



Measure K Style and Usage Guidelines

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Introduction

Measure K is a countywide half-cent sales tax extension passed by local voters in November 2016 to support essential County services and to maintain or replace critical facilities.

It is also known as the “San Mateo County Critical Services Measure.”

This document provides the tools and guidelines for internal departments and external organizations to publically recognize and highlight initiatives supported in whole or in part by Measure K.

Our objectives:

1. Enhance the visibility of Measure K-funded projects, programs and services.
2. Improve the impact and consistency of communications.
3. Provide transparency and accountability to the public.

To achieve these objectives, we created a Measure K logo in a variety of file formats for any platform – print, digital and construction signs. We have also drafted language that should be used to describe Measure K.

The hashtag #SMCMeasureK has been established for use in all social media posts.

The following guidelines are designed to help you use the power of the County of San Mateo’s Measure K brand identity more effectively. You will find easy-to-use directions and concrete examples that will help improve your communications and build audience awareness.

Measure K – What is it?

On Nov. 8, 2016, Measure K passed with 70.37 percent (206,910 votes) “yes” vs. 29.63 percent (87,117 votes) “no.”

Four years earlier, on Nov. 6, 2012, San Mateo County voters established the half-cent sales tax by approving Measure A. (Ballot measures are given randomized letter designations by the Elections Office.) It passed with 65.4 percent (169,661 votes) “yes” vs. 34.6 percent (89,788 votes) “no.”

Measure A took effect (collection began) on April 1, 2013. The tax was set to expire on March 31, 2023.

The passage of Measure K extends Measure A for an additional 20 years, to March 31, 2043.

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors placed Measure A on the ballot after facing several years of budget cuts due to the recession and decreased or unpredictable funding from the state and federal governments. As a result of many successful initiatives, they placed Measure K on the ballot in order to continue the progress being made with local funds for local needs.

The question placed before voters was as follows:

“To ensure San Mateo County quality of life by retaining/improving critical facilities/services, such as: providing affordable homes for seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, families; enhancing public transit; combatting human trafficking; addressing sea level rise; maintaining safe schools and neighborhoods; high-quality preschool and reading programs; park maintenance; and low-income healthcare, shall San Mateo County extend the existing half-cent sales tax, without increasing the rate, providing \$85,000,000 annually for 20 years that the State cannot take away?”

The Board of Supervisors did not commit funds from Measure K (or the previous Measure A) to a specific purpose other than what was generally described in the ballot measure. These local sales tax funds may be spent for any general government purpose. The measure itself, impartial analysis and arguments for and against Measure K, are available [here](#).

Revenues from Measure K are deposited in a special fund for tracking purposes. Revenues from the inception of the tax are as follows:

Fiscal Year	Revenue
2012–13	\$ 4,397,205
2013–14	\$ 75,577,548
2014–15	\$ 80,598,111
2015–16	\$ 79,888,971

Why Brand Measure K?

By approving the sales tax, voters sent a strong message that the County of San Mateo can build a brighter future for everyone on the Peninsula by investing local funds for local needs.

A strong brand like the County of San Mateo – known for excellent and efficient public service – has enormous power. The County brand inspires trust and builds support. Linking the County of San Mateo’s brand with initiatives supported by Measure K offers a way to demonstrate how Measure K is impacting the quality of life while enhancing transparency and accountability.

The San Mateo County Manager’s Office in 2016 launched a public campaign to brand projects, programs and services supported by the local sales tax and to develop a dedicated website to help tell the story <http://cmo.smcgov.org/MeasureK>. This effort will continue with both internal County departments and external partners.

These external partners – other government agencies, nonprofit groups and others – often receive considerable financial support from Measure K. Yet there is often little or no awareness of recognition that funding originates from the Board of Supervisors’ investment of local Measure K funds.

