

Measure A Citizens Oversight Advisory Board
Commission Annual Report
Inception through Fiscal Year Ending June 2022

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<https://rposd.lacounty.gov/advisory-board/>

Advisory Board Members

1st District: David Diaz
2nd District: Reginald Johnson (Vice Chairperson)
3rd District: Veronica Padilla (Chairperson)
4th District: Melissa Balocca
5th District: Kathleen Howald

July 20, 2022

Please note: The Measure A Citizens Oversight Advisory Board held its first meeting on January 8, 2020. The Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District (RPOSD) was recently advised by the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors, Commission Services that each Commission should provide an update to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) about its activities through an Annual Report. The Annual Report is to be completed and approved at a regular Commission meeting, and the Commission Liaison will then transmit the Annual Report to the Board. Thus, this first Measure A Citizens Oversight Advisory Board Annual Report will include an update from the inception of this Commission through the Fiscal Year ending June 2022. All future Annual Reports will be completed annually for each Fiscal Year.

Mission Statement

The role of the Measure A Citizens Oversight Advisory Board (Advisory Board) is to provide public accountability for the use of Measure A funds. Measure A was approved by 75% of voters in November 2016, which authorized dedicated local funding for park, recreation, and open space projects and their maintenance through an annual special tax on all taxable real property in Los Angeles County (County). The Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District (RPOSD) is responsible for implementing and administering Measure A funds. The Advisory Board reviews RPOSD's expenditures to ensure that allocations and expenses are in accordance with the purposes set forth in the Measure A resolution. The Advisory Board is charged with the following duties:

- Quarterly review of all expenditures from the special tax;
- Ensure that the Measure A program is integrated in RPOSD's annual independent audit by reviewing the audit from an independent audit agency;
- Publish a complete accounting of all allocations each year, posting the information on RPOSD's publicly accessible internet website in a downloadable spreadsheet format, including information about the location and footprint of each funded project, its objectives, status, and outcomes, any matching funds used and the applicable program from the expenditure plan schedule; and
- Submit to the County periodic evaluations of the program, which may be undertaken by independent researchers at the County Board of Supervisors' direction, and identify any changes needed to meet the objectives of the Measure A resolution.

The Advisory Board's fiduciary responsibility supports Goal II, Strategy II.2.2, of the County's Mission and Strategic Priorities of "expanding access for all County residents, particularly those in unincorporated and high-need areas, who have traditionally underutilized the County's museums, theatres, beaches, parks, and other recreational facilities." Measure A was drafted to meet current and future park needs and address the park and open space inequity by allocating funding to projects that will increase the high and very-high park-need communities' accessibility to parks and open spaces. The Advisory Board's oversight of RPOSD's expenditures and periodic evaluation of the Measure A program will ensure that Measure A is fulfilling the voters' will and improving the County residents' quality of life as intended.

Historical Background

The formation and operation of the Advisory Board was a mandate of Measure A under Section 7: Community Oversight and Accountability. The resolution dictated the Advisory Board to be composed of five members appointed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board), who acts as the governing body of RPOSD. The members appointed by the Board are community members from one of

the five Supervisorial Districts and possess knowledge and expertise in parks, park development, evaluating financial transactions, and/or program cost-effectiveness. On October 1, 2019, the Board appointed:

- David Diaz, appointment by Supervisor Solis of the First District
- Irma R. Muñoz, appointment by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas of the Second District
- Veronica Padilla, appointment by Supervisor Kuehl of the Third District
- Mark Baucum, appointment by Supervisor Hahn of the Fourth District
- Kathleen Howald, appointment by Supervisor Barger of the Fifth District

The inaugural meeting of the Advisory Board took place on January 8, 2020, at RPOSD headquarters. At the first meeting, the appointed members were sworn in and elected Advisory Board Member Diaz as Chairperson and Advisory Board Member Muñoz as Vice Chairperson. It was established that regular meetings shall be quarterly in the months of January, April, July, and October.

Since its inception through Fiscal Year ending June 2022, the Advisory Board has met nine times. After the first meeting, the second quarterly meeting was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent meetings were held virtually. At these meetings, the Advisory Board remained consistent with its duties and has reviewed ten quarterly status reports, three independent audit reports, and three RPOSD annual reports.

Advisory Board Members Muñoz and Baucum resigned at the April 2021 and July 2021 meetings, respectively. At the October 13, 2021 meeting, the Advisory Board welcomed two new Advisory Board Members. Supervisor Mitchell appointed Reginald Johnson for the Second District, and Supervisor Hahn appointed Melissa Balocca for the Fourth District. The Advisory Board adopted bylaws at the January 12, 2022 meeting, and elected Advisory Board Member Padilla as the new Chairperson and Advisory Board Member Johnson as the new Vice Chairperson.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

As community representatives with diverse backgrounds from each Supervisorial Districts throughout the County, the Advisory Board Members have always welcomed, recommended, and supported ideas on expanding opportunities for inclusion and public engagement.

At each meeting, the public was given the opportunity to address the Advisory Board during the “Public Comment” segment of the meeting regarding any items of interest that are within the purview of the Advisory Board. Aware of the diversity of County residents’ communication styles, there are two avenues the public can address the Advisory Board:

1. Public comments can be written and submitted prior to the meeting via email to info@rposd.lacounty.gov or online on the [Advisory Board webpage](#) on [RPOSD’s website](#). The comment(s) will be read aloud during the meeting.
2. The public can provide a live comment in person and are subjected to the established three-minute time limit.

After the initial meeting, the Advisory Board meetings have been virtual as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Assembly Bill 361. During these virtual meetings, the public had the ability to submit a

comment prior to the meeting via email or the webpage or provide a live comment by either typing their comment in the chat box to be read aloud by an RPOSD staff member or choosing to provide a verbal comment.

The Advisory Board recognized that virtual meetings could increase accessibility and public engagement. To encourage and enhance public participation, the Advisory Board suggested moving the regular meetings from the morning to the evening. Since then, the Advisory Board meetings have been scheduled for 6:00 PM.

Cognizant of the diverse languages spoken by the County's residents; the Advisory Board was an advocate for Spanish interpretation after a suggestion made by a public member during the July 2020 meeting. Simultaneous Spanish interpretation has been available at the meetings since October 2020. In addition, the Advisory Board continually encouraged RPOSD staff to utilize social media and brainstorm other channels to publicize the Advisory Board meetings and available funding opportunities. Advisory Board meetings are publicized at RPOSD headquarters, online at RPOSD.LACounty.gov, through email blasts, and various social media platforms, and notice is Brown Act compliant.

Annual Work Plan

The following is the Advisory Board's timeline for the completion of each duty:

- Review the Quarterly Status Reports four times a year;
- Review the annual independent audit of RPOSD once a year;
- Publish an accounting of all Measure A allocations once a year; and
- Periodically evaluate the Measure A program.

Accomplishments

As members of the community and experts in their respective fields, the Advisory Board Members' personal and professional insights guided RPOSD to accomplish the following:

- RPOSD strengthened its grant award process and internal controls, and released edits to the Measure A Grants Administration Manual;
- Modernized the RPOSD website, including the creation of a webpage for the Advisory Board, to improve user experience and make information easily accessible for the public and stakeholders;
- Creation of the innovative LA Parks Portal that maintains and tracks park inventory, which will assist local officials and park agencies in understanding future steps needed to improve and ensure adequate and equitable access to parks and open spaces;
- Development of the RPOSD Branding Policy, which highlights the support of the voters, transparent use of taxpayer dollars, and contribution towards improving and protecting parks and open spaces;
- The release and award of the first cycle of Measure A competitive grant programs. Over \$26 million was awarded for capital projects that improve and protect open space, watersheds, water resources, regional facilities, regional trails, regional accessibility, and acquisition of parkland. Out of the \$26 million, \$11 million were awarded to high and very-high park-need study areas;
- Launched professional consultant services as part of the Technical Assistance Program (TAP). Through a solicitation process, RPOSD qualified and procured 21 professional consultants with expertise in various park development disciplines to provide technical services at no cost to the

TAP applicants. For the first cycle of Measure A competitive grant programs, RPOSD awarded TAP grants to three high and very-high park-need cities, amounting to over \$40,000 in professional grant writing support and resulting in \$2 million in awarded funds; and

- Released the second cycle of Measure A competitive grants with \$23 million total in funding opportunities for youth and veteran job training programs and recreation access enhancement projects.