

Keep Our Park

For Immediate Release

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JUDGE STRIKES DOWN OAK GROVE REFERENDUM PETITION

*Decision Ends Costly June Referendum Election and Helps Speed the
Donation of Open Space to the City of Pleasanton*

PLEASANTON—Community supporters of a plan to donate almost 500 acres of open space to the City of Pleasanton for public trails and recreation applauded a court ruling today that concluded project opponents deceived residents during a referendum drive targeted for the June ballot.

“This decision is a victory for the Lin Family, the city and the residents of Pleasanton and a repudiation of the deceptive tactics used by a small group of opponents to misrepresent a project that has widespread community support,” said Marty Inderbitzen, attorney for the Lin family, owners of the Oak Grove property. “When we initiated this project, we made a commitment to an open, honest and candid process that would involve the entire community. That’s why we spent four years of intensive planning with elected officials, homeowners’ associations, environmentalists and community leaders and held open house sessions, participated in “First Wednesdays” and nine formally noticed public hearings before City committees, commissions and the City Council.”

Alameda County Superior Court Judge Frank Roesch invalidated a petition that opponents had circulated to place the Oak Grove Project on the ballot. The judge said opponents misled residents into signing the petition by failing to provide the full text of the ordinance approved by the city council.

The court’s decision saves Pleasanton from having to hold an expensive election with taxpayer dollars. With no further delays, Pleasanton gets almost 500 acres of new park land – twice as large as Augustin Bernal – with trails suitable for hiking, biking and equestrian uses, a staging area and other amenities. A developer-funded endowment will maintain the open space in perpetuity.

Despite the extensive community planning process and the council’s near-unanimous approval, a small group of opponents mounted a campaign to place the council’s decision before voters. However, the petition that opponents circulated to get the referendum on the ballot failed to include the very ordinance it sought to challenge, a fatal flaw according to the judges ruling.

Oak Grove supporters challenged the petition in court when they heard from many residents who learned only after they signed the petition that they were not given complete information about the project. There were many more who stated that, had they seen the additional information, they would not have signed the petition.

The 497 acres being donated to the city as part of the Oak Grove Project will serve as the first and most significant step in the creation of a 2,000-acre greenbelt to protect and buffer Pleasanton's southern border against future development forever.

Keep Our Park is a community based group of concerned citizens who care deeply about Pleasanton and its future.

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