The Message: Local Funds for Local Needs

Local funds for local needs is not a tagline but a starting point to position our communication messages. It represents the belief that here, in one of the most diverse and dynamic regions in the world, the County is committed to remedying social problems, creating broadly shared prosperity and creating equal opportunity for all with the help of local funds.

The public is bombarded by thousands of messages each day. To cut through the clutter, we must refer to Measure K in a clear, consistent and concise manner, and reinforce our core message – Local Funds for Local Needs – through repetition.

Receiving a grant of Measure K funds is an excellent time to promote the initiative and acknowledge voters and the Board of Supervisors for their support. Such communication methods may include the following:

- News releases
- Success stories
- Fact sheets
- Testimonials
- Videos
- Podcasts
- Signs and banners
- Social media postings
- News conferences
- Before-and-after photographs

Achieving key milestones are also opportunities to highlight Measure K-funded work. These may include the launch of a program, completion of critical work, award of a new grant or success stories worth sharing.

The impact of funding is best told with personal stories. The County Manager's Office encourages departments and grantees to gather testimonials from those who have benefitted and to share them with us to amplify our message.

Common Language

While each initiative is unique, presenting a clear and consistent message is key to achieving our communications goals.

We have prepared language describing Measure K for ease of use and consistency. The wording mirrors the language that appeared on the ballot. This “boilerplate” can be used in all communications referencing Measure K from both internal departments and grantees:

San Mateo County voters in 2012 overwhelmingly approved a half-cent sales tax support essential County services and to maintain or replace critical facilities. As a result of many successful initiatives, voters in November 2016 approved Measure K, which extends the tax until 2043. The five-member Board of Supervisors allocates Measure K funds for local needs. More information is available at <http://cmo.smcgov.org/MeasureK>.

Not every reference to Measure K calls for a lengthy explanation. The following are examples of ways to incorporate Measure K messaging in digital postings, fliers and other media:

Example 1: This new service is funded by Measure K, a half-cent, voter-approved countywide sales tax. The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors allocates these local funds to support essential County services and to maintain or replace critical facilities.

Example 2: Work began in August after the Board of Supervisors agreed to allocate \$1.5 million in Measure K funds to kick-start the project. Measure K is a half-cent countywide sales tax approved by voters to support essential County services and to maintain or replace critical facilities.

Example 3: Our program improves the lives of homeless teenagers by providing a caring environment, a structured schedule and a safe living arrangement. We want to thank the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors for providing \$100,000 in Measure K funds to support our program and thank local voters for supporting the measure. Measure K is a half-cent countywide sales tax that provides local funds for local needs.

Example 4: This service is funded in part by Measure K, a half-cent countywide sales tax approved by local voters to support essential County services and to maintain or replace critical facilities. Measure K is also known as the “San Mateo County Critical Services Measure,” as referenced in the official ballot language.

The ballot measure also included the following words and phrases:

- “to ensure San Mateo County quality of life”
- “retaining/improving critical facilities/services”
- “the County of San Mateo continues to face demand for, and expenses in providing, essential County services and facilities that its residents rely on”
- sales tax revenues from the original measure “have allowed the County to preserve and enhance existing programs and services as well as launch innovative initiatives”
- “continuation of the current sales tax is critical to the continued provision of essential County services”

Communications should accurately reflect the ballot language.



The Logo

The County Manager's Office has created an identity system locking together the County's logo with Measure K and the consistent message: Local Funds for Local Needs.

The logo is available in a variety of file formats (AI, EPS, PDF and PNG) and in vertical and horizontal layouts.

The horizontal logo is the preferred option. Yet it may not apply to all needs. Use your discretion. Pick the logo that works best for your purpose or consult with the County Manager's Office (see below for contact information).

Logo Approval

The County Manager's Office requires all Measure K grant recipients, both internal departments and external agencies, to seek approval from the County Manager's Office before applying Measure K branding to websites, signage or material objects such as vehicles or buildings.

This is not to impede your efforts. In fact, this is to provide a consistent and accurate message to the public while the County Manager's Office can help amplify your message through a variety of channels.

