

Barbara C: Libraries are the most equitable access facilities to learning for people of all ages and backgrounds. The inventory and staff provide support to anyone wanting to learn—Whether it's a how-to book, a foreign language, books or articles or audio sources about science, history, food, and much more. I volunteered at the library and believe strongly in maintaining one that is easy for all residents to access. I am also a firm believer in fiscal responsibility. The city's plan to tax residents forever for a TOD Plaza library at the BART station when we have a nearly \$90 million in funded pension liability, already own the parcel where our current library is located, and need a safer, modern safety building and equipment, is irresponsible.

William C: The Library Initiative is a BAD deal for the residents of El Cerrito because the costs of the new building which are unknown at this time and new shadow EC library program on top of the County wide library system far exceeds and the benefits of building a new library 3X as big as the existing library in a ground floor commercial space of a 6 story 69 unit apartment building at a major transit hub is just plain

Claudia K: Forever tax is too open and we deserve a library at an affordable price. Our taxes are already too high.

Laurie S: I use the library somewhat frequently but do not like the proposed plan for a new one. It's too expensive!! It's inaccessible to many. I'm a Sr and it will only cost more money as time goes on and will impact most of us on fixed incomes. I would rather see a new library proposal and not the one that has been grandfathered in by a previous office holder. Thank you.

Thomas S: I love our existing library and use it frequently. But this proposal is way too costly and open-ended for the taxpayers of EC.

Kimberly W: Libraries are essential, but there has to be a better plan not requiring another tax. El Cerrito already has one of the highest tax bases in not just CoCo County but in CA

Donald S: Essential service

Miguel A: I Use the current EC library regularly

Janos S: I do not think the problem is the tax, the problem is the purpose of the tax. The taxation system will need significant changes, and it will include increasing tax on the citizens, this is not really a question of if but rather the when. Trying to package this behind a library project is something I'm opposed to. Especially because overall this is a bad deal to the city. If the city could save up money to invest into a new library, I would fully support it. But this deal is just building debt for a promise of a lease, and further increases debt burden to the financially already rigid city. If the city wants to do something like this, first show that they can save up money and they are able to finance their investments without dedicated extra taxation.

Shelby H: I love libraries, but I do not like this attempt to get around the 2/3 majority vote required for a new tax. This library petition has already had legal trouble for “making false and/or misleading statements”—specifically not mentioning that the tax rate could increase annually while also falsely claiming library use is on the rise, among other statements.

How much of a citizens initiative is this petition when it is proposed by a former city council member (who is obsessed with building a massive library); the city council voted to add construction of a new library at the Plaza BART station as goal in the city's strategic plan; the city hired an owner's rep to negotiate a library deal with BART and the Plaza project developer; and the city recently paid \$38,000 to consultants for a survey on how to word the ballot initiative so it will pass? Looks like the city thinks this citizens initiative is a done deal.

I think this whole idea is another example of the city pushing the pet project of a well-connected special interest group instead of listening to what our community actually wants, needs, and can afford.

Justin C: The new library is too large, bad location, has no parking, and unnecessarily expensive. Remodel the existing library.

lindalee a: NO forever tax only a one time ax

Landry W: Our taxes are already high, and the library project includes destroying parking we elders need, and makes taking BART almost impossible.

Robin H: Libraries are extremely important not only for adults, but mostly for children too. We need to be able to read information. That's important and not have to purchase books when we can't afford them.

Yutaka H: Housing library is beyond our mean

Lucas R: No forever taxes

Nathan R: No forever taxes

Eva R: No forever taxes

Richard R: No forever taxes

Fran B: Each tax should be considered separately.

Namgun K: We have neighboring cities' great library systems. We do not need a new one. City of El Cerrito needs to spend its effort on other more important problems such as fire risk mitigation

Lorraine S: Libraries are a life line for some of us but the forever Tax isn't the way to go in my opinion.

Craig F: Stop adding taxes to my existing property tax bill! Property tax is absurdly high given costs in California - no new taxes on families who

finally broke into home ownership!

