

## Moorpark Residents Came Through Again

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By: ROSEANN MIKOS

The ballots were cast, and last week they were counted. An overwhelming majority of those voting (about 70 percent) said Yes.

- Yes to re-establishing most of the assessment that used to help pay to maintain Moorpark's parks (about \$39 per year now—instead of the old \$41.16 for single family homes; or a little less than that for condos and mobile homes).
- Yes to re-opening the closed Monte Vista Nature Park on Spring Road—a soon-to-be-rehabilitated casualty that had resulted from the loss of prior maintenance funding.
- Yes to the residents of Villa Campesina—to include Villa Campesina Park in the assessment district and level the playing field for them so they no longer have to pay more than anyone else in town to have a well-maintained park in their neighborhood.

They showed the rest of Moorpark the way by agreeing, through a vote in their neighborhood a while ago, to pay a self-imposed \$60 a year to maintain that one park until the city was able to get citywide maintenance funding for all parks. Now that we've done that, Villa Campesina residents can start paying what the rest of us will be paying per year—only \$39.

Thank you Villa Campesina. You were an inspiration to us all!

- Yes to much-needed park improvements that were on the back burner until now, especially at older parks. This regular improvement work, to be paid for from developer fees on deposit, can now be safely considered.

Why? Because we no longer have to worry about a park being closed for lack of maintenance funds after we spend capital improvement monies to replace worn out slides or other equipment. No one wanted to improve a park only to have the park closed if the maintenance assessment district was not approved. Thank goodness we won't have to consider closing parks.

(Lest anyone wonder, developer fees can only be used for capital improvements at parks and not for maintenance. That's the law.)

Once again, I am very proud of the people of Moorpark, who overwhelmingly endorsed something that is good for Moorpark—the appropriate maintenance of our fine park system.

Just as you supported the Moorpark Save Open-space and Agricultural Resources measure and defeated Hidden Creek by a 2 to 1 margin in January, now you have supported our parks by a 2 to 1 margin. Good for you—on all three issues.

As the coordinator and supervisor of the "Save Our Parks" phone bank, at which 37 volunteers spent hundreds of hours calling thousands of Moorpark residents over the last six weeks before the votes had to be in, I give a heartfelt thank-you for all your efforts. I'd also like to thank Troop Real Estate for allowing us to spend four weeks using phones in their offices.

My personal goal for the phone bank was to reach enough people with the facts so that when the votes were counted, we would have a two-thirds majority in favor of the maintenance assessment district. We only needed a simple majority, but a two-thirds majority would send a stronger statement of our support for parks. Thankfully, that's just what happened.

No matter how you slice it in this admittedly new kind of vote (a mail ballot, following the guidelines established by the state-voter approved Proposition 218), the favorable tallies were better than two thirds:

- If we count it by the raw number of property parcels whose owners voted, 68 percent of them voted Yes.
- If we count it by the formula in Proposition 218 for "weighted" ballots, with those owning more property getting a greater vote, it came to 70.9 percent voting Yes.
- If we count it by the most common type of household in Moorpark, the single-family dwelling, 72.1 percent of those homeowners voting said Yes.

If anyone still has any questions about the park mail ballot and what it means, feel free to contact me. I will be happy to try to answer your questions. And once again, thank you, Moorpark!

*Roseann Mikos is an 18-year Moorpark resident, the leader of the "Save our Parks" phone bank, and co-author of the Moorpark Save Open-space and Agricultural Resources measure. She can be reached at [rmikos@bigplanet.com](mailto:rmikos@bigplanet.com).*