

Town of Atherton

Compiled by the Town of Atherton City Clerk Ms. Theresa DellaSanta

Measure L

Should the Town of Atherton primarily use private donations to construct and design a new Town Center? Other funding sources might include funds derived from Building fees or future grant money, but would not use general fund or parcel tax money.

Full Text

The Atherton Town government offices are currently situated at 91 Ashfield Road, This so-called Town Center complex houses the Police, Building, Public Works, and Administration departments. All of these structures are old and worn, with some in a dilapidated state. All are in need of repair and remodeling.

The City Council desires to seek input from the voters as to how best to proceed with respect to this issue. They pose the following question:

Should the Town of Atherton primarily use private donations to construct and design a new Town Center? Other funding sources might include funds derived from Building fees or future grant money, but would not use general fund or parcel tax money.

Impartial Analysis of Measure L

The current Atherton Town Center government offices are old and in some cases dilapidated, requiring substantial repairs, remodeling, or replacement. The City Council has addressed this issue in the past several years, and has agreed that a new facility should be built to house the Police, Building, Public Works, and Administration departments. There are currently no identified funding sources for this project.

The Council now seeks input from the voters regarding what types of revenues might be used to pay for the design and construction of this facility. A yes vote on this measure would restrict the types of funds that could be used for the Town Center improvements, generally requiring that more than half of the money come from private donations and other non-tax sources such as Building fees and grants; however, any other funding sources cannot include general fund tax money or parcel tax funds without further voter approval.

A no vote on this measure would leave the City Council free to decide what funding sources might be used to pay for the new Center, and could feasibly include general fund tax and potentially parcel tax money, although use of the parcel tax proceeds would require separate voter approval because of existing voter approved limitations on use of these funds.

Regardless of how voters respond, the City Council will remain free to pursue design and construction of a new Town Center if appropriate funding sources can be identified. The essential issue to be decided by the electorate in this measure is whether to limit funding for this project to specified methods.

/s/ **William B. Connors**, City Attorney

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Arguments in support of or in opposition to the proposed laws are the opinions of the authors.

Argument in Favor of Measure L

The basic premise surrounding the design and construction of a New Town Center was that it would be accomplished entirely with private donations. A “Yes” vote helps affirms this commitment.

The Town of Atherton’s infrastructure is in need of replacement. In 2009, a special task force released its report which highlighted the issues with the facilities our Town staff and Police use everyday. Atherton’s Building, Planning, and Public Works Departments work out of decaying portable buildings right next to the train tracks and our Police Department is similarly constrained with portables and only one locker room which serves as a briefing room and meal room, and does not have separate facilities for our female officers.

Current plans have been prepared which reflect the leaner organization that the Town currently operates under. Despite outsourcing of certain aspects of the Town’s function, a core staff of on-site personnel will always be present and operate within our facilities which need to be upgraded or replaced. There is no question about the need. Several Councils have continually reaffirmed this and repeatedly stated it would be of no cost to the residents. Council has indicated all work would be accomplished using private funding. As such, no tax dollars nor parcel tax nor bond measures are needed.

A yes vote ensures that the Council is true to its word. This ballot measure insures that no tax dollars or bond measures would be used for this project-as promised repeatedly. Only fees from our Building Department (currently ~\$2M) and State and Federal Grants are permitted along with the private donations Council members indicate are at the ready.

A “Yes” vote binds the current and future Councils to the basic premise under which this project was initiated. Please vote Yes.

- /s/ **(William R) Bill Widmer** August 15, 2012
Mayor, Town of Atherton
- /s/ **Kathy McKeithen** August 15, 2012
Councilmember
- /s/ **William Grindley** August 15, 2012
- /s/ **Marion E. Oster** August 15, 2012
- /s/ **Herman Christensen Jr** August 15, 2012
Chairman, Planning Commission

No Argument Against Measure L Submitted