Suzanne B: It is insanity to tie the community to a piece of real estate that we do not own and that will continue to cost more each year. There is no reason not to temporarily close the existing library for renovations; if the city of Richmond can do why can't we? I love the public libraries and support them wholeheartedly, but not this boondoggle which is, no doubt, lining the pockets of someone.

Marlene M: Libraries, Yay! Building a big condo w libr, NO! I'm senior on Social Sec I can barely afford to live at all. We don't need another huge parcel tax on our prop tax bills that already doubled due to forever taxes added (original 1 percent but now are full 2 percent and growing.

Susan H: Libraries are one of the best institutions in the world. I oppose another Forever Tax because it is not economically sustainable and places an undue burden on taxpayers.

Pearson M: We already have a library, but do not have funding for fire engines, pool repairs, park maintenance and pension liability. The BART Plaza housing May never be built, but the tax will remain.

Leighann J: Libraries are necessary and good for the general public. Increasing taxes that go for other causes ie: BART is not a supportive tax earmarked for the library.

Eddy S: Library is great, but do not want forever tax and the proposed new location at the plaza is not better the current location.

Brenda C: Putting an independent citizen initiative on the ballot allows this open-ended property tax to squeak by with a bare majority of only 50% plus 1. To my mind, such a major decision should only be made by the full 66% majority that would be required if the city put the tax proposal on the ballot through normal channels.

Roy H: Library at BART not needed. EC Doesn't have the funds. Govt get your house in order rather than asking for more money from us.

Phil Y: Another money grab

Ken L: Another big El Cerrito budget boondoggle that benefits greedy developers and leaves taxpayers holding the bag

Joe G: This is a city council initiated scam

David S: Because maybe the city council feels, to prove they are still alive, they have to pass another Tax for another useless building like they did for El Cerrito high school football field. I'm sure that solved our education problem.

Colleen S: El Cerrito is already heavily taxed. The roads need fixing and paving. Why pay for additional projects if you cannot drive safely in this expensive city?

Betty B: Property owners would pay hundreds of dollars a year for a library that would in many ways be worse than the one we have now. It would be in an area that is congested and parking-starved and becoming more so as the city approves buildings to replace parking lots. Nearly all nearby parking would be paid parking. The library would not be centrally located and would be on land not owned by the city.

The county provides library services, paid for by property taxes. We do not need a library three times larger at a time when library use is shifting from in-person visits to online services.

James P: The city is in fiscal trouble. This is not the time to take on added burdens. Other priorities matter more.

Nancy L: I love libraries and love to read, but, the plan as it stands now to add an unending tax to our tax rate in order to build a library is not

reasonable. There needs to be another, more reliable way to build a library for our community. Property taxes go up every year no matter what and I do not want to support a BART housing project the city of El Cerrito won't even own even though we're paying for it.

Terra M: I am in general opposed to the proposed redevelopment of the El Cerrito Plaza BART station; while I support a new City library, this is not a good location for it; the tax is too high and will continue to increase; the tax is a handout to developers, who should be paying most of these costs; there is not even a guarantee that the library will ever be built; taxes in the City of El Cerrito are already sky high; we need to stop the City from continually passing on all of its costs for various projects to the residents; the misleading marketing of the measure really says it all

I Ellen C: The benefits and costs do not weigh out. I'm slowly not being able to afford to live in my home.

Rodney L: BART should be funding the entire project and incentivising El Cerrito for BART engaging in disrupting the serenity of this community. There is no guarantee the project will be properly budgeted and El Cerrito residents should not be held hostage to infinite costs covered from our own pockets.

Odessa C: I believe El Cerrito has other, greater fiscal priorities aside from building a new library.

Kellie g: Disagree with the Bart housing project- on many levels including existing infrastructure and traffic.

Kenneth B: As stated by Ira S. in his many posts on Nextdoor.

William Y: I support renovating the existing library, not a new one. The City's spending habits are so poorly managed, the Forever Tax is like paying only the minimum payment on a maxed out credit card, it will never get paid off. While the developers and their supporters get paid up front,

the residents of EC get left holding a bag that may never get filled. Follow the money.

