



STAFF REPORT

City Council

Meeting Date:

11/4/2025

Staff Report Number:

25-168-CC

Public Hearing:

Receive and file the certification of sufficiency of the petition for the proposed citizen-initiative measure entitled "Downtown Parking Plazas Ordinance Initiative"

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council receive and file the certification of the sufficiency of the petition for the proposed citizen-initiative measure entitled "Downtown Parking Plazas Ordinance Initiative".

Policy Issues

Pursuant to California Elections Code section 9114, this report constitutes the City Election Official's certification of the results of the examination of the petition for the proposed citizen-initiative measure entitled "Downtown Parking Plazas Ordinance Initiative" (Proposed Initiative.) The results of the examination of the petition from the County of San Mateo Assessor County Clerk Recorder's & Elections Office (County) is attached hereto as Attachment A. The city clerk, acting as the City's Elections Official, has determined that the Proposed Initiative qualifies for the ballot.

Background

On May 15, 2025, Initiative proponents Alexander John Beltramo, Caitlin Ann Darke and Van Richard Kouzoujlan submitted a Notice of Intent to Circulate a Petition with the City's Elections Official with a request that a ballot title and summary be prepared for the measure. In response, a Ballot Title and Summary was prepared by the city attorney pursuant to Elections Code section 9203 (Attachment B). The Ballot Title and Summary was submitted to the proponents May 29, 2025. The proponents published the Notice of Intent in San Mateo Daily Journal June 2, 2025, pursuant to Elections Code section 9205 and filed an Affidavit of Publication with the city clerk June 9, 2025, pursuant to Elections Code section 9206.

The petition regarding the Proposed Initiative was filed with the city clerk Oct. 10, 2025, bearing 3,440 unverified signatures. Per the Elections Code, the city clerk's office, in conjunction with the County, examined the signatures the proponents had collected to verify the sufficiency of the petition.

By letter dated Oct. 20, 2025, the County notified the city that "of the 3,928 signatures submitted" in support of the Proposed Initiative, "2,760 were checked and 2,200 signatures were verified as valid." The 2,200 verified signatures exceed the minimum of 2,103 signatures required to qualify the Proposed Initiative for the ballot (Attachment A).

Analysis

Because the petition has been signed by the requisite number of voters, the city clerk has determined that

the Proposed Initiative qualifies for the ballot.

This receive and file agenda item requires no City Council action. However, the next agenda item, J-3., will require the City Council to take one of the following three actions, pursuant to Elections Code section 9215, which are described in greater detail in Agenda Item No. J-3.

1. Adopt the ordinance, without alteration, at the regular meeting at which the certification of the petition is presented, or within 10 days after it is presented; or
2. Submit the ordinance, without alteration, to the voters pursuant to Elections Code section 1405; or
3. Order a report pursuant to Elections Code section 9212 at the regular meeting at which the certification of the petition is presented. When the report is presented to the City Council, the City Council is required to either adopt the ordinance within 10 days or order an election pursuant to subdivision (b).

Impact on City Resources

There is no direct impact on City resources associated with the action in this staff report.

Environmental Review

This action is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it is an organizational structure change that will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. Certificate of sufficiency of the petition for the Proposed Initiative
- B. City Attorney Ballot Title and Summary

Report prepared by:
Judi A. Herren, City Clerk

Report reviewed by:
Nira F. Doherty, City Attorney



OFFICE OF
**ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-
RECORDER & ELECTIONS**
COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

MARK CHURCH
ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-
RECORDER & CHIEF ELECTIONS OFFICER

October 20, 2025

Judi Herren, City Clerk
City of Menlo Park
701 Laurel St
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Subject: Completion of Signature Review – Downtown Parking Plazas Ordinance

Dear City Clerk Herren,

We have completed the review of signatures for the Initiative Petition titled *Downtown Parking Plazas Ordinance*, which you filed on October 10, 2025. Of the 3,928 signatures submitted, 2,760 were examined, and 2,200 were verified as valid.

A separate billing statement for our services will be sent to you shortly.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Hillary O'Connor at (650) 312-5294.

Sincerely,

Mark Church

Judi A. Herren

From: Herren, Judi A
Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 4:35 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: 'Doherty, Nira F.'
Subject: Ballot title and summary
Attachments: 20250529 Ballot Title and Summary - Downtown Parking Lots.pdf

Hello James and Erik,

Please see the attached ballot title and summary.

Thank you,
Judi

May 29, 2025

VIA E-MAIL

Judi Herren
City Clerk, City of Menlo Park
jaherren@menlopark.gov

Re: Menlo Park City Attorney Ballot Title and Summary

Dear Ms. Herren:

Pursuant to Elections Code section 9203, attached hereto please find the City Attorney ballot title and summary in response to the Notice of Intent to Circulate a Petition which was submitted to the City of Menlo Park City Clerk's office on May 15, 2025.

Please provide this ballot title and summary to the following persons by May 30, 2025:

James R. Sutton, Esq.
[REDACTED]

Erik Leggio, Esq.
[REDACTED]

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

BURKE, WILLIAMS & SORESENSEN, LLP



Nira F. Doherty

NFD:vk

Enclosure: Ballot Title and Summary - Downtown Parking Lots

INITIATIVE MEASURE TO BE DIRECTLY SUBMITTED TO THE VOTERS

The Menlo Park City Attorney has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purpose and points of the proposed initiative measure:

Title

A Citizen Initiative Prohibiting the City of Menlo Park from Selling, Leasing, Donating, Disposing, or Conveying City-Owned Downtown Parking Lots Without Voter Approval.

Summary

This initiative, if adopted, would prohibit the City of Menlo Park (the “**City**”) from selling, trading, leasing, donating, disposing, or otherwise conveying all or a portion of City-owned downtown Menlo Park parking lots for any reason that would affect or diminish the availability or convenience of parking, without voter approval, with certain exceptions.

The initiative would add Title 17, Chapter 17.01 to the Menlo Park Municipal Code entitled “**Downtown Parking Plazas**” (the “**Ordinance**”). The Ordinance includes the following provisions:

1. “**Parking Plazas**” is defined as eight separate parking lots located in downtown Menlo Park, described as “publicly owned” and “owned by the City.”
2. The City is prohibited from taking any of the following actions, without first obtaining voter approval, if such action would diminish the availability, access, or convenience of public parking for Downtown customers, workers, and visitors:
 - a. Disposing, selling, trading, leasing, donating, or otherwise conveying all or any portion of a Parking Plaza;
 - b. Designating a Parking Plaza as “surplus” or “exempt surplus” land pursuant to the Surplus Lands Act;
 - c. Modifying, altering, or constructing any improvements on the Parking Plazas;
 - d. Changing the use of a Parking Plaza.
3. If the City wishes to take any action listed in Section 2, above, the City must take all legally required steps to approve the action and then place such action on the next regularly scheduled election ballot, and such action will only become effective if approved by a majority of the voters.
4. If the City takes any action listed in Section 2, above, between May 15, 2025 and the effective date of the Ordinance, such actions shall be deemed null and void, unless the action is reenacted in compliance with the Ordinance.
5. Voter approval is not required for the following actions:
 - a. Maintaining, repairing, renovating, or improving the Parking Plazas as long as those actions are intended to preserve, improve, or expand availability, access, or convenience of public parking.
 - b. Allowing for community activities on the Parking Plazas, such as farmers’ markets or other similar events, as long as such activities are temporary and last no more than three consecutive days.