



MEMORANDUM

DATE April 19, 2018
TO Measure A Steering Committee
FROM Los Angeles Regional and Open Space Park District
SUBJECT Draft Displacement Avoidance Strategy

In addition to supporting overall health and wellness, providing community cohesion, and environmental benefits, parks may also contribute economic benefits to communities they serve. Research indicates that park improvements can positively impact real property values and municipal revenues.

Unfortunately, this means that communities with parks have increased neighborhood appeal and may attract affluent residents and lead to increased property values, which can gradually price out low-income residents and businesses from the neighborhoods in which they live. The process of economic forces pricing lower income populations out of their homes and neighborhoods is called *displacement*, while the resulting changes of neighborhood population from lower to higher income is referred to as *gentrification*.¹²³

Although RPOSD is not able to directly fund housing and other displacement prevention projects, the implementation of Measure A should consider strategies intended to lessen the likelihood of displacement and gentrification as a result of park enhancement projects. The following goals and policies, many of which are included in the Measure A Grantmaking Policy, eligibility requirements, evaluation criteria, and/or other grant guidelines, are intended to lessen the likelihood of displacement and gentrification as a result of park enhancement projects:

Goals:

1. Ensure that parks and recreation facilities funded by Measure A serve all residents of Los Angeles County, particularly low-income people and ethnic minorities who generally populate High and Very High Need Study Areas.
 - **Policy 1.** Set aside a portion of Measure A funds for High and Very High Need Study Areas. (*Currently included in Community-Based Park Investment Program (Category 1), Neighborhood Parks, Healthy Communities and Urban Greening Program (Category 2)*)

¹ [American Planning Association](#): City Parks Forum: How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development

² [The Trust for Public Land](#): Measuring the Economic Value of a City Park System

³ [Active Living Research](#): The Economic Benefits of Open Space, Recreation Facilities and Walkable Community Design

- **Policy 2.** In scoring competitive grant applications, give points to projects that serve High and Very High Need Study Areas. For the Natural Lands, Local Beaches, Water Conservation and Protection Competitive Grants; Regional Recreation, Multi-use Trails, and Accessibility Competitive Grants; and the Acquisition-only Competitive Grants, at least 30% of funds should be expended on projects in High and Very High Need Study Areas. *(Currently included in competitive grant scoring and Grantmaking Policy).*
 - **Policy 3.** Allow affordable housing developers working in collaboration with local agencies to receive Measure A funds for the development of publically-accessible park space that is located adjacent to or within one-half mile of the affordable housing development.
2. Work to minimize any direct impacts on land values that might occur through parkland acquisition and park development in low income areas.
- **Policy 1.** Minimize advanced public disclosure of proposed use of Measure A funds to acquire specific parcels, so as to avoid speculative increases in land value.
 - **Policy 2.** Avoid funding acquisition projects when purchase prices are based on speculative or inflated land values.
 - **Policy 3.** In scoring competitive grant applications, give extra points to agencies with value capture or other displacement prevention policies in place. *(Included in competitive grant scoring)*
3. Require inclusive and meaningful public outreach and engagement aimed at existing populations for all projects funded by Measure A.
- **Policy 1.** Adopt a community engagement policy for Measure A funded projects which requires meaningful engagement, language access, and cultural inclusion. *(Included in Community Engagement Requirements)*
 - **Policy 2.** In competitive grant scoring, give points to projects that include community outreach that goes beyond the basic requirements referenced in Policy 1, including strategies to employ small, local businesses and workers. *(Included in competitive grant scoring)*
 - **Policy 3.** Engage Los Angeles County park-users through innovative online platforms that allow individuals to connect to their local park agencies to assist in reporting ongoing local park conditions and needs.
4. Collect, analyze, and report park investment data to monitor for displacement and gentrification.
- **Policy 1.** As a part of the on-going analysis of Measure A implementation, produce GIS map layers that show the location and size of Measure A investments
 - **Policy 2.** Partner with research institutions, universities, non-profit organizations, and other public agencies seeking to address displacement and gentrification, by facilitating conversations and sharing data to support the development of equity tools and reports.