Jennifer C: I love libraries and use the current El Cerrito library a lot to read lots of books, my love for books started at a very young age. The library staff is amazing there too - I support the EC library fully but do not agree with an overpriced plan for an over the top 'fancy' urban library that costs so much that won't even be owned by the city. The current plan with its price tag is not what EC residents need.

Yann J: Retrofitting and modernizing the current library better serves the El Cerrito community

Jackie O: I love libraries and still use both Contra Costa and Alameda to get all my books through the Libby app which is free and I read on my Kindle App so I can adjust the type.

Jackie O: I get all my books online from Contra Costa and the Alameda Libraries through Libby and read the ebooks through Kindle, as well as the UC Berkeley Libraries, I do not use the physical Library, the few times I have been there I have never seen it full or with long lines. I do think the early reading program for pre school children is important as are the free news papers and magazines available for older residents. I don't think EC needs to spend millions for a new facility for a city it's size.

Rick K: Because this plan is fiscally irresponsible

Brenda W: The City should purchase an existing property like the vacant Marshall's store on San Pablo Ave which is available and has plenty of parking. No need to build another building and create more forever taxes. Do something smart for a change!

Michael L: It's a bad idea to put a new building in the Bart area, we have lots of other existing properties we could use !

Eric D: This is a developer give-away, not a library funding proposal

Tamara W: I'm opposed to the High Occupancy Development at El Cerrito Plaza BART, and feel strongly that the future of our library should not be linked to that project.

Lee P: The Plaza location does not serve the broader community of El Cerrito. It's southern border location makes access difficult for those living in central and northern El Cerrito. In addition, building of a new location which is more central to the city should be done within existing resources.

Mac S: Too many parcel taxes already. No statutory limit on this obligation

Edie B: We don't need this expensive idea. And I do love libraries!

Jerica F: I support education I do not support forever tax

Mayur P: Waste of money on projects that don't benefit a majority of the community. Libraries are less relevant in today's internet age. Most of the times the books are ancient or not available. Even the bookstores are going out of business. The library idea has gone past it's prime.

Leslie P: We need it but not a forever tax.

Mark B: Library update or replacement is great. This city plan is terrible and badly thought out.

Susan K: I use the library all the time--but mostly the digital services. I'd much rather see money used for a senior center, or maybe a combined senior/after school center.

Shani S: I'm a graduate of MIT (MS) and Georgia Tech (PhD) in Architecture, and I've witnessed firsthand that even these great institutions are repurposing their libraries as access to knowledge becomes increasingly digital. They are relocating books to off-campus storage

facilities and redesigning the library buildings into collaborative and interactive spaces. Libraries as we used to know them are obsolete. I support a space and building for El Cereito residents that can facilitate the learning, collaboration, and engagement needs of our children, adults, and the elderly; however, a traditional library, as we used to know it, is not the answer.

Walter L: City misuses current taxes, city doesn't have enough funds for other citizen's needs(senior center, swimming pool repair, new fire truck)

William d: Vague and too expensive

Forrest B: Libraries are great but costs are out of control. You simply must find a way to build a new library more affordably. It's possible you simply have to have the will to demand it

Ruth R: I am keenly aware of the need for a new or remodeled library, but not on BART property. I would vote YES to a tax IF a different location and budget were real.

Eric H: The proposed BART Plaza location is a poor choice: it's not a city-owned property, future rent and library funding is uncertain, the city budget already has projected shortfall, and the proposition would impose expensive taxation for decades. The library project design and details are not established for review, there is likely diminishing in-person use of library with increasing online access, parking is not planned for visitors or book pickup in a very congested area (there is also limited parking for the proposed housing there) and it seems that other locations including existing commercial buildings have not been thoroughly considered for design and cost savings. i am a frequent user of the current library system and can see that a new library properly designed, located and funded could be beneficial to the community, but it must be affordable, right-sized, economical and subject to ongoing taxpayer oversight.

Patty C: Heavy future tax implications for residents. Won't own our library.

Jean L: We need a plan to build a small library at the current location (Stockton Street) on the land that is owned by the City of El Cerritos. We don't need Another Forever Tax to house a bigger library at the EC Plaza on the land that belongs to BART.

