



City of  
**OAKLAND**  
California

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 9, 2013

Love Our Lake Day on Sunday, June 9, Celebrated the Transformation of Lake Merritt  
*Residents and visitors explore the car-free streets, waterways and parks transformed by Measure DD!*

Oakland, CA – On June 9, thousands of revelers enjoyed a fun-packed Sunday during **Love Our Lake Day** celebrating Oakland's investment through Measure DD which has transformed Lake Merritt. From 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., residents and visitors walked, pedaled, strolled and jogged around the lake exploring the surrounding neighborhoods in a family-friendly setting at **Oaklavia-Oakland Sunday Streets**. At 2 p.m., U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee, Gov. Jerry Brown, Mayor Jean Quan, City Council President Patricia Kernighan and representatives from the Measure DD Community Coalition participated in the Lake Merritt Boulevard **Grand Opening Dedication** showcasing the beautiful new amphitheater and four-acre park at the south end of the lake.

"Oakland's citizens made a \$198 million investment in Lake Merritt, our waterways and parklands when they voted in support of Measure DD back in 2002," said Mayor Jean Quan. "I envisioned Love Our Lake Day as an opportunity to thank the community for its investment and commitment to the future of Oakland. Our residents should take great pride that they have helped make Oakland a truly green city and an environmental leader."

**Oaklavia by the Lake** closed three miles of streets around Lake Merritt to vehicular traffic to make way for pedestrians and bicyclists to enjoy a day of family fun filled with cultural and recreational activities. Over 40 separate activities were planned throughout the day for folks to enjoy Oakland's beautiful climate while exploring Lake Merritt, Lakeside Park and surrounding neighborhoods. A sampling of the activities included salsa dancing, Taiko drumming, martial arts performances, sports, a bike rodeo, yoga, hula hooping and belly dancing. Some of Oakland's renowned food trucks were on hand to provide tasty treats to fuel walkers, runners and cyclists. Event goers could also paddle and pedal the lake in kayaks, pedal boats or just enjoy a ride on a pontoon boat or gondola. Free bike rentals were also available. For a roster of all the events, please visit [www.loveourlakeday.com](http://www.loveourlakeday.com).

"Opening up the streets around Lake Merritt is a chance for Oaklanders to experience their public spaces without worrying about car traffic and safety. We are grateful for the City of Oakland's strong support of this Open Streets event - a non-commercial festival wouldn't be possible without their help," said Jonathan Bair, President of the Board of Walk Oakland Bike Oakland.

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The **Lake Merritt Boulevard Grand Opening Dedication** at 2 p.m. was held at the new amphitheater and four-acre park at the south end of the lake to mark the completion of this major transformative milestone. Speakers at the grand opening included U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee, Gov. Jerry Brown, Mayor Jean Quan, Port of Oakland Attorney and former City Councilmember Danny Wan and City Council President Patricia Kernighan. The dedication program was co-hosted by James E. Vann and Naomi Schiff representing the Measure DD Community Coalition and Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt (C.A.L.M.). Before and after the dedication program, local artists entertained and inspired on the new amphitheater with Lake Merritt as a beautiful backdrop.

In addition, information booths and photographs highlighted the many **transformative projects brought about by Measure DD**, the voter-approved bond for Clean Water & Safe Parks.

“The transformation of Lake Merritt is the result of an extraordinary, decade-long partnership between the Measure DD Community Coalition and the City of Oakland,” said Council President Kernighan. “Everything we see and enjoy today demonstrates the strength of this partnership.”

The \$50 million phase of Measure DD improvements at the south end of Lake Merritt saw the removal of the 12<sup>th</sup> Street dam, culverts and twelve-lane roadway and the creation of a new six-lane, tree-lined boulevard and free-span bridge that better accommodates park users, pedestrians, bicyclists and wildlife. This work allowed for the re-opening of a 750-foot section of the Lake Merritt Channel which had been restricted by man-made structures since 1869. Restoration of the 100-foot-wide tidal channel included improvements for water quality and wildlife habitat, creation of a new two-thirds-of-an-acre tidal marsh and construction of a new recreational trail that will eventually connect to the San Francisco Bay Trail.

“The Lake Merritt transformation is the inspiring result of advocacy and community organizing,” said longtime Oakland resident Naomi Schiff who represents the Oakland Heritage Alliance on the Measure DD Community Coalition. “It demonstrates the power of our community in preserving and improving public resources for the benefit and enjoyment of all.”

The Measure DD channel restoration work has increased tidal flow by 50 percent to help mix and oxygenate the lake’s water and provide more tidal flushing. Tidal flushing improves the water habitat for fish and birds. In addition, vegetated swales and water quality basins further improve water quality by filtering stormwater before it reaches the lake.

New pathways under the vehicular bridge and a new pedestrian bridge across the channel allow walkers, joggers and bicyclists to safely loop around Lake Merritt. The pathways will eventual connect to the San Francisco Bay Trail. Other nearby project elements include landscaping and restrooms.

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This phase closed the gap in the existing Necklace of Lights with the addition of 11 new lampposts and will also include a public art element. As part of the City's mandated investment in public art as part of any capital improvement project, an art installation of light-based sculptures created by Oakland-based artists Todd Blair and John Colle Rogers will be mounted along the pedestrian pathway walls flanking the channel under the 12<sup>th</sup> Street bridge.

