

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

March 12, 2018

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee

FROM: Jacki Bacharach, Executive Director

RE: Park Bond Measure A – Use of Funds

Adherence to Strategic Plan:

Goal B: Member Regional Advocacy. Advocate for the interests of the South Bay.

BACKGROUND

At the January Board of Directors meeting, Torrance Community Services Director John Jones requested that the SBCCOG send a letter and ask our cities to send a letter to our county supervisors about the criteria being considered for allocation of Park Bond Measure A competitive funds. The Board agreed and the attached letter was sent as well as sending a request to cities to do the same.

Subsequent to the SBCCOG taking this position, I received a phone call from the Social Justice Learning Institute Executive Director D'Artagnan Scorza. This is an organization in the City of Inglewood that we have worked with on some of our projects. Dr. Scorza stated that he is expressing the concern of other community organizations who were not happy with the SBCCOG's letter. He agreed to send me further information which is what follows:

Thank you for your interest in additional background information on Measure A. Please let me know if the below provides you with what you need, or if there is anything else that would be useful.

- *From 2015-2016, LA County undertook a countywide comprehensive Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, which divided the county into 188 study areas and used specific metrics to assess each area's park need. Each area's park need is characterized as Very High, High, Moderate, Low, or Very Low, resulting in the [map on PDF p.7](#).*
- *Measure A is a voter-approved countywide parks and open space funding measure developed and passed after the Parks Needs Assessment. Revenue is based on a parcel tax of 1.5 cents per square foot of development, which amounts to approximately \$96 million per year.*
- *The Measure A expenditure plan divides funds into seven spending categories.*
 - *50% of all revenue will be directly allocated back to each study area, based on population.*
 - *13% of all revenue will be directly allocated to High and Very High Need study areas.*
 - *14% of all revenue will be general competitive grants. Within this pot, 30% of general competitive grant funding will be set-aside for the High and Very High Needs areas, per a recommendation by the Measure A Implementation Steering Committee. This set-aside amounts to only 4% of all Measure A revenue.*
- *The current Measure A competitive grant program draft scoring criteria proposes extra points for proposals in High/Very High Need areas and the weighting of level of need in scoring. The steering committee (the 45 member governance structure to guide Measure A implementation guidelines) is leaning in this direction to encourage proposals from high and very high need*

study areas (not to exclude excellent projects from other parts of the County) but in keeping with one of the fundamental principles of the Measure overall which is to make some countywide progress eliminating stark disparities in park access by reducing the intensity and frequency of "very high need" study areas in the County.

Key points:

- *10 SBCCOG member cities and unincorporated areas are considered in Very High or High park need and would benefit from the emphasis on need. Very High Need: Inglewood, Hawthorne, Lawndale, Unincorporated Lennox, Unincorporated West Athens-Westmont and High Need: Gardena, Carson, North Torrance, Unincorporated Alondra Park, Unincorporated West Carson*
- *Half of all Measure A funding goes right back to the cities based on a population calculation.*
- *Even though the set-aside for High/Very High needs areas is 30% of general competitive grants, that amounts to just 4% of all Measure A funding (\$4.1 million). In total, only 17% of Measure A (\$16.4 million) is targeted to High/Very High needs areas.*
- *The competitive grant scoring criteria are still in draft form, and there is strong interest among many Measure A Implementation Steering Committee members in ensuring that scoring criteria address needs based on the Parks Needs Assessment.*
- *Additionally, scoring criteria to demonstrate a project's multiple benefits, including health, environment, and public safety/gang reduction (per the ballot language) are being considered, so strong proposals, regardless of location, can score well.*
- *Measure A is designed to leverage other state and local funding sources; we all want a program that positions the whole region to do well.*
- *Inequality hurts growth, according to multiple economic analyses, which make the case that equity should be at the heart of local planning because the entire region will profit. Equity is not a special interest; it is a common one. (Source: [USC "Measures Matter," 2018](#))*

Thank you for all that you do to improve the lives of people living in and visiting Inglewood. I hope the information provided above is useful. Let me know if you need anything further.

Best Regards,

D'Artagnan Scorza, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Social Justice Learning Institute

RECOMMENDATION

Review information provided and decide if any additional action should be taken.



SOUTH BAY CITIES
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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February 15, 2018

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor, 2nd District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
500 W. Temple Street, Room 866
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Measure A--Safe, Clean Neighborhood Parks and Beaches Protection Measure of 2016

Dear Supervisor Ridley-Thomas:

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments respectfully requests your support to ensure Measure A competitive grant funds match the intent of the voters and to fund as many projects as possible throughout Los Angeles County.

Measure A asked voters to continue their support for local parks, beaches, open space, and water resources by approving an annual parcel tax of 1.5 cents per square foot of development for recreational improvements in Los Angeles County.

The 45-member Steering Committee broadly represents community interests throughout the County. However, the Cities charged to implement the improvements are represented by only a few seats on the Committee. During the competitive grant discussions, the Steering Committee recommended a total of 30% of the competitive grant funds be set aside for High Need and Very High need areas. Currently, the grant application scoring criteria favors High and Very High Need Study Areas. This scoring criteria and funding set aside does not provide fair and equal opportunities for funding within each of our communities. Measure A's language does not call for weighting competitive grants in this manner. The voters approved Measure A to address needs within their own community.

Since there is high need in every community, this request asks you to consider changing the scoring criteria favoring high and very high need areas to application scoring based on the need and condition of the project itself and its impact to that community.

The opportunity to improve the entire county is diminished using High and Very High Need application scoring. Our agency is concerned that the intent of Measure A is being changed beyond the intent of the voters.

Sincerely,

Kurt Weideman, SBCCOG Chair
Councilmember, City of Torrance

Cc: Jane Beesley, Regional Parks and Open Space District

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN ACTION

Carson El Segundo Gardena Hawthorne Hermosa Beach Inglewood Lawndale Lomita
Manhattan Beach Palos Verdes Estates Rancho Palos Verdes Redondo Beach Rolling Hills
Rolling Hills Estates Torrance Los Angeles District #15 Los Angeles County