

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

December 10, 2018

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee

FROM: Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG Executive Director
John Jones, Director, Torrance Community Services Department

RE: **Measure A--Safe, Clean Neighborhood Parks & Beaches Protection Measure of 2016 Fund Allocation**

As the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors has yet to approve the final Measure A Report, I wanted to provide the South Bay City Council of Government Membership an update on the next steps for the Measure A Final Report. I have been alerted that the Final Measure A Report will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for consideration and action at their Board Meeting at 9:30 AM on Tuesday, January 8, 2019. This final report is currently available on the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Recreational District Web Site at RPOSD@lacounty.gov as well as the Board of Supervisor's website under Correspondence.

As you are aware last March 2018 I brought before the SBCCOG Board a concern that the Measure A Implementation Committee consisted of a large percentage of Non-Profit Organizations or CBO's and a much smaller representation of municipal agencies. This concern highlighted that the Implementation Committee is recommending a carve-out or targeting of funds within the Competitive Grant Funds in the amount of approximately 30% so that only 70% of the remaining funds would be distributed between all agencies who did not qualify as having High or Very High Need Study Areas. This action is not following the initial intent of Measure A that was overwhelmingly approved by the voters in Los Angeles County in 2016, as the intent was that 100% of the funds within the Competitive Grant Areas would be provided to the most deserving individual projects within Los Angeles County. Unfortunately, this Measure A Final Report is following the same concept and has included as a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors an approximate 30% carve-out or targeting of funds that I have highlighted in my summary notes below.

Given that the Board of Supervisors plan to review this Measure A Final Report on January 8, 2019, I am again providing a draft letter for your consideration that can be sent to the appropriate Los Angeles County Board of Supervisor District Representative by December 20, 2018. (See Attached) It is my understanding that the Board of Supervisors can bring a motion forward to make changes to any of the recommendations within the Measure A Final Report, and I am certain that there will be a many Non-Profit Organizations or CBO's attending the January 8, 2019 Board of Supervisor Meeting to speak on their own behalf.

With regard to the pending litigation, I have been informed that the litigation is moving forward, as there was a hearing at the Appellate Court the week of November 12th, which will be followed by a decision (1-2 months) then the final decision called a remitter (1-3 months). If the decision is not in favor of RPOSD/County I was informed that they will pursue a request for review from the State Supreme Court (estimated to take an additional 4-12 months).

Lastly, for ease of review of the Measure A Final Report, I am providing you the draft summary of Administrative and Grant Requesting policies for Measure A that are being recommended for adoption by the Board of Supervisors below:

Administrative Policies

Consumer Price Index Updates

- The Measure A special tax rate shall be automatically adjusted every two years to the maximum rate allowed by the Consumer Price Index Update formula.
- The Board may, in any given year, choose to adjust the tax rate to a rate less than the maximum.

Bonding

- Measure A authorizes RPOSD, at its discretion, to issue bonds secured by the special tax revenues to finance grants.
- RPOSD shall work with the responsible County Departments to determine the appropriate conditions and timing for bond issuance.

Countywide Neighborhood Parks Needs Assessment Maintenance

- The neighborhood park inventory data shall be updated by all park agencies annually. Verifying and updating data is required to remain in Good Standing.
- The Neighborhood Park Need by Study Area Map shall be published periodically with updated neighborhood park inventory and U.S. Census population data.
- The Countywide Neighborhood Park and Recreation Needs Assessment (NPNA) shall be updated every 8 to 10 years and shall contain at a minimum the metrics used in the 2016 Countywide Parks Needs Assessment and updates of the study areas' neighborhood park need levels.
- The Regional Recreation, Beaches, Rural Areas, and Open Space Assessment shall be conducted to inventory existing public recreational lands and amenities from the regional perspective and determine the needs of the many diverse geographical areas of the County. The results of the assessment will inform the project planning and selection for competitive grants. The assessment will be conducted soon and updated every 8 to 10 years.

Board of Supervisors Designated Park Projects

- The Board shall allocate two (2) percent of Measure A annual revenue for County priority projects, with each Supervisorial District receiving one-fifth of the annual amount.

- The funds may be committed to grants for eligible projects annually or may accumulate.
- Supervisorial Districts may choose to combine their available funds to jointly award grants for eligible projects.

Sharing Funds

A public agency receiving annual allocations under the Community-based Park Investment Program and Neighborhood Parks, Healthy Communities, & Urban Greening Program may consider sharing funds across Study Areas of its own or of adjacent jurisdictions provided that:

- The funds will be expended on a specific project or projects that are eligible for Measure A funds.
- The agency initiating the request demonstrates to RPOSD's satisfaction that all Study Area(s) involved will benefit from the sharing of funds and resulting project(s).
- RPOSD determines that the proposed sharing of funds will result in timely completion of the park project(s); and
- The governing body of each public agency has authorized the sharing of funds for a specific project or projects.

