

CITY OF OAKLAND



DALZIEL BUILDING • 250 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA • SUITE 4314 • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612-2033

Oakland Public Works

Brooke A. Levin

Director

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July 6, 2016

Sent Via E-Mail

Naomi Schiff, naomi@17th.com

James Vann, jamesevann@aol.com

Jennie Gerard, jejerard@pacbell.net

Dear Ms. Schiff, Mr. Vann & Ms. Gerard:

Thank you for your letter concerning funding for the care and maintenance of infrastructure through Measure DD. As you know Measure DD does not fund maintenance, which has been a challenge for the City. Providing new park lands and enhancing our existing parks is a benefit to the community and the environment and we appreciate the Measure DD coalition's advocacy for park improvements and seeking ways to fund the maintenance of these improvements.

In the last Fiscal Year budget, the Council authorized \$400,000 to the Parks and Tree Services Division for Lake Merritt maintenance to assist with the maintenance of the new Measure DD landscape infrastructure which was coming off of a plant establishment period. I'm pleased to say that three new gardener positions were created and hired and the equipment for their use was ordered and expected to be delivered in July. The gardeners began working at Lake Merritt in April. We also added additional hours of park attendants at Lake Merritt in the summer due to the heavy use. The park attendants assist with litter can emptying and cleanup. We anticipate with the new staff and equipment sufficient maintenance will be provided to Lake Merritt parklands barring any other demands on this unfunded citywide service. The City Administrator has allowed unspent personnel funds from the \$400K appropriated in FY 15-16 to carry forward to FY 16-17 for use in caring for Lake Merritt parklands.

The staff at the Lake varies in assignments based on the day to day needs. Operational adjustments are made on a regular basis for all areas of the City including the Lake Merritt location. These adjustments are based many variables such as special event support, homeless encampment abatement/cleanup, and staff on various leaves (vacations, sick, workers comp). The Parks and Tree Services team does their best to adjust on a day to day basis to provide the best service possible throughout the City.

As to the question of overall staffing, one Gardener II assigned to the Lake was transferred to another area of the City and in exchange a Gardener II from that area was moved to the Lake. There was no reduction in staffing.

We are looking forward to this coming fiscal year with the three additional gardeners' efforts for the entire year and the efficiencies that can be made in the maintenance of Lake Merritt parklands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brooke A. Levin', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Brooke A. Levin
Director, Public Works

cc: Sabrina Landreth, City Administrator
Christine Daniel, Assistant City Administrator
Susan Kattchee, Assistant Director Public Works
Brian Carthan, Manager, Park and Tree Services
Lesley Estes, Program Manager Measure DD