Joe G: The entire project is poorly planned. We have to fund the pension and right size the budget. The size is meant for a city of 100,000 people. Every school in El Cerrito has a library and we have a community library. Also, this gives too much power to the city council to tax and raise taxes. Last, it's an unnecessary burden on or fixed income neighbors.

Karen B: I support libraries not developers.

Michael C: because libraries are important resources for the community; but the public needs to have control; and a forever tax takes the control from the public.

Anne W: This will be a burden carried by all El Cerrito residents but mostly on property owners, many of whom are retired and living on fixed incomes.

Patricia C: Because it's a forever tax. I want a senior center.

Sina K: We don't need one and it's too expensive.

Thomas C: El Cerrito desperately needs a new library that will be owned by and serve the residents of El Cerrito. Next to BART is a bad location with already severe parking problems, and congestion that will make use by elderly patrons dangerous. El Cerrito is more than the Plaza and environs. Let's find a location elsewhere that will reduce the concentration in the Plaza area.

Seth M: The city proposal makes no sense and is really a subsidy for the BART project developer. It seems much more financially sound to let the developer finance their space and to agree to a fair market rent vs so much

financing.

David S: Remodel the old one & save millions

Suzanne B: I am sure the existing library can be renovated like the Richmond Library is going through now. I am a big supporter of public libraries but do not support the proposed project.

Stephen J: New library yes, but not at the Plaza BART station.

Darby F: No real Planning for Scope of Work or actual costs.

KATHLEEN C: as proposed the plan will cost residents of El Cerrito too much money for very little return when there are other issues within the city that deserve closer attention, and use of the funds such as a new fire truck and repair of the city swimming pools, and a possible Senior Center

Claire G: Not a good plan

Rose S: Our current library is paid for and functional.

Gene R: Although there have been many fewer visits in the past few years in spite of increased populations and libraries providing some e-services, libraries may provide some limited services to a community. I oppose the current proposal for a new library for several reasons; here are just a few: We have a library; the tax is a forever tax; the tax stays, even if the proposed location falls through; the tax can be increased; the proposed location does not have any dedicated parking, even though on the to-be-renovated Richmond street connecting part of North El Cerrito with the Southern extremity of the city, the proposed location of the library.

B.J. (Elizabeth) T: Of COURSE I support libraries—I'm civilized, after all. But I am so wary of taxes with no caps on them, such as the one connected with this library plan.

Martha D: I was permanently disabled in 1998, in Both hands. Trying to type ANYTHING on cell phone is painful. At library I can use their desktop computers with a normal size keyboard. Some computers are set up, specifically for disabled! Furthermore I have intermitant cell signal! And no cable TV. No working vehicle!! I rely on PARATRANSIT, except city of El Cerrito requires 2-4 week advance Notice! Not practical! In addition to computer usage, I borrow books, books on tape & DVDs, attend events & meetings (emergency Preparedness, etc) I would go more often if it were closer to North East, El Cerrito. As everyone knows, Richmond library is not part of Contra Costa Library system. So I pay extraordinarily high taxes, for what? A 1\$ reduction in pool price! I can't afford it! Where is our Senior Center? I used to use those desktop computers, too! Not at 7007 Moeser Community center....? And I have owned my El Cerrito home 30years. State service doesn't contribute to SSI And Worker Compensation is only for Fire & Law enforcement. Zero for EMT's. The public schools so bad & condoned another parent physically & repeatedly punched & assaulting both my daughter & I on School property! The public school refused to let me use their phone to call 911!! Police came, filled in police report & dropped the ball. Tried contacting DA. no help... we need real roads, not just a thin coating...

william y: Irresponsible spending without exploring better options

Celia E: New library/addtl development not needed when there are other options

Marlen M: I'm on a fixed income, too poor to pay this onerous and completely bad measure. I love our library. It actually works quite well and is in the best spot. One could build a second story or partial story to expand the existing 1964 library space at a later point, but usage is actually trending down, so it's ok at the present size. We don't actually have to buy anything or pay extra for anything. The proposal is certainly not the solution. It's not what we need. It's insanely expensive. And it would not even be owned by City!