Nonprofit Maintenance and Servicing Allocations

- Eligible nonprofit organizations that own and/or operate parklands may apply for M&S funds annually, following the established procedures and requirements for M&S funds, including any subsequent updates.
- A city, the county, or a joint powers agency may assign a portion or all of its unexpended M&S funds to a nonprofit or other public operating agency to maintain a project funded by RPOSD. The duration of this assignment must also be defined.

Good Standing

- Good Standing will be required of all grantees to have payment requests processed and receive any grant funds from RPOSD.
- Good Standing is achieved and maintained when a grantee maintains compliance with all requirements stated in the guidelines, policies, and procedures of RPOSD for both Proposition A and Measure A.

Grant Requesting Policies

Project Types

Each competitive grant program will make funding available for project types that could occur in and/or serve High and Very High Need Study Areas.

Evaluation Criteria

Each competitive grant program will include a "Level of Need" evaluation criterion. This criterion will consider whether a project or program

- serves or benefits residents of High or Very High Need Study Areas;
- offers the greatest regional benefits or serve the greatest regional need, such as in rural areas of the County; or

- provides services to and/or recruits most of its participants from High or Very High Need Study Areas.

Long-Range Planning

Measure A-funded projects will be consistent with each Study Area's long-range park planning documents, such as a parks master plan, community plan, or other adopted planning document (such as the Countywide Neighborhood Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment).

Community Engagement

RPOSD will require appropriate, thorough, and timely community outreach and engagement for all projects funded by Measure A to ensure inclusion, input, and support from the public.

Monitoring and Correction

RPOSD will consistently monitor, track, and if necessary, adjust the administration of both competitive funding and annual allocations to ensure that the goals of Measure A are being met.

Technical Assistance

RPOSD will provide technical assistance to potential applicants and grantees throughout the stages of the grant process to ensure that barriers to applying for, receiving, and administering funding are reduced, and that the goals of Measure A are being met.

Targeting Funds

The portion of funds to be targeted from the Competitive Grant Funds is initially set at 30 percent that will be designated for projects in High or Very High Need Study Areas. This percentage will be evaluated periodically and may increase or decrease in future years based on the evaluation of metrics tracked by RPOSD, such as for funds and competitive grant proposals. This would affect the following programs:

- Natural Lands, Local Beaches, Water Conservation and Protection Competitive Grants;
- Regional Recreation, Multi-use Trails and Accessibility Competitive Grants; and
- Acquisition-Only Grants

(INSERT CURRENT DATE)

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor, 2nd District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
500 W. Temple Street, Room 866
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Measure A--Safe, Clean Neighborhood Parks and Beaches Protection Measure of 2016

Dear Supervisor Ridley-Thomas:

As a member of the South Bay Cities Council of Governments, the **(INSERT YOUR AGENCY NAME)**, respectfully requests your support to ensure Measure A competitive grant funds match the intent of the voters and to fund as many projects as possible throughout Los Angeles County.

Measure A asked voters to continue their support for local parks, beaches, open space, and water resources by approving an annual parcel tax of 1.5 cents per square foot of development for recreational improvements in Los Angeles County.

The 45 member Steering Committee broadly represented community interests throughout the County. However, the Cities charged to implement the improvements are represented by only a few seats on the Committee. During the competitive grant discussions, the Steering Committee recommended a total of 30% of the competitive grant funds be set aside for High Need and Very High need areas. This funding set aside does not provide fair and equal opportunities for funding within each of our communities. Measure A's language does not call for weighting competitive grants in this manner. The voters approved Measure A to address needs within their own community.

Since there is high need in every community, this request asks you to consider changing the funding set aside favoring high and very high need areas to application scoring based on the need and condition of the project itself and its impact to that community.

The opportunity to improve the entire county is diminished using High and Very High Need application scoring. Our agency is concerned that the intent of Measure A is being changed beyond the intent of the voters.

(INSERT JOB TITLE AND SIGNATURE)

Cc: Jane Beesley, Regional Parks and Open Space District

(INSERT CURRENT DATE)

Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor, 4th District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
500 W. Temple Street, Room 822
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Measure A--Safe, Clean Neighborhood Parks and Beaches Protection Measure of 2016

Dear Supervisor Hahn:

As a member of the South Bay Cities Council of Governments, the **(INSERT YOUR AGENCY NAME)**, respectfully requests your support to ensure Measure A competitive grant funds match the intent of the voters and to fund as many projects as possible throughout Los Angeles County.

Measure A asked voters to continue their support for local parks, beaches, open space, and water resources by approving an annual parcel tax of 1.5 cents per square foot of development for recreational improvements in Los Angeles County.

The 45 member Steering Committee broadly represented community interests throughout the County. However, the Cities charged to implement the improvements are represented by only a few seats on the Committee. During the competitive grant discussions, the Steering Committee recommended a total of 30% of the competitive grant funds be set aside for High Need and Very High need areas. This funding set aside does not provide fair and equal opportunities for funding within each of our communities. Measure A's language does not call for weighting competitive grants in this manner. The voters approved Measure A to address needs within their own community.

