Measure A Implementation

Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District

Summary Meeting Notes
Steering Committee Meeting #9
March 1, 2018 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Manal Aboelata	Reyna Diaz	John Johns
Jean Armbruster	Hugo Enciso	Nicole Jones
Mark Baucum	Belinda Faustinos	Kim Lamorie
Jane Beesley	Hugo Garcia	Amy Lethbridge
Alina Bokde	Karen Ginsberg	Sussy Nemer
Scott Chan	Mark Glassock	Stefan Popescu
Maria Chong-Castillo	Lacey Johnson	Barbara Romero
Reuben R. De Leon	Bill Jones	Jeff Rubin

Alternate Members in Attendance: Sylvia Arredondo, Clement Lau, Robin Mark, Cara Meyer

1. **Comment Summary:** *Today's Meeting*
   a. Final recommendations to Board may be less specific than the Steering Committee discussions. Appendix or addendum will include more specificity.
   b. Final recommendations may present minority viewpoints as well, either in the main recommendations or as an addendum.
   c. No outside speakers at meetings, cannot delay timeline any longer.
   d. Will send out calendar invites for future meetings and update with links to agenda items as these are developed.

AGENDA ITEM: Evaluation Themes – Grant Application Scoring Process

1. **Comment Summary:** *Category Type – Balancing name and content of category with overall goals*
   a. Voters are expecting improvements based on overall goals.
   b. Equity should be primary emphasis.
   c. Projects should match category minimum requirements, not just name.
   d. Need to clarify and expand definitions (e.g. good standing, public park land, open space).
   e. Need should be considered in Categories 3 and 4.
   f. Proposition 68 (SB5) language is a good example of connecting categories with overall goals.

Response Summary:
    a. Project must be consistent with the measure, including all the language below each category title. This should be a pass/fail requirement, not an item that is scored.
    b. In general, points should be awarded for elements that contribute to overall goals of Measure A.

2. **Comment Summary:** *Level of Need*
    a. 30% to HVHN doesn't get to equity. There should be additional points for level of need.
    b. Points should be awarded for serving areas of high and very need too, especially from a regional perspective.
    c. Including subarea need is diluting the power of the Study Areas and shouldn't receive any points.
    d. Voters saw maps of their Study Areas showing levels of need in the Study Area and they expect funds to meet those needs.
    e. High and Very High Need Study Areas should get a targeted percentage of funds relative to population living in High and Very High Need Study Areas.
    f. 30% targeted funds in Categories 3&4 already go too far and penalize Study Areas with other types of need.
    g. Every Study Area is getting money, regardless of need level. High and Very High Need Study Areas will get an extra amount.
    h. High and Very High Need Study Areas should be elevated in scoring and looked at as a regional issue. Open space and regional projects should be able to make an argument for how they serve need. Should be grounded in PNA data evidence.
    i. Need to look at scenarios of projects serving subareas to determine if this should be considered.
    j. Red and orange subareas within yellow or green Study Areas have resources close by in a way that red and orange subareas within red and orange Study Areas don't. It's an issue of access.
    k. There is so little money to address need compared to the amount of need in the County. Look at historical lack of investments in High and Very High Need Study Areas. What is the mix going to High and Very High Need Study Areas? Connections to income, poverty and race? 80% of people of color live in High and Very High Need Study Areas. Using subareas ignores the context.

Response Summary:
    a. Some points should be awarded for projects in High and Very High Need Study Areas.
    b. Some points should be awarded for projects that serve High and Very High Need Study Areas.
    c. Opinion is split on awarding points for project in high need subareas, more information may be needed on this.

3. **Comment Summary:** *Multi-Benefit Criteria*
    a. Match measure language and broaden to include and integrate social outcomes.
    b. Do not confuse campaign and PNA with the law as written in the measure.
    c. There should be three buckets of points for social, environmental, and health, each worth the same total point value.
    d. It's dangerous to separate the point buckets because every community is different. Maybe a community doesn't need a project that meets the criteria in one of the buckets. Too specific will disadvantage neighboring communities.
    e. Community outreach will inform what the project should be, the community knows its priorities.
    f. Environmental multi-benefits are easier to demonstrate than gang prevention. More specific guidelines and examples would help with scoring.
    g. Anti-displacement criteria should have own space outside the multi-benefit criteria, refer to TCC and Prop. 68.
    h. There should be a separate category for health. Currently a project can get all points without considering health at all and health was specifically called out in the measure.

     i.   Certainly health is a fundamental, but each community has different concerns, so health doesn't need its own bucket.

     j.   Need opportunities to give points to projects that go the extra mile rather than just meet minimums.

     k.   Use one bucket and allow community to decide highest priorities. Health and safety are priorities in all parks. Splitting creates barriers to funding what the measure said should be funded.

     l.   Creating a single bucket of points means that a project could get maximum number of points without truly being multi-benefit. Might have multiple environmental benefits, but not include social or health benefits.

     m.   Should not create criteria that eliminates the possibility of funding projects that were specified in the measure.

     n.   It's less about eliminating projects and more about adding elements to projects that magnify the benefits.

Response Summary:

     a.   Agreement that there should be points awarded for multi-benefit projects and this should include social, health and environmental benefits.

     b.   Categories should match the measure but be broader than they are now.

     c.   No agreement on the idea of a single bucket of points vs. splitting the points into separate buckets.

     d.   Recognize that in a competitive grant process not every project will score all the points – the intent of the criteria is to help choose which projects to fund.