Cory G: It is an excessive tax for an oversized library when the city has overburdened pension liabilities.

Joanne H: I am a senior and would be hit the hardest.

Michael Y: A new library along with a new playground makes more sense than a shared space.

Diane S: Fix the old library

Susi P: I use the library or library online services every day. But this tax and proposal is not clear and it appears to have a hidden agenda. So many bonds are already on our property taxes, adding an additional one, and a high one, will not guarantee a library. In addition, there's still no senior center/ will that come next?

Dianne B: We cannot support a tax for a new library before there is a specific project proposal (location, design, project cost, timetable). it's not appropriate to ask the public to start paying a tax for a project that is not defined.

Elaine F: The City should live within its means. We need to impose more restraint on the City. A modest sized library is what this small City needs.

Jacqueline M: El Cerrito government cannot be trusted. In favor of a new library but do not trust the city to use the money as voters intended. Swimming pool funding, which I voted for, was used for other projects. No faith in these city officials anymore.

Shirley S: We don't need another library or more taxes

Jacqueline M: We do not need to partner with BART. We need assurances that our government will use the money as intended and not spread it out to other needs as they have done, most recently with the pool tax. We need to be able to hold the city accountable for using the money exactly as

intended, so we need a way to stop the funding if its voted in and the city does not use it as intended.

William D: no forever tax. this is irresponsible.

Rich D: Fiscal responsibility and frugality in this time of inflation are important and grow us in character. There are other library options that would be more affordable and predictable in costs

Eugene R: Libraries have been a valuable tradition. The forever tax is a reckless proposal.

Anna W: Libraries provide resources but we cannot afford more taxes.

Tony W: I like libraries but cannot afford another tax.

Bill B: The tax initiative is poorly conceived, leaves many questions about financing and ongoing support unanswered, and puts El Cerrito residents in a financial corner for more than 30 years--without ever guaranteeing that the library would even be built. It's a boondoggle for the developers, not a highlight for the city.

Claudia B: Historically the City Council has failed to appropriate funds by the millions. For example:

the "Pool" at the Recreation Center on Moeser, and

the "Ohlone Greenway which was intended to provide a safe space for bikers. Poor maintenance of this space has been shameful. Instead of beautifying it with park benches and lush landscaping, El Cerrito has forgotten their obligation and the reason why they fought so hard to spend money/taxes to build & promote it.

Forty percent of El Cerrito residents are 50 years or older & are on fixed incomes. They will be the ones to be hit the hardest. Apparently the City Council has forgotten or doesn't care that they failed, again by closing the Senior Center after they imposed yet another tax intended for Senior Center upgrades.

In addition, residents already pay in part into a 25 item laundry list of taxes in a city that has one of the highest sales tax rates as compared to other cities in the Bay Area.

Janet S: I am a regular library user but want to see a specific plan—inside and out—as well as a budget. I am opposed to a forever tax. I would like to see a location with more parking , less congestion and more central in the city.

Randall C: Libraries are vital community resources but our city needs to be fiscally responsible with every dime we spend. The city has allowed our current library to decay and fester in hopes of some grand scheme to build something outlandish and expensive. This is just another example of our city government spending beyond their means and being fiscally irresponsible. We need a better solution to our need for a modern library for El Cerrito.

Jon C: Antiquated, fond memories of our time spent in libraries don't match the reality of the world now or in the future. It is a waste of time, money and resources. Some want to make money at the expense of others.

Patricia K: I can't afford more taxes!

David H: We want libraries for the public not taxes that will be used to fund city staff perks and salary increases.

Jay C: Bad financial plan for homeowners and city

Judith L: Our present library is quite good, and any money should be spent on improvements there. The proposed plan is excessively expensive, and the new library will be difficult for parking and access. If anything, libraries are moving towards ebooks and computerization..so why need more space? Spend money instead on senior services and fire department.

Kevin B: I like the library right where it is, and I'm opposed to wasting millions on one at a BART Station.