Since there is high need in every community, this request asks you to consider changing the funding set aside favoring high and very high need areas to application scoring based on the need and condition of the project itself and its impact to that community.

The opportunity to improve the entire county is diminished using High and Very High Need application scoring. Our agency is concerned that the intent of Measure A is being changed beyond the intent of the voters.

(INSERT JOB TITLE AND SIGNATURE)

Cc: Jane Beesley, Regional Parks and Open Space District

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

March 12, 2018

TO: SBCCOG Transportation Committee

FROM: Jacki Bacharach, Executive Director

RE: Park Bond Measure A – Use of Funds

Adherence to Strategic Plan:

Goal B: Member Regional Advocacy. Advocate for the interests of the South Bay.

BACKGROUND

At the January Board of Directors meeting, Torrance Community Services Director John Jones requested that the SBCCOG send a letter and ask our cities to send a letter to our county supervisors about the criteria being considered for allocation of Park Bond Measure A competitive funds. The Board agreed and the attached letter was sent as well as sending a request to cities to do the same.

Subsequent to the SBCCOG taking this position, I received a phone call from the Social Justice Learning Institute Executive Director D'Artagnan Scorza. This is an organization in the City of Inglewood that we have worked with on some of our projects. Dr. Scorza stated that he is expressing the concern of other community organizations who were not happy with the SBCCOG's letter. He agreed to send me further information which is what follows:

Thank you for your interest in additional background information on Measure A. Please let me know if the below provides you with what you need, or if there is anything else that would be useful.

- *From 2015-2016, LA County undertook a countywide comprehensive Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, which divided the county into 188 study areas and used specific metrics to assess each area's park need. Each area's park need is characterized as Very High, High, Moderate, Low, or Very Low, resulting in the [map on PDF p.7](#).*
- *Measure A is a voter-approved countywide parks and open space funding measure developed and passed after the Parks Needs Assessment. Revenue is based on a parcel tax of 1.5 cents per square foot of development, which amounts to approximately \$96 million per year.*
- *The Measure A expenditure plan divides funds into seven spending categories.*
 - *50% of all revenue will be directly allocated back to each study area, based on population.*
 - *13% of all revenue will be directly allocated to High and Very High Need study areas.*
 - *14% of all revenue will be general competitive grants. Within this pot, 30% of general competitive grant funding will be set-aside for the High and Very High Needs areas, per a recommendation by the Measure A Implementation Steering Committee. This set-aside amounts to only 4% of all Measure A revenue.*
- *The current Measure A competitive grant program draft scoring criteria proposes extra points for proposals in High/Very High Need areas and the weighting of level of need in scoring. The steering committee (the 45 member governance structure to guide Measure A implementation guidelines) is leaning in this direction to encourage proposals from high and very high need*

study areas (not to exclude excellent projects from other parts of the County) but in keeping with one of the fundamental principles of the Measure overall which is to make some countywide progress eliminating stark disparities in park access by reducing the intensity and frequency of "very high need" study areas in the County.

Key points:

- *10 SBCCOG member cities and unincorporated areas are considered in Very High or High park need and would benefit from the emphasis on need. Very High Need: Inglewood, Hawthorne, Lawndale, Unincorporated Lennox, Unincorporated West Athens-Westmont and High Need: Gardena, Carson, North Torrance, Unincorporated Alondra Park, Unincorporated West Carson*
- *Half of all Measure A funding goes right back to the cities based on a population calculation.*
- *Even though the set-aside for High/Very High needs areas is 30% of general competitive grants, that amounts to just 4% of all Measure A funding (\$4.1 million). In total, only 17% of Measure A (\$16.4 million) is targeted to High/Very High needs areas.*
- *The competitive grant scoring criteria are still in draft form, and there is strong interest among many Measure A Implementation Steering Committee members in ensuring that scoring criteria address needs based on the Parks Needs Assessment.*
- *Additionally, scoring criteria to demonstrate a project's multiple benefits, including health, environment, and public safety/gang reduction (per the ballot language) are being considered, so strong proposals, regardless of location, can score well.*
- *Measure A is designed to leverage other state and local funding sources; we all want a program that positions the whole region to do well.*
- *Inequality hurts growth, according to multiple economic analyses, which make the case that equity should be at the heart of local planning because the entire region will profit. Equity is not a special interest; it is a common one. (Source: [USC "Measures Matter," 2018](#))*

Thank you for all that you do to improve the lives of people living in and visiting Inglewood. I hope the information provided above is useful. Let me know if you need anything further.

Best Regards,

D'Artagnan Scorza, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Social Justice Learning Institute

RECOMMENDATION

Review information provided and decide if any additional action should be taken.