



Berkeley Ballot Measures 2026



Presented by Berkeley
Neighborhoods Council



Agenda



10:30 – 11 Measure X

Amendments to Rent Stabilization
Ordinance

11 – 11:30 Measure U

\$300 Million General Obligation Bond

11:30-12 Measure V

0.5% Sales Tax Increase for General City
Purposes

12 – 12:30 Measure Y

Parcel Tax for Arts Organizations and
Programs

12:30 - 1 Measure Z

Parcel Tax for Public Bank

1 - 1:30 Measure AA

Soda Tax Increase

Measure X – Amendments to Rent Stabilization Ordinance

Requires majority vote to pass

For: Soli Alpert

Against: Krista Gulbranson

Measure U – \$300 Million General Obligation Bond

Requires 2/3 vote to pass

For: Brent Blackaby, City Councilmember

Against: Eric Friedman

2027-2067

Generational debt

The “Advanced Fiscal Policies” Plan

Another bond.

And another.

And another.

New bond measures every 6–10 years

Amount first. Priorities later.

**“How far can
we take this?”**

Shoshana O’Keefe

Amount first. Priorities later.

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**“It felt like a lot”
“...it’s not like
a science.”**

City staff

Amount first. Priorities later.

**“How far can
we take this?”**

Shoshana O’Keefe

**“It felt like a lot”
“...it’s not like
a science.”**

City staff

**“No scoring, no weighting, no documented
analysis”**

Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission subcommittee

Equity?

Resilience vs Resiliency?

Safety (Fire) == Sustainability?

No Binding Standard

Affordability?

We've probably under-leveraged our bond capacity over time, *so there's more room.*

Brent Blackaby

One Wallet

ONE WALLET

+26%

Berkeley bonds

+95%

**Berkeley parcel taxes
and assessments**

**Schools/county/regional increased 17% and 58% in the same
period**

**2016: \$100 million ~~for~~ EXISTING
infrastructure**

Repair • renovate • replace • reconstruct

Flexibility was championed as a feature

Flexibility also means drift

LESS: promised projects ~~—~~ scaled back / altered

DIFFERENT: turtle garden with no turtles and
no garden

DIVERTED: street money moved

MORE: new facilities → **new operating costs**

T-1: serious execution challenges

2018

No streets paved

3 Directors

2023–2026

Vision 2050: lessons learned

Objective prioritization

Asset lifecycle planning

Assure capacity to deliver

Measure U guarantees none of these

What would better look
like?

Fire is a priority?

Put it in writing

**Demand a
better measure**

Vote NO on U



Measure V – 0.5% Sales Tax Increase for General City Uses

Requires majority vote to pass

For: Brent Blackaby, City Councilmember

Against – Geoff Lomax



AFFORDABLE BERKELEY

Sustainability Starts with Affordability

Should an Affordability Crisis Come with a Tax Increase?



Berkeley, CA 10/9/26

How Local Sales Taxes Target the Poor and Widen the Income Gap

A new report shows that low-income Americans are taxed at twice the rate as the richest one percent.



Are Berkeley Residents Undertaxed?

