



2024 Measure A Acquisition-Only Competitive Grant Program

RPOSD accepted questions regarding this Measure A competitive funding opportunity until August 9, 2024. Submissions were collected, answered, and compiled into this “Questions & Answer (Q&A)” document.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. **Question:** Will the virtual workshop be recorded and available online?

Response: The recording and PowerPoint slides are available on RPOSD’s webpage: <https://rposd.lacounty.gov/competitive-grant-programs/>.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)

2. **Question:** When is the deadline for public agencies to request assistance via the Technical Assistance Program?

Response: TAP Eligible Entities have until Wednesday, August 28, 2024, to request funds for grant writing services.

3. **Question:** Is the request for funds for grant writing services reviewed on a rolling basis? Specifically, if eligible agencies submit a request before August 28th, can the process begin sooner?

Response: Yes, requests will be reviewed on a rolling basis. TAP Eligible Entities are able to apply for funding for grant writing services prior to the August 28th deadline. For additional TAP-related questions, contact Susan Castro-Valenzuela, at scastro@rposd.lacounty.gov.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

4. **Question:** Does a city council office qualify as an eligible organization, or would it need to be a city department?

Response: The responsible entity does not matter. It could be the city’s parks and recreation department or another city department applying. The key is ensuring that the property remains a park in perpetuity. It’s important to note that each city is allowed only one application. If multiple departments within the city are planning to submit an application, coordination across

departments is essential to ensure only one application is submitted. However, there is a caveat for the County of Los Angeles and City of Los Angeles due to their large size. Certain departments within the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles are considered separate eligible applicants for application purposes.

5. **Question:** Are federally recognized tribes considered as local governments in order to apply? Are unrecognized tribes listed on the California Native American Heritage Commission eligible applicants? Do they need 501 (c) 3 status?

Response: Eligible applicants can be tribal governments, as long as they are registered as a nonprofit organization, 501(c)3. In addition to being a 501(c)3, the mission of the organization must be related to one or more of the park-related focus areas listed on page 4 of the [guidelines](#).

6. **Question:** Are tribal land return projects encouraged regardless of the location in LA?

Response: Proposals that acquire land for park purposes in LA County are encouraged to apply.

7. **Question:** Is there a preference for the type of applicant if applicants can be either local governments or non-governmental organizations aligned with Measure A goals?

Response: No, there is no preferred entity. RPOSD strongly encourages a variety of different types of entities to submit applications.

8. **Question:** Are organizations who have existing separate, open grants with RPOSD eligible in this program?

Response: Yes, organizations who have existing separate, open grants with RPOSD are eligible to apply for the Acquisition-Only Competitive Grant Program. Applicants must be in Good Standing to apply for any Measure A funds.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

9. **Question:** Is purchasing a property for a community garden an eligible project type under this program? What type of public access will a community garden need to provide to be considered eligible?

Response: Yes, a community garden is eligible because it would be considered a new park so long as the applicant can ensure public access. It is key to ensure non-discrimination and avoid preferential treatment. Everyone should have equal access to the garden, and any fee structure implemented must be uniform. There cannot be different fees for residents and non-residents of a city. All individuals must be treated equally.

- 10. Question:** If the garden space is only accessible by gardeners who rent the plot, but the garden periodically holds publicly accessible programming, would that be eligible?

Response: The main issue is public access – not the community garden. The RPOSD grant agreement includes a nondiscrimination clause, ensuring equal rights for all to enroll in programs or attend events at RPOSD-funded property or facilities, regardless of their residency. Eligibility requires that the membership process for the community garden is uniform and does not give preferential treatment to its users.

- 11. Question:** Can a project have multiple parcels and willing landowners? Will they need to be adjacent? Will multiple escrows be acceptable?

Response: Yes, a project can have multiple parcels and willing landowners. There are some situations where there may be a collection of parcels you're interested in purchasing with different landowners. The parcels do not need to be adjacent. Multiple escrows are acceptable.

- 12. Question:** If we already have a Purchase Agreement based on an appraisal over one year old, do we need another appraisal? If so, will this be covered under the grant?

Response: An appraisal cannot be more than one year old at the time of application submission. However, if you are a successful applicant and have entered into an agreement with RPOSD, RPOSD will require an updated appraisal a minimum of 60 days prior to the contemplated close of escrow. The updated appraisal is an eligible cost covered by the grant.

- 13. Question:** If an appraisal is less than a year old at the time that the willing seller signs a Letter of Intent and the appraisal is less than a year old when submitted to RPOSD as part of the grant application submission, does that mean the appraisal is valid for two years after the grant application is submitted?