In addition, the Parks Department, which has its own sign shop, has created a number of easy-to-use templates for Measure K signs, decals and banners. These range from bumper stickers and decals to metal signs to large banners. Each can be customized for specific programs or projects. Prices are reasonable and ordering is easy. Both internal County department and external grant recipients can order signs from Parks.

To seek approval to use the logo, consult about branding opportunities or to order signs, contact:

Marshall Wilson, Measure K Communications Officer
650-363-4141 or mwilson@smcgov.org

Michelle Durand, Chief Communications Officer
650-363-4153 or mdurand@smcgov.org

Applying the Logo

The Measure K logo should appear prominently at all work sites, construction projects and road and trail improvements that are supported by Measure K funds. These are excellent opportunities to let the public literally see their Measure K funds at work. To assist, the County Manager's Office has created a tagline to pair with the logo: "Your Measure K Funds at Work." It is available in a variety of formats.

The logo should also appear on all websites, fliers, brochures, reports, news releases and other materials that highlight programs, projects or services supported by Measure K.

Layout and design of signs and other communications materials will vary greatly so care must be taken when applying the logo. Always position the logo for maximum impact and give it plenty of room to breathe, to help ensure the logo's visibility and legibility.

When using the logo, be conscious of its size. A logo that is too small ceases to be useful. The logo should never appear smaller than 0.5 inches tall.

The logo should be displayed at the same general size as departmental or other logos on all materials.

Online materials should contain a hyperlink to the official Measure K website or reference the full address: <http://cmo.smcgov.org/MeasureK>.

Measure K funds have purchased numerous pieces of equipment. Decals featuring the logo can be placed on fire engines, pump stations, parks equipment, playgrounds, technology (SMC Public Wifi stations, for example), building entrances and on other assets. By doing so we let the people of San Mateo County literally see how their tax funds are improving the community.

Important note: To preserve the integrity of the logo and for consistency, do not alter, distort or recreate the logo. It is a valuable brand asset and should be treated as such. The logo is a graphic file – a piece of art work.



Logo in full color



Vertical logo in color



Vertical logo in black and white



Logo in black and white



Example of the tagline being used in a construction sign



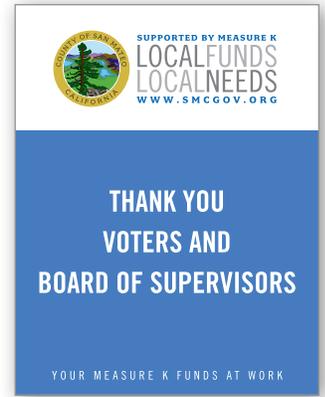
5 x 8 in. Decal

Guidance for External Grantees

The County encourages external grantees of Measure K funds such as nonprofit organizations and government agencies to follow the same general guidance as internal departments.

To achieve maximum visibility, a sign with the Measure K logo and “Thank You Voters and Board of Supervisors” has been created and can be posted near the entrance to facilities that have received Measure K funding. Examples include health clinics, libraries, food pantries, shelters and other facilities that provide services to the public.

The sign has also been produced as a vinyl cling for windows. Both the “Thank You” sign and vinyl cling can be requested from the County Manager’s Office.



8.5 x 11 in.
Thank You Sign

Social Media

Use the hashtag #SMCMeasureK in all social media posts that feature or reference projects, programs and services supported by Measure K funds.

No separate social media accounts have been created for Measure K. The County Manager’s Office believes we should use our existing platforms to strengthen the County’s brand rather than dilute our message and reach by creating additional accounts.



Questions?

Do you need the logo? Have a question about Measure K? Do you want help or guidance in doing outreach or promotion? Contact:

Measure K Communications Officer Marshall Wilson, at 650-363-4141 or mwilson@smcgov.org.

Michelle Durand, Chief Communications Officer, at 650-363-4153 or mdurand@smcgov.org.

We are here to help.