

## Measure U Forum - Comments by Bill Kampe, May 8, 2008

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Thanks Alec, and thanks for the chance to participate in this forum.

My wife and I have long been enchanted with Pacific Grove. About 5 years ago we bought a house here, and now we are settled into our home full time.

For the past 2 years, I've followed the council and the passionate community discussions about the budget. It's been very clear that something is changing in PG finances. I've become concerned about our future, and wondered about Measure U. That's why I'm here tonight. I've spent some time looking at the budget, and making several trips to city hall to track down answers to my own questions on the numbers. I'd like to share some of that with you tonight.

But first, I feel there are 2 broader questions before us on Measure U.

1. Do we need it? ...and the simple answer is Yes, very much
2. Is this the best way? ...more in a moment

Do we need it?

You've probably read today's article in the Herald. It says PG will be healthy in a few years, even without Measure U. The article reports a great success on the budget. In my mind, this is not yet a success; it's acceptance of a harsh reality. With this budget we will see significant cuts for an indefinite future. And that's why I'm still here on this stage, on this side of the table.

I'm sure you've heard a lot of stories about the city budget. I've asked questions from every angle I can think of, and the budget shortage just doesn't go away. We are looking at a **perpetual** shortage of \$2M per year when we compare services in the past to what we can fund in the future. And for up to 5 years, we will fund – in addition – a gradual recovery in our reserves for about \$700K per year. That's leaves us a very big gap, and even Measure U does not fill it. There is still more work to be done beyond Measure U. So we need it.

Now, is this the best way?

Most of us have heard a long list of other things that "could" or "should" be done. Many of those things are not as new, or as possible, as you may be told. And most do not go anywhere near as far to fill the budget gap. Measure U is the only train leaving the station at this time. Please consider what a challenge it is to gain community support for any other idea, get it on the ballot, and pass it. If we are waiting for the next train, or waiting for a time where we have total harmony and accolades for the city administration, it could be long wait. That train's not coming soon...maybe never has come.

Measure U is for Us

Today, we have a clear Measure before us. It produces a clear benefit to our city. It is a modest cost of \$2-3 per month per resident. And it gives us a chance, as a group of citizens, to rally for our own benefit and keep PG the place to live that we cherish. Please join me in voting Yes on Measure U. With your support, we can join together to make it happen. Yes, We Can!