes on Measure X1!

Vote by Mail or on November 8th. Protect Fair Elections in Berkeley!
Measure X1
YES!
Fair Elections For Berkeley

Vote Yes on Measure X1
✓ Prioritize people over special interests.
✓ Bring more diversity & accountability to City Hall.

JOIN US! Take Action Today!
visit www.YesonX1.org

Paid for by the Berkeley Fair Elections Coalition for Measure X1
(FPPC # pending)
2124 Kittredge Street, Suite #250, Berkeley, CA 94704
Major funding by Jim Heerwagen, Los Gatos, CA, $10,000;
California Nurses Association, Sacramento, CA, $1,000;
Laura Lauder, Atherton, CA, $1,000; John O’Farrell, Atherton, CA, $1,000.

Berkeley Tenants Union  CALPIRG
BERKELEY PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE

Supported by these
Berkeley City Council Members:
Max Anderson, Jesse Arreguin,
Laurie Capitelli, Lori Droste,
Darryl Moore and Kriss Worthington