Measure A Implementation

Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District

Summary Meeting Notes
Steering Committee Meeting #6
January 11, 2018 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Manal Aboelata	Belinda Faustinos	Amy Lethbridge
Greg Alaniz	Esther Feldman	Linda Lowry
Jean Armbruster	Hugo Garcia	Sandra McNeil
Mark Baucum	Karen Ginsberg	Sussy Nemer
Julie Beals	Mark Glassock	Bonnie Nikolai
Jane Beesley	Lacey Johnson	Stefan Popescu
Alina Bokde	Bill Jones	Jeff Rubin
Scott Chan	John Johns	Keri Smith
Jay Duke	Kim Lamorie	Stephanie Stone
Hugo Enciso		

Alternate Members in Attendance: Andrea Gullo, Nicole Jones, Clement Lau, Cara Meyer, Teresa Villegas

AGENDA ITEM: SUBAREA NEED CLASSIFICATION

1. **Question:** How can we assure no bias in subareas over time?
   Response: Tracking is important to make sure funds aren't all going to subareas instead of study areas. Need ongoing documentation and quantifiable criteria to document how high need areas are being served.
2. **Comment:** Concern about keeping high need areas true to the measure and consistently funded so they can come up to par with other jurisdictions. Use a tiered approach initially and evaluate after 5 years if too much money is being given.
3. **Question:** How do subareas relate to the Parks Needs Assessment?
   Response: Some Study Areas considered those areas and pockets of need when prioritizing projects; the data were available at all meetings.
4. **Question:** Many South Bay cities have fewer than 5,000 people in High or Very High Need subareas. Would there be any way Study Areas under 5,000 could get points?
   Response: Yes, if they can show they serve adjacent high or very high need study areas.
5. **Comment:** Study Area need reflected demographic info but subareas may not and more data is needed to see. If we move definition of need to include more it, loses its meaning and dilutes help for High and Very High Need Study Areas.
6. **Comment:** High or very high subarea need in low/moderate still has more access and advantage than High or Very High Need Study Areas.
   Responses Summary:
   a. We can check demographic information. Will maintain the precedent of the PNA.

b. Recommendation 1 is supported, recommendation 2 needs more analysis or very specific detail to prove serving regional need, and recommendation 3 is supported.

AGENDA ITEM: DRAFTING GRANT GUIDELINES

1. **Comment Summary:** *Calendars, Bonding and Acquisition*
   a. Bonding will increase pot of funds earlier. Need to expedite the timeline so we can get money sooner before things get more expensive. State programs are annual and encourage competitiveness. Very little state money comes to LA County because there are no matching funds here. Measure A can provide those matching funds, but only if we bond and have the funds available when needed.

   Response Summary
   a. We already talked about bonding and decided categories 1 and 2 would be bondable but not 3 and 4. This would be a different direction. In the big picture would go 20 years without money in categories 3 and 4.
   b. Need more analysis of this and acquisition problems.
   c. Not in favor of bonding, money is needed annually. There must be other money out there for acquisition.

   Comment: How would bonding address need in High or Very High Need Study Areas?
   Response: Do we want to bring back looking at bonding relative to high need and acquisition? Yes
   Comment: Funds need to be leveraged before they are gone. We need to do research of relevant funding and put that on a calendar of deadlines to address whether Measure A's timeline coincides with other funding opportunities.

   Response Summary
   a. Do we want bring back bonding of Category 3 and 4 as topic to a new meeting? Yes
   b. Yes, we need to reopen this due to timing and be as competitive as possible so we can pull state money into LA County.
   c. The rule of bonding annual allocations is staying but we are reopening the question of bonding against categories 3 and 4.
   d. To clarify, individual Study Areas won't be bonding on their own against their allocations – RPOSD will pool funds and float the bonds.

   Straw Vote
   a. Do we want to reconsider bonding against category 3 and 4?
      a. Want to reopen: 21
      b. Don't want to reopen: 3
   b. We will reopen the discussion and add another meeting and see how the discussion and research impact our current meeting schedule.

