Measure A Implementation

Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District

Summary Meeting Notes
Steering Committee Summer Workshop A
August 17, 2017 1:00 am – 5:00 pm

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Jean Beesley	John Guevarra	Cara Meyer
Alina Bokde	John Johns	Dilia Ortega
Reyna Diaz	Tori Kjer	Max Podemski
Hugo Enciso	Clement Lau	Stefan Popescu
Belinda Faustinos	Linda Lowry	Barbara Romero
Hugo Garcia	Norma Martinez	Keri Smith
Mark Glassock	Sandra McNeill	

RPOSD Staff in Attendance: Dwayne Case, LaTrina Hancock, Sara Keating, Martha Lopez, Warren Ontiveros, Rigo Sanchez, Ani Yeghiyan

PlaceWorks Staff in Attendance:
David Early, C.C. LaGrange, Jessica Wuyek, Jasmine Williams

AGENDA ITEM: TOPIC 1- ELIGIBILITY

Public Comment
1. RPOSD should do outreach to make sure small agencies and organizations know there is an opportunity for funding. The County should do outreach in the very beginning to get the word out to small and non-traditional partners.
2. Reviewing and updating the Parks Needs Assessment could create a barrier for agencies with low capacity.
3. How should the process include neighborhood councils and organizations? Could they be included as eligible organizations?
4. For eligible non-profit mission statements, the scope needs to be broader. Instead of considering mission statement, consider historical presence and relationship to the community.
5. For joint use agreements, the 20-year minimum agreement length is very long. There should be off-ramps if those relationships don't last.

Committee Comment
1. Discussion on Joint-Use Agreements:
   a. Minimum agreement (20 years) is too long for LAUSD and DWP and many other districts. 1-5 or 10-year agreement is more common. At most, 5-10 years. Compromise on 20 years if you have a claw back in the agreement. Whoever is responsible for maintaining the project should pay. Vet

existing joint use agreements to ensure compliance and good partners. Ensure good public access in addition to fees. Establish benchmarks to track progress.

    b. Challenge is to balance investment of public funds with reasonable agreement length – want to encourage creative spacemaking while ensuring project is accessible to those who need it in the long term

    c. Suggestion: Consult offline with entities who have experience putting together joint use agreements to see what is realistic. JUMP taskforce that has been working on joint use throughout the county.

2. Discussion on Nonprofit Mission Statements Requirement:

    a. Expand to include community gardens, public health, and living. Perhaps allow for an exception for organizations that may not meet the mission but can be decided upon by RPOSD staff. Allow missions around environmental justice and social equity.

    b. Is there even a need to have a mission-related requirement? Perhaps this could focus more on the project or the organization's relationship to the community, instead of the mission.

3. Discussion on Updates to Park Needs Assessment:

    a. Provide clarity on what is the role of the jurisdiction and what is the role of RPOSD/County. Include information about the process and if it's possible for an agency to contest the data.

    b. Have agencies verify data, rather than re-enter it to lower barriers. Make it a predictable process that larger agencies can plan for.

4. Discussion of Proof of Jurisdiction Support:

    a. The process needs clarity: where specifically does the support need to come from, what does it need to say, and who is responsible for submitting? Draft resolutions or templates should be acceptable in case things need to move quickly. Support should come from the department or agency and not necessarily Council because it could take a long time to go to Council. It will be easier to secure support for projects than just enrollment/eligibility.

    b. Support should go through a higher level. Although it creates barriers, it ensures more supported projects.

5. Discussion of Contract Terms and Conditions:

    a. Terms and conditions should be simple and straight forward, easily accessible and not buried in a long RFP or other document. The contract should be flexible so it doesn't add a barrier.

    b. Everyone should meet terms and conditions in order to play. Everyone should play the same game because it protects the funding agency. Everyone should accept terms when working with cities. Don't exempt anyone from it.

Summary Takeaway

  + Shorten requirement for joint-use agreements and vet models for successful partnerships that balance needs

  + Expand nonprofit eligible mission statements or remove this requirement

  + Clarify the process required to update the Park Needs Assessment

  + Clarify the types of required jurisdiction support

  + Make contract terms accessible, easy to understand, and consistently flexible

AGENDA ITEM: TOPIC 2- COMPETITIVE GRANTS

Public Comment
1. Should be minimum set aside for local projects to balance regional (10-15%).
2. Regional projects should have extra points if they've taken into consideration connectivity, access, and local benefit.
3. There should be extra points for leveraging matching funds such as Cap and Trade.
4. Top evaluation criteria: Project feasibility, multi-benefit-high, leveraging funds; level of need, community involvement, accessibility, and amenity conditions.
5. Bottom evaluation criteria: Matching funds, creative space making, project readiness, regional benefit
6. Regional projects should be tied to a regional plan to ensure regional benefit.
7. Add criterion related to climate plans so that projects that consider climate readiness would receive additional points.
8. Unhook Parks Needs Assessment from evaluation criteria.
9. Level of Needs should not be a criterion so that it's truly a competitive process.
10. What is the difference between project feasibility and project readiness?
11. Areas of high need should receive a set aside percentage and should be a priority.