Response: Yes, if the applicant is submitting the appraisal with their application, the appraisal cannot be more than a year old. RPOSD will consider the appraisal valid for up to two years from the date of submission.

- 14. Question:** Does a MOU with the seller have to be completed at the time of application? What are some additional examples of an identified willing seller? What else would be definitive besides the MOU?

Response: No, an MOU is not required. RPOSD requires submissions to be more definitive than just a conversation with the landowner but not necessarily to the level of an MOU. If you already have an MOU or a sale agreement, you can upload it under the Supporting Documentation section of the application in the Grants Management System. Additional examples include correspondence between the applicant and the landowner that indicate a willingness to enter into negotiations to purchase with the applicant. As part of the evaluation process, the evaluators will give more weight to those acquisitions that have the best likelihood of success.

- 15. Question:** Will RPOSD accept other documentation as proof of an identified and willing seller other than a Letter of Intent or Purchase Agreement? For example, notices of disposal/solicitation, lease agreements (evidence of relationship between two agencies), etc.

Response: A Letter of Intent between a buyer and seller is one example of supporting documents that may be submitted to indicate proof of an identified willing seller. Other documents may be submitted, but they will be compared with other applications that provide a Purchase Agreement or Letter of Intent and may receive a higher evaluation score from the evaluators.

- 16. Question:** Can you talk about the perpetuity requirements?

Response: Measure A requires the property to be operated, maintained, and publicly-accessible in perpetuity, meaning forever. Additionally, the use of the property must remain consistent with the purpose of the measure.

- 17. Question:** Are there any funding match requirements?

Response: There are no fund-matching requirements; however, refer to the [guidelines](#) regarding budget considerations. RPOSD is awarding up to \$2 million per project. RPOSD's goal is to ensure the acquisitions go through. Ideally, RPOSD prefers acquisitions where the \$2 million contribution will either fully cover the cost or be used towards the final stages of funding to complete the acquisition rather than extending the process over several years.

- 18. Question:** Can you acquire land for a recreational facility?

Response: Yes, the funding is strictly for the acquisition of property. You can use the property for any park-related purpose, such as building a gymnasium, creating open space, conservation, playgrounds, or basketball courts.

- 19. Question:** Through this grant opportunity, we can purchase "rural" or "regional" parkland, but it must be used for one or more of the following purposes: multi-benefit parks, regional recreation facilities, wildlife corridors, conservation, preservation, habitat restoration, trails, multi-use trails, and access facilities such as trailheads, staging areas, roadways, and parking lots?

Response: Yes, page 6 of the [guidelines](#) also lists new parks, pocket parks, and expansion of existing parks.

- 20. Question:** Are specific project types more favorable than others? For instance, if the project provides multi-modal access to a park that has an existing barrier such as a rail line, adjacent inaccessible private property, etc.

Response: Specific project types are not more favorable than others. We encourage all applicants to review the evaluation criteria to ensure that elements of the project align to the evaluation criteria.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

- 21. Question:** Are community meetings required as part of the application? Can you provide examples of what community engagement opportunities would be as part of the land acquisition process?

Response: Community engagement is not required for this Acquisition-Only Competitive Grant Program, but it is recommended. The [Measure A Grants Administration Manual](#) lists many examples of community engagement. If you have already completed community engagement, it is advantageous to mention this in your application.

APPLICATION

- 22. Question:** Can we see the full list of application questions outside of GMS?

Response: All elements required in the [Grant Management System \(GMS\)](#) are outlined in the [guidelines](#), including the application questions.

GRANTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

- 23. Question:** On my GMS, I don't see any funding opportunities to apply for.

Response: Access to funding opportunities is based on the eligibility of each entity. RPOSD recommends reviewing the [Become Our Grantee webpage](#), which provides resources on how to navigate the process of applying for grants. At this time the only posted funding opportunity is for Acquisition-Only. All pertinent information is located on the [Competitive Grant Programs webpage](#). Please note that the funding opportunity will close on September 27, 2024 at 10:00am.

EVALUATION

- 24. Question:** Beyond the eligibility guidelines, is there any advice on any project characteristics or details in an application that RPOSD generally likes to see?

Response: Reference the scoring rubric in the [guidelines](#) (pages 12 – 15). Focus on the elements that are called out in the scoring rubric.

- 25. Question:** Will the size of the acquisition make the application more competitive, such as a pocket park versus a regional park?

Response: No. The likelihood of success of the acquisition is more determinative than the size.

26. Question: If a tribal entity is interested in acquiring land for conservation purposes but these lands are not in rural or urban high-need areas, will this be problematic from a scoring perspective?