AGENDA ITEM: GRANT PROGRAMS

1. **Comment Summary: Organizational Track Record**
   a. Careful about program providers needing a track record. Don't want to preclude innovation and the entry of new organizations.
      Response: With limited money, we want money going to organizations that can successfully deliver projects.
   b. Include criteria in scoring that deals with competency. Partnering increases overhead. A new organization could have very experienced staff, but are precluded from applying by these feasibility requirements.

c. Organizations should have some type of established relationship with the community and run similar programs.

d. Place-based experience for program grants is extremely important and should be scored.
    Response: Yes, clarifying language will be added that experience must be somewhere in Los Angeles County.

e. Youth and veteran programs need a threshold, and experience is key. Other programs would support these criteria tied more to evaluation criteria

f. If objective is to find regional approaches and partner at a regional level, we wouldn't qualify under these criteria. Too limiting and should be scored or require participation in TAP.

g. How does the word "service area" relate to High or Very High Need Study Areas? How are we asking an applicant to demonstrate these criteria? How will the reviewer evaluate the strength of the claim?
    Response: We are assuming it's a narrative and the reviewers will have some subjectivity. Service area is whatever area they intend to serve, which will not necessarily be a Study Area.

Straw vote: Should there be a minimum requirement to apply for competitive program funding? We will clarify regional and build language to require experience in SA (if we keep as is).

    i.   Keep as is: 12
    ii. Keep these for Cat. 5 but not Rec. Access: 11
    iii. Get rid of them all together and only account for capacity in the scoring: 2

    Response: We will take under consideration and give it more thought but lean toward only having minimum criteria for Category 5

h. Mission-based requirement to enroll excludes affordable housing organizations to obtain funding and build parks. Expand to organizations that support the goals of Measure A.

i. Added language about community health and housing, and active transportation missing.

j. Add "develop" to "operate and maintain".

AGENDA ITEM: SCORING

1. **Comment Summary**
    a. Where can we put language about displacement because it's not currently there?
    b. How are we doing things in relevant languages and addressing cultural sensitivity?
    c. Where is innovation and creativity? These should be scored in all categories.
    d. In "Multibenefit," what is the logic for giving some criterion more points than others?
        Response: highest points are related to measure language but also feasibility and priorities/likeliness (most achievable)
    e. Accessibility – there should be a distinction between open space areas and urban areas. Open spaces can't support tons of uses, so accessibility doesn't apply in the same way.
    f. Regional benefit is valid, but the sub-criteria are way too oriented to urban projects, open space projects have different regional benefits not related to distance.
    g. Highest point values should reflect measure language and priorities and it currently doesn't.
    h. We don't have to limit scoring to 100 points. Multibenefit should drive scoring. Subcriteria for multibenefit should be consolidated. Group things together more effectively (all water, all air with climate change).
    i. Human health should be elevated through scoring and receive more points. Active recreation should be scored higher.
    j. Safe playgrounds, neighborhood parks, and gang reduction are also in the language and are not represented enough. We need to look closer and think forward about what truly reduces gang

activity. "Public safety" can be misinterpreted to mean more policing in high need areas, which we don't want.

    k. "Level of need" metrics are too subjective when a narrative is used. Scoring to award points for partnerships. Conditions criteria exclude regional facilities that weren't evaluated. Agencies are hesitant to disclose poor conditions. Creative placemaking and innovation should be scored and needs to be included in all categories

    l. Baseline is essential. Level of need is consistent with the measure

    m. Pre-work to educate committee on how parks influence social outcomes is needed before additional discussion.

Response: There are several big themes emerging here and we will schedule an additional meeting to further discuss the criteria. That means two additional meetings in the coming months. We will let you know the dates once these are scheduled.

AGENDA ITEM: PUBLIC COMMENT

1. **Ken Carson**
   a. The correlation between need and demographics is not an accident
   b. The high and very high need areas are low income and where people of color who have the greatest need for safe parks and parks nearer to their homes live,
   c. Also have health issues that require exercise and fitness, and parks address this
   d. The subarea classification in moderate and low need areas is a way to water down the needs assessment
   e. Applications that include plans to address health issues should receive a higher point value in the scoring criteria

2. **Shona Ganguly, The Nature Conservancy**
   a. 30% of competitive grants should be allocated for high and very high need areas
   b. Look at the measure and address habitat, multi-benefit, and regional issues while balancing with equity

3. **Lyndsey Nolan, LA County Bicycle Coalition**
   a. Committed to equity
   b. Parks are inequitable
   c. At least 30% of competitive grants should be allocated for high and very high need areas or clearly serve those areas
   d. Against designation of subareas within study areas
   e. Consider effects on displacement and fund affordable housing. Include anti-displacement policies.