**Love Our Lake Day** was presented by the City of Oakland, Walk Oakland Bike Oakland and Measure DD Community Coalition. Event sponsors included the Office of Mayor Jean Quan; City of Oakland, Public Works Agency; Bay Area Air Quality Management District; McGuire & Hester; PG&E; AT&T; Kaiser Permanente; Bay Area Rapid Transit; AC Transit; Metropolitan Transportation Commission; Lake Merritt - Uptown District Association; East Bay Bicycle Coalition; East Bay Express; Oaklandish; Port of Oakland; Bay Area Bikes; Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson; Clif Bar; TransForm; Mechanics Bank; EBMUD; San Francisco Bay Chapter Sierra Club; tndrbox.com; Whole Foods; Alta Planning and City of Oakland, Office of Parks and Recreation.

### **About Measure DD**

In November 2002, the voters of Oakland passed a bond measure known as Measure DD – the Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks. This \$198 million bond has funded a variety of projects throughout Oakland and transformed Lake Merritt. City of Oakland staff has leveraged Measure DD funds with \$55 million in grants and outside funding sources.

### **Completed Measure DD Projects**

The work at the south end of Lake Merritt is just one of the many transformative projects funded by Measure DD. Other Measure DD-funded projects which have already been completed include:

- Union Point Park, a new, nine-acre waterfront park – completed 2006.
- Renovation of the Lake Merritt Pergola – completed January 2007.
- Restoration of the historic East 18th Street Pier – completed 2008.
- 66th Avenue Gateway project, a restful pocket park on the Oakland Waterfront Trail – completed 2008.
- Renovation of the historic Municipal Boathouse (now home to the Lake Chalet Seafood Bar & Grill, Lake Merritt Rowing Club and Gondola Servizio) – completed 2009.
- Acquisition of over 65 acres of open space to protect watersheds- completed 2009.
- Several projects at Children's Fairyland – including a new attraction called Fairy Music Farm, renovation of the puppet theater, improvements to the entryway and Chapel of Peace and the new Aesop's Playhouse, the East Bay's only theater devoted to performances by and for children – completed 2009.
- Renovation of Studio One Art Center – completed 2010.
- Lion Creek restoration project – completed 2010.
- The Lakeshore/El Embarcadero project, which calmed street traffic, improved pathways and renovated landscaping along the eastern shore of Lake Merritt – completed 2010.
- A new section of waterfront trail connecting Derby Avenue and Lancaster Street – completed 2010.

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- Construction of a new indoor pool and fitness center in East Oakland – opened in 2011.
- Two new sections of waterfront trail connecting High Street and Fruitvale Avenue – completed 2012.
- Numerous water quality projects such as fountain upgrades, underground trash collection devices and rain gardens to improve water quality in Lake Merritt – first project completed in 2004, others are ongoing.

### **Future Measure DD Projects at Lake Merritt**

Four additional Measure DD projects at Lake Merritt are planned:

- The **Lakeside Green Streets project** will reconfigure the intersection of 20<sup>th</sup> and Harrison streets to provide more parkland along the lake and at Snow Park, and will renovate the shoreline pathway and landscaping from 19<sup>th</sup> Street to Grand Avenue. Construction is expected to start in 2014 and be completed in 2015.
- The **Sailboat House Shoreline project** will replace a failing seawall at the Sailboat House, move a parking lot away from the shoreline, treat street stormwater runoff through vegetated swales, add an attractive shoreline pathway and restore a section of shoreline to a natural soft edge with native upland and marsh plants. Project construction will begin in 2014.
- The **Bellevue Avenue project** will improve parking, provide a safer pedestrian crossing at the Lakeside Park entry and enhance the entrance to the Gardens at Lake Merritt. Construction on this project is expected to begin in 2015.
- The **Lake Merritt Channel Improvements at 10<sup>th</sup> Street** will begin construction in June 2013. This phase will replace the 10<sup>th</sup> Street roadway with a clear-span bridge, matching the improvements already completed at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and continuing the open channel further toward the bay. This work will further improve the tidal flow into Lake Merritt by an additional 50 percent and bring added amenities to the lake. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2016.

For more details and updates on Measure DD progress, please visit [oaklandnet.com/measuredd](http://oaklandnet.com/measuredd).

### **About Oaklavía**

Oaklavía is Oakland's version of Ciclovía that began in Bogotá, Colombia where over one million people recreate on more than 70 miles of downtown streets each Sunday. Ciclovía means "bike path" in Spanish, Thirty years later, the concept has spread around the world from Tokyo to New York City. Walk Oakland Bike Oakland, a volunteer driven group, held a successful Oaklavía event in 2010 that brought over 4,000 people into the heart of Oakland. Learn more at [www.oaklavia.org](http://www.oaklavia.org).

### **About the Measure DD Community Coalition**

In November 2002, over 80% of Oakland voters passed Measure DD, a \$198 million bond measure. The Measure DD Community Coalition was formed to establish an ongoing dialogue between the City of Oakland and interested members of the community on how this historic bond measure will be implemented. The group meets bi-monthly and is open to anyone interested in finding out more about the Measure DD Bond implementation. Learn more at [www.waterfrontaction.org/dd/](http://www.waterfrontaction.org/dd/).

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