Committee Comment
1. Discussion of Level of Need:
    a. Should be given highest consideration in a point-based scoring system. Primary concern is to move red areas into green areas. The 13% is not nearly enough to make up for the years of underinvestment. Find way for apples to apples comparison because you can't compare high need and low need areas in the evaluation stage.
    b. There should be a minimum standard of funds awarded only to high and very high need areas (In addition to Category 2).
    c. Don't pit level of need and matching funds against each other
    d. How is level of need defined? Horse trails, natural lands, and open space still need development although many regional/open space areas are not high need.
    e. Poll: How many people think there should be points for need?
        i. Unanimous
    f. Poll: How many people think there should also be minimum threshold (dollars)?
        i. 14 yes
        ii. 3 say no
2. Discussion of Regional Projects/ Regional Benefit:
    a. How are regional projects and regional benefit defined? Need to be flexible with the definition.
    b. What about regional areas that serve high need areas? Priority should be high and high need areas. You can make a case that you're serving high need communities but not actually be doing that. How can you really prove the reach of regional benefit?
3. Discussion of Evaluation Criteria:
    a. Top Criteria: Community involvement, level of need, amenity conditions, public safety, health & wellness
    b. Bottom evaluation criteria: Matching funds
    c. Look at health from multiple perspectives such as anti-displacement and other social determinants

Summary Takeaway
+ Level of Need should be an evaluation criterion
+ Thresholds for Level of Needs should be discussed

+   There need to be clear definitions for regional projects and regional benefit
+   There must consideration for how regional projects serve high need areas and how agencies can prove it
+   Build out health and wellness criterion

AGENDA ITEM: TOPIC 3- MEASUREMENT

Public Comment
1. Crime and environmental indicators, health outcomes, park use (through registered programming), and displacement can be measured. RPOSD should do baseline survey right away. Agencies need to prove they service high need communities. Displacement and homelessness should be tracked.
2. Monitor if funds were spent completely and with their original intent? If not, what were the changes?
3. Park Needs Assessment should be updated every 3 years, not 5 years so it could be tied to census.
    a. Response: 5-10 years to update the Parks Needs Assessment is reasonable, possibly with snapshot updates to specific geographic areas every 2-5 years.
    b. Response: 5 years is good benchmark to update Parks Needs Assessment. Data used to inform PNA should be updated very regularly through the agencies and project holders. Streamline the process and Database to funnel data and ease the burden of the update.
4. Parks Needs Assessment: Add metrics such as crime, race, and income to indicators for Level of Need. No changes should be made to methodology for a little while (5 years).
5. Community outreach. Require it for competitive grants (with thresholds). Grantees should provide metrics on their projects and outreach.

Committee Comment
1. Discussion of Indicators to Monitor:
    a. Parks Needs Assessment: Monitor if high and high need areas are progressing to low need areas.
    b. Applicants: Monitor which agencies have won and loss. How many people applied, what did they propose, where did those applications come from, what populations did they serve?
    c. Geographic investment: Monitor geographic trends in investments to identify areas that either aren't applying or aren't winning. Provide technical assistance to remedy. Investment maps would be helpful to visualize and overlay Park Need Map.
    d. Park use: Look at underutilization of facilities because of conditions, safety (actual and perceived).
    e. Demographics: Measurement should consider all factors studied in the Parks Needs Assessment such as race, safety, income, etc
    f. Coordination with local Measures: Should tie annual reporting to other measures in LA county— specifically, Measure M and Measure H (transportation and homelessness).
    g. Regionality factor: See how the regional facilities have proven to serve high need areas.
2. Discussion of Reporting:
    a. We don't want to put too much burden on organizations reporting. Can metrics be included in application so the reporting is built into the process? Reporting could be done at the macro level and not burden the small jurisdictions.
    b. Electronic process: Innovative reporting will make it much easier for RPOSD staff to measure effectiveness. At grant closing, grantee could do basic self-reporting.

Summary Takeaway
+   Measure changes in crime, health, and environmental and other demographics
+   Monitor deviations from project descriptions and successful completion
+   Track winning and losing applicants as well as geographic investments
+   Lower barriers to administrative reporting
+   Coordinate reporting with complementary Measures

AGENDA ITEM: TOPIC 4- OVERALL POLICY

Public Comment
1. Level of Need, climate change, displacement, and multi-benefit projects (that benefit housing, jobs, and parks) should be emphasized within the policy and principles
2. Policy should coordinate with Measures M and H (transportation and homelessness) to foster synergy with supportive housing and transit. Projects that support all three should be valued.
3. The word equity should be stated and clearly defined. DPR is defining and measuring equity and this definition should be aligned.
4. Include a clear statement committing the District to work with applicants to create the best applications by lowering barriers through technical assistance.
5. District should have monitoring and course correction in a timely manner. Make that language stronger.

Committee Comment
1. Discussion of Policy Elements:
   a. Technical Assistance: Include a technical assistance policy to lower barriers, encourage applications, and ensure more successful projects.
   b. Include a policy for community involvement and outreach. There should a connection between projects and existing community and long-range plans.
   c. Acknowledge that data collection has inefficiencies and systemic problems and establish a framework to reassess data and reporting.
   d. Develop an evaluation policy to evaluate similar projects (such as by cost of project) against one another to allow for apples to apples comparison.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. *No Comment*

Meeting Adjourned.