Megan Q: I don't trust BART. I don't like the idea of a public library in a commercial space owned by them.

Tom P: Too expensive and uncertain. It's more than just a library, it's a development, and it's another step down the slippery slope of unfettered taxation without public input.

Bin S: I don't.

Gregory E: Who needs a new \$75 million library in the current digital age? The internet gives everyone access to every book listed in the library of Congress. Besides, we already have a library on Stockton Ave. I can't imagine a new library adjacent to the Del Norte BART station providing any benefit for seniors, families, or students. I can imagine the new library becoming a magnet for criminal activity and the homeless, making it unusable to El Cerrito residents. The BART housing project is having difficulty finding paying commercial and private tenants to fill their redundant building capacity. This is another scam to bail out developers by their friends in the El Cerrito City council. If we are going to spend \$75 million, let's use it to build a new public safety building for the ECPD.

Janny L: Our state and cities already burdened by many imposed taxes, no more added tax but better stewardship of our resources!

John T: The City is not being transparent about this tax

Steve H: Complex issues are often reduced to simplistic language. If you oppose a new library, you're anti-intellectual and or you're not supporting kids and seniors. The library proposal as it stands is such poor governance, it's mind boggling. We can and should do better.

Kimberly S: I believe libraries are essential to communities. However, El

Cerrito continues to mismanage funds entrusted to them AND I STRONGLY believe developers building large housing units or the new storage facility recently built should pay for our new library. NO on-going taxes.

Marc L: The arguments in favor of this boondoggle do not bear even a superficial scrutiny.

KERRI L: We can remodel our current library on land we already own. Stop giving our tax money away to developers. Keep our tax dollars in our city, for our own property improvements.

Sam A: Transparency and fiscal responsibility

Olivia E: I use the El Cerrito library; it is always quiet, with just a few people there. It's pleasant inside, and also easy to park nearby. The first flyer I received from the City about a new library listed about 7 "reasons" to justify a new library, but on reading the list carefully, I found that the list repeated the same few ideas, with only 3 or so being distinct (though not convincing, given my good experiences with the present library). The upshot is that the supposedly sensible proposal was designed to convince - not to simply propose. Now that I know more about the proposal, I see that it is designed to give City Council an unending source of new money, to do with as they please; and it will give Council members a launching pad for future political aspirations ("look at the magnificent stuff I did"). The Plaza proposal would lock us taxpayers in for the foreseeable future with painfully high new taxes, which could increase greatly without our having a chance to say anything. The whole thing seems to me like a giant boondoggle.

Kristen K: I love the library and will always support it, but details matter. This is a blank check to BART Plaza property developers.

I live near Del Norte station, where they've developed the ground-floor commercial space and apartment buildings. The only business that has moved in is a liquor store. We have no guarantee that the allocated funds

will be used for a space that benefits the community.

Jeana X: I read the proposal at city's website, and find it misleading.

RICHARD P. P: The Library that we have had all these years, is sufficient as our Library, going forward.

Timothy N: Libraries are a great asset to the public and should be available, but we already have a library. This plan does not make any sense in support of the people who live here. It is too expensive and there is no guarantee that there will actually be a library available.

Jay C: Current library location can be remodeled as needed in a reasonably fiscal manner without Forever tax. The way this is planned and with many of the timelines for non-guaranteed funding sources put off until December, this is like rolling the dice in a crap game.

Kevin O: The era of gaslighting citizens is over. Common sense and efficiency are values missing in the city hall of our notoriously mismanaged town.

Erez E: A waist of public money, there is no need for that.

Leslie Y: Too many taxes and mismanagement of funds.

Alex V: Libraries are not used enough as it stands and this will be a project that will waste resources over a long period of time and end up abandoned. A study should be made about the frequency of people visiting libraries and how many libraries have closed down in the past 10-15 years. The number of libraries have been steadily declining since the age of internet and will keep declining as we rush ahead into the AI landscape.

Kelly B: Citizens pockets should NOT have to fund city developments that do not guarantee a fixed project cost, a civil service or affordable housing.

Heather D: Because it's a tax , for something the city will not own