November 25, 2019

Doug Parker
President & CEO
Land Trust of Napa County

Dear Doug,

In support of our mission to be the community’s voice for the protection, restoration, responsible development and celebration of the Napa River and its watershed through education and advocacy, Friends of the Napa River would like to endorse

“ORDINANCE No. 2019-01, AN ORDINANCE OF NAPA COUNTY, KNOWN AS THE NAPA WATER, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION RETAIL TRANSACTIONS AND USE TAX ORDINANCE, IMPOSING A TRANSACTION AND USE TAX, TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TAX AND FEE ADMINISTRATION

“The goal of this Ordinance is to protect the quality and quantity of local water resources, reduce wildfire risk, preserve 20,000 acres of forests, wildlife habitat, rivers and streams and other important open space lands and resources in Napa County, provide public parks for all, and educate future generations in the care and stewardship of the natural environment. The Ordinance does this by establishing (subject to voter approval) a dedicated source of funds to implement the Napa Open Space District Master Plan as updated on July 8, 2019. Funds come from a one-quarter percent transaction and use tax (commonly referred to as a sales tax); of the estimated $9 million annually generated, at least 52 percent is restricted to the acquisition of high priority open space lands, 25 percent is restricted to operating, maintaining and improving open space lands, including but not limited to managing forests to reduce wildfire risk, operating public parks and sponsoring youth outdoor education, 20 percent will be distributed to the four cities and one town in Napa County to implement their adopted local park and recreation plans, and no more than three percent may be spent on administrative overhead. One hundred percent of the funds must be spent for the purposes specified in the Ordinance, and none may be diverted by the State, the County of Napa or any other agency for any other purpose. The Ordinance requires independent citizen oversight, mandatory financial audits and yearly reports to the public. The Ordinance makes it possible for the Napa Open Space District and its partners to compete successfully to obtain a fair share of State and Federal matching funds. Tourists are expected to pay more than one-third of the total funds generated. Without the Ordinance, 20,000 acres of unprotected land and natural areas could be lost to development and gone forever. The Ordinance will help ensure that city parks can continue to be expanded and improved to provide valuable recreational facilities for local residents. By protecting natural carbon sequestration, the Ordinance will help Napa fight climate change. The tax authorized by this Ordinance shall terminate in fifteen years unless renewed by a two-thirds majority of the voters of Napa County.”

Please do not hesitate to communicate our endorsement in any public forum as the campaign moves forward.

Bernhard Krevet,
President, Friends of the Napa River, Inc.