Berkeley vs. Emeryville: Two property tax bills, FY 2025–2026



BERKELEY

29

charges / assessments

\$5,162.44

annual fixed charges / assessments

EMERYVILLE

17

charges / assessments

\$1,172.40

annual fixed charges / assessments

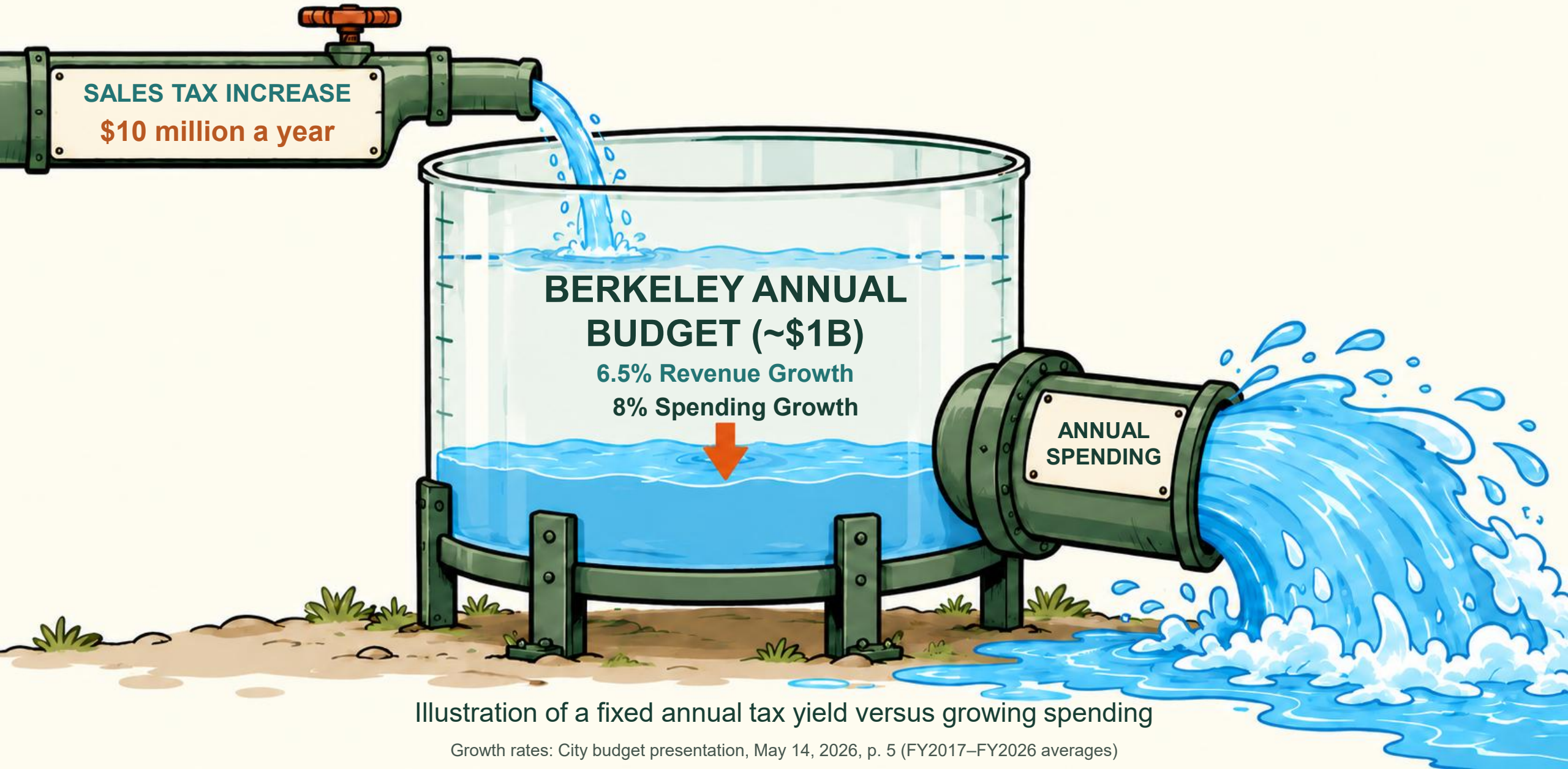


12 more charges. \$3,990.04 more per year.

The Berkeley bill has 4.40 times the fixed charges and assessments

Source: Supplied Alameda County tax statements, pp. 3–4. Counts include every line item in the fixed charges / special assessments section. Excludes ad valorem taxes and bond debt service. Individual properties, not city averages. Charges vary by property, size and applicable district.

Will The Sales Tax Fix The Deficit?



Can Our Retail Ecosystem Survive “Revenue Enhancements”

2016–2024

RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS



AVERAGE SALES PER ESTABLISHMENT



Total inflation-adjusted retail sales fell 27%

Illustrative bars, 2016 = 100

*Average sales decline calculated from rounded report figures: $0.73 / 0.83 - 1 \approx -12\%$.
Source: California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, 2025; Strategic Economics, 2025.
Small Business Anti-Displacement Strategies Memo, Jan. 21, 2026, p. 14.