4.   **Comment Summary:** *Evaluation of Open Space and Local Park Projects*

     a.   Need to define open space. Piece of land that sits, trails, amenities, etc.

     b.   Limiting access and no access are separate issues. Prop 68 differentiates between open space and community parks.

     c.   Prop 68 was written as a water bond. Different than Measure A. Scoring should be oriented to need over type of project. Show how open space addresses need.

     d.   Have a cap on total pot for open space projects but still must be multi-benefit.

     e.   Further define urban space.

     f.   Measure is explicit on regional benefit. Be explicit on regional need. Urban fabric is dense.

     g.   Projects that have proven they serve users from High and Very High Need Study Areas but weren't assessed in the PNA can't get any points.

Response Summary:

     h.   Urban and open space projects can both have regional benefits, and both types of project should be equally able to score points.

     i.   Amenity condition should be removed or re-worked to ensure that projects without amenities or that didn't participate in the PNA can still score points.

     j.   In general, all criteria should be structured so that open space and more urban or local park projects can earn points.

5.   **Comment Summary:** *Community Engagement*

     a.   There should be additional points for extra community engagement.

     b.   Need to include and define "robust" engagement requirements.

     c.   Community engagement should be required in every grant program.

     d.   However, participatory engagement may not by the right approach for necessary infrastructure projects like restrooms and parking.

     e.   Community engagement thresholds should be tied to the total project budget, not just the Measure A funding portion

      f.   Planning and Design funds needs minimum engagement requirements because otherwise engagement would occur after construction begins.

      g.   Opportunity for County to catalyze where we're heading as a County through use of criteria that are potentially on the aspirational side. We don't always get every point in every category and that's fine - the categories can set a tone and alert potential grantees of priorities.

Response Summary:

      a.   Agreement that points should be awarded for community engagement that goes beyond the minimum requirements

      b.   Elements to consider in setting community engagement requirements include infrastructure projects, total project budget, all projects and programs should require engagement.

Public Comment:

      a.   Elsa Tung – LA Neighborhood Land Trust

            i.   What does "robust" engagement mean?

            ii.   There are great objective criteria in AB31 state park program. Point values and criteria that evaluate the number of outreach methods used, broad representation, number and kind of engagement activities, convenience of meetings. Look to AB31 for objective criteria for robust engagement.

      b.   Anisha Hingorani – Advancement Project CA

            i.   Historical inequities are huge, this group is pivotal in moving toward equity.

            ii.   Money has followed affluent communities.

           iii.   Consider larger county issues like displacement.

           iv.   We need displacement avoidance criteria that inspires and encourages people to address displacement.

6.   **Comment Summary:** *Leveraging Funds*

      a.   These may be the only funds that low capacity groups are able to secure.

      b.   This criterion shouldn't preclude projects from participating or exacerbate inequality.

      c.   Award points for plans to leverage funds, if Measure A funds are the first funds secured.

      d.   Prop 68 includes leveraging funds, why not use these funds? Our goal is to get the job done so if we've figured out how to leverage funds, we should get points.

      e.   Some communities with low capacity will have a hard time securing other funds.

      f.   Can leveraging funds be part of TA? Does the TA schedule allow time for this?

      g.   Capacity is so slim so that they only have one person to write grants. Leveraging could be a requirement/expectation in Low Need Study Areas, but not High Need Study Areas. Need to be fair in a context of unequal. PlaceWorks should come back with some creative ways to do this.

      h.   To what extent are people creating partnerships, working with Metro for example

      i.   In-kind donations or resources could support this. Concerned that nonprofits will have a harder time meeting a monetary requirement. Leveraging funds may not be tied to money but tied to resources.

Response Summary:

      a.   All criteria will advantage some projects and disadvantage others, so the criteria must be set up in a manner that is fair.

      b.   Technical assistance could include assistance with leveraging funds.

      c.   General agreement to award points for leveraging funds or plans to leverage, especially if in-kind leveraging or partnerships are considered instead of just money.

      d.   Idea that leveraging could be an expectation or standard requirement rather than a point-scoring criteria.

7. **Comment Summary:** *Innovation*
   a. Need both innovation and limited subjectivity. Need more clarity about what is scored, more definitions and examples of best practices. Innovation is good, but needs to be practical and rooted in data. Somewhere in between objective and loose.
   b. Innovation can be a detriment to completion. Should be "Innovation and Excellence" so that "traditional" projects that are extremely well-executed are rewarded too - established best-practices shouldn't be penalized.
   c. Innovation is already embedded in other categories, so it's a bit of double-dipping to have a separate criterion. Take it out. Innovation will shine in multi-benefit categories.
   d. Innovative approaches to social interactions, cultural facilities, etc. should earn points too. If we keep it, broaden it to be more inclusive.
   e. Innovation and excellence should be higher level principles that are expected to some degree.
   f. Okay with embedding into other places. Excellence should be rewarded in any category.

   Response Summary:
   i. Consensus to embed points for innovation in all categories and get rid of it as a stand-alone criterion.

8. **Comment Summary:** *Subjectivity*
   a. Subjective is very challenging, if there are subjective criteria there need to be benchmarks, guidelines, best practices and examples to guide applicants and scoring panel.
   b. Objective criteria are generally easier for reviewers to use to get on the same page, although some subjective criteria are ok too.
   c. Projects will be very diverse, so object criteria and empirical evidence will be useful when comparing them.
   d. If a criteria is subjective, the evaluation panel should discuss the score for each application.
   e. Nothing on community engagement requirements has been brought back after discussions. We care about engagement and want to learn more about the process and standards. Agree that there should be objective criteria. Subjective leaves it wide open and doesn't leave benchmarks to guide scorers and commit to.
   f. Can we encompass looking at tools and rubrics? It is difficult to gauge what the best approach is.

   Response Summary:
   a. If scoring subjective, then evaluation panel members should discuss the item.
   b. Agreement that scoring should be as objective as possible.
   c. Any subjective criteria should be clearly described with best practices and examples so applicants know how to earn points and evaluators can accurately score.

Meeting Adjourned.