4. **Anisha Hingorani, Advancement Project CA**
   a. Eliminate park inequality and reverse injustice
   b. Agrees that 30% of competitive grants be allocated for high and very high need areas
   c. Should direct technical assistance program to high and very high need areas
   d. Focus should be on study areas, not subareas
   e. Consider effects on displacement and if local hiring standards reduce displacement

5. **Natalie Zappella (on behalf of Sissy Trinh), South East Asian Community Alliance/LA ROSAH**
   a. Chinatown is very dense with overcrowded housing
   b. Equity should be included as a key metric
   c. Agrees that 30% of competitive grants be allocated for high and very high need areas
   d. Study areas, not subareas should be used to reverse injustice
   e. Set a precedent of 50% to high and very high need areas

            i.   Look to Transformative Climate Communities as a precedent (100% to Disadvantaged Communities)

    f.   Green gentrification is an issue

6. **Ramon Mendez, Enterprise Community Partners**
   a. Well-designed houses should be affordable, and parks and housing need to be collaborative, not competitive
   b. Prioritize areas where parks and housing are needed
   c. More than 30% allocation of competitive grants is needed for high and very high need areas
   d. Should encourage joint development
   e. Acquire land for parks and housing, and have residents be stewards
   f. Community based organizations should be included as eligible
   g. Emphasis should be placed on monitoring

7. **Assata Umoja, Hyde Park Organizational Partnership for Empowerment**
   a. Level of need is critically important across all criteria as it relates to health, environment and accessibility
   b. Development projects adversely affect areas, creating environmental hazards and poor social ecology
   c. 52% of people are in high and very high need areas but are only getting 30% of the funds. More should be designated
   d. Level of need should be considered in all categories
   e. More parks are needed, but gentrification and accessibility are issues and getting to the parks is a challenge. Areas don't have space for new parks
   f. Open space accessibility plan for people from high need areas. Need open space within high need areas
   g. Need trees, shrubbery and flowers. Trees were cut down for Endeavor and other development

8. **Ruth Bell, Jump Task Force, LA County Department of Public Health**
   a. How were the top 10 projects chosen, how relevant are they now, and will this list change for funding?
   b. Category 4 criteria don't match up with projects prioritized by community, who want active use
   c. Health outcomes should be scored higher
   d. Agreement for schools will not be in use prior to funding
   e. Need to make sure everyone actually knows what the measure says

9. **Pastor Michael Grissom, Love Mission Community Center**

   The children should come first, not organizations or cities. We need to bond money. If we do so, these kids will have a better life. Red will be orange. If we take a small amount of money and spread it around, it won't be effective. Think about the future of every child that can't walk to a park and the dangers they face even if they can. Think about the children whose faces you can't see. Put aside personal needs and increase the standard of life.

10. **Jim Stein, Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council**
    a. Are straw votes firm or will they be discussed further? Concerned about what the revised version of the project and program requirements look like after the straw votes that were taken.
    b. Lake Balboa has the second largest regional park, Sepulveda Basin. This creates a similar problem that the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy was describing. We attract hundreds of thousands of people yet we only have one community park. Other needs such as community center, youth center, police facilities, infrastructure etc. are nonexistent or stretched very thin.
    c. Do neighborhood councils meet requirements to participate? Neighborhood Councils, being the primary representative of the stakeholders, are unable to be nonprofits and can't therefore meet the requirements specified.

11. **Kahllid A. Al-Alim, Park Mesa Heights Community Council**
    a. Community councils should be eligible
    b. Community based organizations have disenfranchised our communities and often disrupt the community's vision
    c. New types of organizations should be considered
    d. To get results, money cannot be given to organizations with overhead
    e. We need pocket parks locally. They are vital and need to be able to compete although not usually multi-benefit
    f. Mobility and walkability to parks is important to support fitness and kids
    g. Staff is needed for maintenance and programming

12. **Lisa Craypo, The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation**
    a. Scoring criteria and policies should be based around ballot language and be revised to meet the needs of voters, i.e. safe and appealing places for families to recreate in their neighborhood

13. **Nirshila Chand, NHF**
    a. Much was discussed about youth voices. Please show a video on youth voices as many organizations such as NHF built program videos as part of future meetings.

14. **Naomi Iwasaki, Investing in Place**
    a. Investing in Place is a transportation policy and finance nonprofit working in Los Angeles County. We would like to see the methodology of the County Park Needs Assessment use Study Area rather than subarea classification as a basis for funding award. We believe this would lead to more direct benefits and access to quality open space for high-needs communities in the County.

15. **Chelina Odbert, KDI**
    a. Concerned that the definition and criteria used to determine need as discussed is not specific enough
    b. By allowing so many ways to meet the need criteria, it begins to dilute the focus on establishing new parks in the highest need neighborhoods and essentially allows most neighborhoods to find a way to collect those points by simply proving they will serve those with high needs. Played out to its worst-case scenario, it could lead to many new, high-need-serving parks located in low need neighborhoods which would seem to counter the goal of the Measure
    c. Scoring of Category 4, Criteria b is particularly problematic in this regard

Meeting Adjourned.