Measure Y – Parcel Tax for Arts Organizations and Programs

Requires majority vote to pass

For: Clayton Shelvin, Executive Director of the Freight

Measure Z – Parcel Tax for Public Bank

Requires majority vote to pass

For: Sean Dugar, Sunny Singhal

<https://youtu.be/R59muDBR5Kw?si=8jJiVbnjwGpE2aRW>

Against: Joe Garrett

Measure AA – Soda Tax Increase

Requires majority vote to pass

For: Marice Ashe

Raheemah Natoti, Healthy Black Families

Please click [this link](#) to see the video from HBF that we were unable to show at the Forum.

YES

ON

AA

Double the soda tax. Lock the money to health.

Berkeley vs. Big Soda

Measure AA | Berkeley General Municipal Election | November 3, 2026

Why It Matters

1

Sugary Drinks = #1 Source of Added Sugar

Sugary drinks, including sodas, sports drinks, lemonade, energy drinks, sweetened coffee and teas, and fruit drinks with added sugars, are the number one source of added sugars in the U.S. diet.

2

Predatory Marketing to Kids

Product placement at child eye level in stores.

Disproportionately more outdoor ads for sugary drinks in lower-income Black neighborhoods.

3

Preventable Disease

Consuming too many sugary drinks can lead to harmful health effects, including heart disease, weight gain, obesity, type 2 diabetes, kidney diseases, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, and cavities.

Obesity-related conditions include heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer. These are among the leading causes of preventable, premature death in the U.S.

- Centers for Disease Control (2024)



Today vs. under Measure AA

TODAY

1 cent per fluid ounce

General tax — revenue enters the general fund

Spending decided year by year

Purchasing power falling since 2014

Permanent, but the rate is frozen

UNDER MEASURE AA

2 cents per fluid ounce

Special tax — revenue is restricted by law

Spending dedicated to health programs

Purchasing power restored

Permanent, at a rate that matches the need

What the first \$11.9 million built

\$5.7M

Into Berkeley schools

The district's cooking and gardening program now reaches more than 40,000 students and parents across 18 school gardens.

29K

Care referrals

Roughly 20,000 primary care and 9,000 dental referrals between 2018 and 2022, for residents the health system routinely misses.

80%

Changed their minds

Of 840 people surveyed in funded programs, four in five reported a shift toward healthier attitudes or intentions.

The money went where the industry aimed its marketing: Black, Latino, immigrant and lower-income neighborhoods.

It meets people at every stage of life

Toddlers

Children at the YMCA of the East Bay learn which drinks help them grow.

K–8

Students cook vegetables they grew themselves in school gardens.

Teens

High schoolers train as water ambassadors with the Ecology Center and run urban agriculture through Berkeley Youth Alternatives.

Adults

Primary care, dental care and health information in their own language at neighborhood clinics.

And the health effects are measurable

44,000

children in California cities with soda taxes, compared against 345,000 children in 40 matched cities without one.

What the 2024 study found

- Significantly lower body mass index percentiles among children in tax cities.
- The strongest effects appeared in children under 12.
- The researchers recommended excise taxes as a chronic disease prevention tool.

But wait ... there's more!

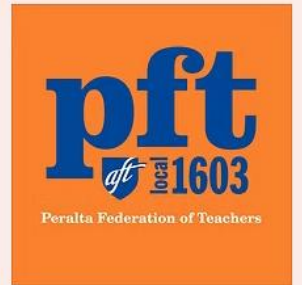
- The volume of sugary beverages declined by 9.6%
- Residents are drinking about half as much sugary beverages as before the tax
- Sales for healthier beverages rose, so no negative effect on businesses



**PREVENTION
INSTITUTE**



Healthy Black Families, Inc.



ACCMA
Alameda-Contra Costa Medical Association



American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



**Wellstone Democratic
Renewal Club**



bdc **Berkeley
Democratic
Club**

VOTE YES ON AA

Berkeley **vs.** Big Soda

Visit our website at:
www.BerkeleyVsBigSoda.org



Berkeley vs. Big Soda

YES

ON

AA

Tuesday, November 3, 2026

<https://www.berkeleyvsbigsoda.org/>



Thank you to our speakers!

And thank you all for taking the time
to learn about these measures!

Did you find this meeting helpful?

Get more involved with BNC!

- Visit our website
- Attend BNC meetings –
Second Saturday of the Month on Zoom
- Volunteer to work on a project
- Donate to BNC to help cover the costs

Email: bnc50@BerkeleyNeighborhoodsCouncil.com