Response: The first two elements in the evaluation criteria, Level of Need and Regional Recreation or Rural Recreation Priority Areas, are not mandatory requirements but opportunities for additional points based on the measure. Projects located in areas of lower park need are still eligible to apply. RPOSD funds acquisitions for open space and conservation, and not all of these acquisitions need to include public access.

27. Question: If a park project is not in a high-need study area, will it impact the score?

Response: The Level of Need criteria (10 points max) is only one of the six evaluation criterion that total up to 100 points (see the scoring rubric on page 12 of the [guidelines](#)). How well the application may score will depend on whether the acquisition project is located in a regional recreation or rural recreation priority area (10 points max) and how well it scores with the evaluated criteria (up to 80 points). There is still potentially 90 points available not including the Level of Need criteria.

28. Question: Are letters of support from community organizations and government officials used to score the application?

Response: No, letters of support are not required or used to score the application.

29. Question: How many applications were received versus awarded in the previous cycle? Do you expect this cycle to be more competitive than the last?

Response: In the previous cycle, RPOSD received 9 applications and awarded 6 projects. RPOSD welcomes and hopes to receive a diverse range of applications for the evaluation panel to consider.

30. Question: What metrics are used to determine high-need areas? Is there a map where we can check if the location is high need by searching via address?

Response: The results of the [2016 Countywide Parks Needs Assessment](#) are used to determine the high park need areas. Measure A encourages park acquisitions primarily in these high and very high need areas but does not focus solely on them. The emphasis is on all of Los Angeles County, with a particular focus on the areas with the greatest park-need.

For Level of Need, use the [RPOSD Park Investment Map](#) to check if the location is high need by address via the search box. Ensure that the "Park Need Level" layer is toggled on the Layer List.

To identify the Regional Recreation or Rural Recreation Priority Areas that the project is located in, use the [Park Needs Assessment+ Map Viewer](#). In the Map Viewer, zoom into street level of the

project, and use toggle on the “Priority Areas for Increasing Access to Regional Recreation” OR “Priority Areas for Increasing Access to Rural Recreation” layer.

- 31. Question:** The grant workshop mentioned that we would score higher if our project was within a high-need area. LA County previously did a study of the east side of Palmdale and identified a few high-need areas. Do we have an updated version of this document or a tool online we could use to get a clearer look at these areas? The guidelines mentioned using the [PNA+ interactive map](#), but it appears in that tool that we have no high-need areas.

Response: The project would receive points if it’s in a Very High or High Need Study Area as per the [2016 Countywide Parks Needs Assessment](#). The City of Palmdale has two Study Areas:

SA#124 City of Palmdale - Eastside (Park Need Level is low)

SA#125 City of Palmdale – Westside (Park Need Level is low)

The project would also receive points if it’s located in a Regional Recreation or Rural Recreation Priority Areas with one or more identified indicators of need as per the [2022 Parks Needs Assessment +](#).

For the Regional Recreation or Rural Recreation Priority Areas, you’ll need to use the [Parks Needs Assessment + Map Viewer](#) and zoom into the location of the project’s acquisition. Turn on the “Priority Areas for Increasing Access to Regional Recreation” OR “Priority Areas for Increasing Access to Rural Recreation” layer on the map.

- 32. Question:** We understand that there is a minimum of 30% of program funding to be allocated to regional/local high-need areas. For the remaining 70 or less percent, will the awardees be selected based on their score out of 100? For instance, if a project is not located in a high need but rather a moderate need but receives high scores in all other criteria/categories.

Response: Yes. Once all applications have been vetted and scored, they will receive a cumulative total score. That will determine which applications receive funding, based on the remaining funds available.

- 33. Question:** Can you provide past successful projects and what made them stand out?

Response: Past awarded projects are on the website here: <https://rposd.lacounty.gov/competitive-grants-awarded-under-measure-a/>. RPOSD used a similar scoring rubric for evaluations. This rubric is derived directly from the voter-approved Measure A Resolution. Successful applications typically address more of the elements that are scored by the evaluators.

AWARD

- 34. Question:** Is the targeted award announcement no longer in December?

Response: RPOSD aims to announce the awards in December. However, based on past experiences, the holidays during the last two months of the year made it more difficult for the evaluators to convene and decide on rankings. RPOSD will make every endeavor to award in December and by no later than January 2025.

- 35. Question:** The City is about to open escrow with a second property, when will awards be made and what is the earliest date funds will be available to close escrow? If an application is made with a property address that the City wishes to acquire, but it ends up being funded by another fund source, can the application be used for another property on the block if the City opens escrow on new property?

Response: RPOSD Acquisition funds will only be awarded for the property that is identified in the application and cannot be transferred to another property.