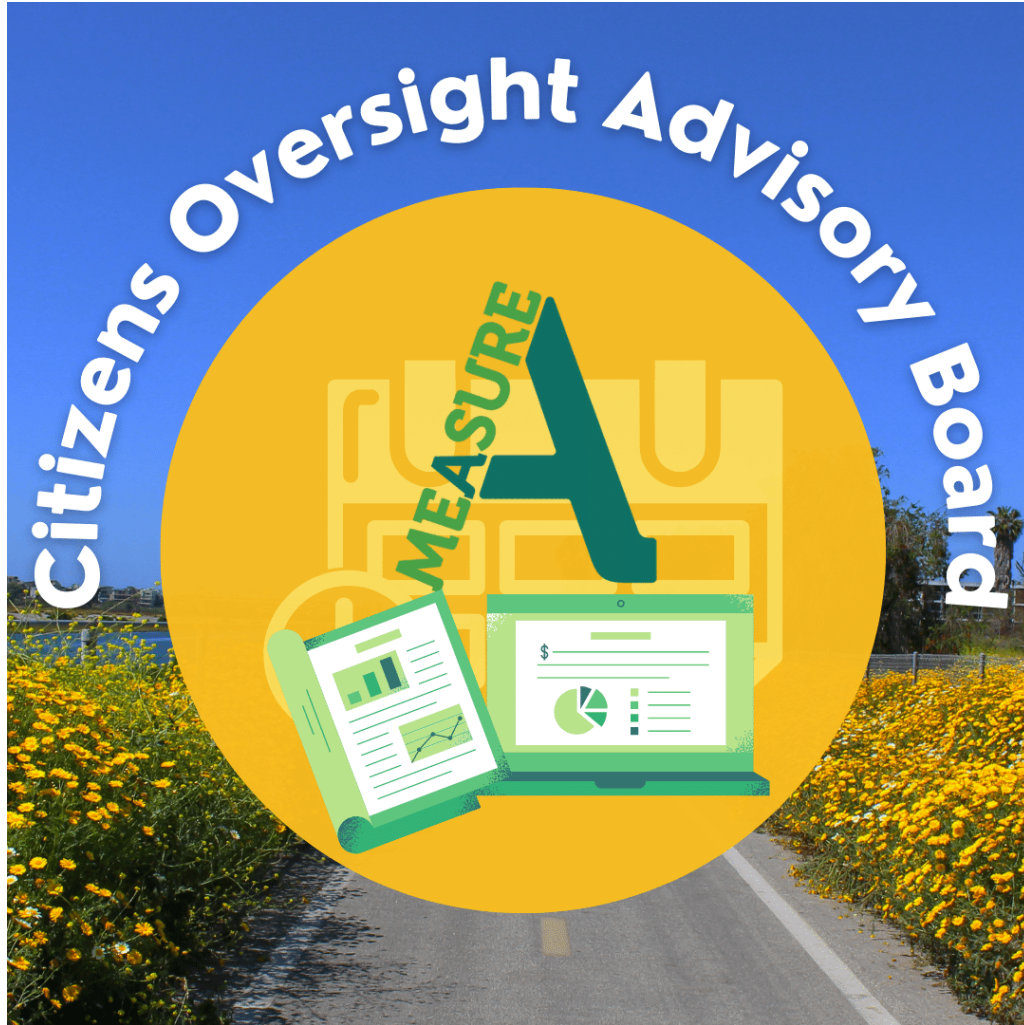


Measure A Citizens Oversight Advisory Board  
Commission Annual Report  
Fiscal Year 2022 - 2023



Advisory Board Members  
1st District: David Diaz  
2nd District: Reginald Johnson (Vice Chairperson)  
3rd District: Veronica Padilla (Chairperson)  
4th District: Melissa Balocca  
5th District: Mark Mariscal

October 18, 2023

1000 S. Fremont Avenue, Unit #40, Building A-9 East Ground Floor, Alhambra, CA 91803  
Telephone: (626) 588-5060  
Website: <https://rposd.lacounty.gov/advisory-board/>

## 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 periodic evaluations of the program to the County, 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 act as the governing body of RPOSD. The members appointed by the Board are community members from the five Supervisorial Districts and possess knowledge and expertise in parks, park development, evaluating financial transactions, and/or program cost-effectiveness. Once appointed, members of the Advisory Board serve a term of four years at the pleasure of the Board, and no member may serve more than two consecutive terms. In the event of a vacancy arising during the term, the Board assumes the responsibility of appointing a successor to complete the unexpired term.

For the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023, the Advisory Board was comprised of the following appointed members:

- David Diaz, representing the First District
- Reginald Johnson, representing the Second District
- Veronica Padilla, representing the Third District
- Melissa Balocca, representing the Fourth District
- Kathleen Howald, representing the Fifth District

During this period, Board Member Padilla served as Chairperson, with Board Member Johnson as the Vice Chairperson. Board Member Howald resigned in March 2023 and Supervisor Barger of the Fifth District appointed Mark Mariscal in June 2023, to fulfill the remainder of the term.

The Advisory Board established a schedule of regular meetings on a quarterly basis, specifically in the months of January, April, July, and October. Over the course of the FY ending on June 30, 2023, the Advisory Board convened four times. During these meetings, the Advisory Board remained consistent with its duties, reviewing a total of four quarterly status reports along with one RPOSD annual report.

## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

As community representatives with diverse backgrounds from each Supervisorial District throughout the County, the Advisory Board Members created an environment that allows the public and stakeholders to share and openly express their ideas, opinions, and beliefs. The Advisory Board has consistently welcomed, recommended, and supported ideas aimed at expanding opportunities for inclusion and public engagement.

The public is provided with the opportunity to address the Advisory Board during the “Public Comment” segment at each meeting, regarding any items of interest that are within the purview of the Advisory Board. Aware of the diversity of County residents’ communication styles, the Advisory Board offers two avenues for the public to address the Advisory Board:

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

When the Advisory Board shifted its meetings to a virtual format in accordance with the state of emergency necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic and Assembly Bill (AB) 361 in 2020, the Advisory Board ensured that the variety of communication channels remain accessible for the public. During these virtual meetings, the public had the option to submit comments ahead of time via email or the designated webpage or alternatively they could provide live comments by either typing their comments in the chat box to be read aloud by an RPOSD staff member or choose to deliver the comment live themselves.

The Advisory Board quickly recognized that virtual meetings could increase accessibility and public engagement. To encourage and enhance public participation, the Advisory Board suggested shifting the regular meetings from the morning to the evening hours. As a result, the Advisory Board meetings have since been scheduled for 6:00 PM.

When the state of emergency ended on February 28, 2023, the Advisory Board transitioned back to in-person meetings. This change prompted RPOSD to consider adjusting the meeting hours to daytime, however, the Advisory Board Members proposed retaining the evening meeting time to promote increased accessibility for the public, as evening hours often align better with working individuals' schedules, enabling broader attendance and participation. Recognizing the importance of inclusivity and accessibility, the Advisory Board Members also supported a hybrid meeting format during the transition, keeping the virtual components of previous meetings and combining it with in-person elements. This hybrid approach seeks to maximize the public's access to the meetings, allowing remote participation when necessary and fostering a more diverse and engaged stakeholder community.

The Advisory Board continually encouraged RPOSD to utilize social media and to brainstorm other channels to publicize the Advisory Board meetings and available funding opportunities. The meetings are publicized at RPOSD headquarters, online at [RPOSD.LACounty.gov](https://RPOSD.LACounty.gov), through email blasts, and various social media platforms, and comply with Brown Act requirements.

The Advisory Board's commitment to encouraging equity, diversity, and inclusion is evident in its support of RPOSD's Technical Assistance Program (TAP). On July 14, 2022, RPOSD held a special presentation at Grand Park to announce the allocation of over \$9 million in Measure A funding to 30 high and very-high park-need cities and unincorporated areas of the County for technical assistance services to advance park development projects and deliver new parklands. Advisory Board Member David Diaz spoke on behalf of the Advisory Board at the event and voiced the Advisory Board's support for this initiative. Addressing an audience that included city mayors, city managers, park directors, park equity advocates, park agency partners, and media, he highlighted the significant strides RPOSD is taking toward park equity. The funding was allocated to areas with considerably less park acreage than average, to empower these historically underfunded communities to create new parks and provide opportunities for individuals of varying backgrounds to benefit from the positive impacts of nearby green spaces.

Furthermore, following the Board's lead, the Advisory Board recognized that we occupy land originally and still inhabited and cared for by the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples. At its April 19, 2023 meeting, the Advisory Board unanimously approved opening all meetings with a Land Acknowledgment to recognize the area's original inhabitants who were forcibly dispossessed of their homelands as a step toward recognizing the negative impacts these communities have endured and continue to endure.

## 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 at the Board's direction.

## 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 during this FY:

- RPOSD commemorated a remarkable milestone of three decades of grantmaking. Over the course of 30 years, RPOSD has awarded \$1.6 billion in funding towards the advancement of parks and open spaces.
- The allocation of over \$53.5 million in annual allocation funding to the 88 cities and unincorporated communities throughout Los Angeles County.
- The allocation of over \$9 million in Measure A grant funding for pre-park development technical assistance services to 30 cities and unincorporated areas of the County with the highest park need.
- The awarding of over \$12.9 million in funding for two Measure A competitive grant programs: Recreation Access and Youth and Veteran Job Training and Placement. This cycle awarded \$6.8 million in Recreation Access grants to nine programs designed to enhance County residents' access to public lands and open spaces, and \$6.1 million in Youth and Veteran Job Training and Placement grants to seven job training and career development programs for youths and veterans in the parks and recreation field. Funding programmatic grants is a historic first in RPOSD's 30 years of grantmaking.
- Expanded the TAP team with two new staff members to carry out a more robust implementation of the program. The new team members initiated an active outreach campaign, engaging with the agencies that received the July 2022 TAP allocation to facilitate the development of park projects that will add new parklands to their respective communities. Furthermore, the TAP team launched a series of workshops designed to enrich collaboration and knowledge. The initial set of workshops was tailored for nonprofit organizations to foster discussion on strategic partnerships. The second series of workshops showcased park planning and development experts sharing their insights and experiences in the industry.
- Funded the Parks Needs Assessment Plus (PNA+), a comprehensive study of public recreational lands and amenities from the regional perspective. The results identified additional park needs concerning environmental conservation, restoration, regional recreation, and rural recreation. In collaboration with the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, RPOSD will integrate the PNA+ findings into the Measure A grantmaking process.
- Launched a new webpage titled "Become Our Grantee" to foster strategic collaboration with nonprofit organizations to achieve shared objectives. It includes steps to identify eligibility, planning, applying, and managing a grant.

This report was compiled on behalf of the Advisory Board by



LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT