



MEMORANDUM

DATE May 24, 2018
TO Measure A Steering Committee
FROM Los Angeles Regional and Open Space Park District
SUBJECT Revised 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*.^{[1][2][3]}

Although RPOSD is not able to directly fund housing and other displacement prevention projects, the implementation of Measure A should consider strategies intended to **directly address** and 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 & Urban Greening Program (Category 2) and use of Per Capital Improvements Formula)
 - Policy 2.** In scoring competitive grant applications, **award** points to projects that serve High and Very High Need Study Areas. (Currently included in competitive grant scoring rubrics).
 - Policy 3.** Within 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 located in High and Very High Need Study Areas. (Currently included in Grantmaking Policy and grant program descriptions).

- **Policy 4.** Allow non-profit affordable housing developers working in collaboration with local park agencies and/or non-profit park developers to receive Measure A funds for the development of publicly-accessible park space that is located adjacent to or within one-half mile of the affordable housing development.
 - **Policy 5.** Collaborate with other public agencies to expand Measure A's Technical Assistance Program to include information about accessing and leveraging additional public funding to support open space projects (i.e. Measure M, State Cap and Trade programs, etc.). Additionally, link potential grantees to technical assistance offered by other agencies and organizations that could assist with these types of projects.
- 2. Work to minimize any direct impacts on land values and existing housing 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. (Included in community outreach and engagement requirements).
 - **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 points to agencies in areas with value capture, or other displacement prevention policies in place. (Included in competitive grant scoring, social multi-benefits criterion).
 - **Policy 4.** Require conformance to applicable relocation law regarding the loss of any housing units demolished in the course of park construction or enhancement.
- 3. Require culturally competent, linguistically appropriate, 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 outreach and 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, and integrate workforce development through partnerships with organizations such as a conservation corps or similar youth employment organizations. (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 (Included in Evaluation section of document)
 - **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 and displacement avoidance tools and reports. *(Included in Evaluation section of document)*

- **Policy 3.** Periodically evaluate how the policies in this Displacement Avoidance Strategy are being met and make adjustments as needed to lessen the likelihood of displacement and gentrification as a result of park enhancement projects. *(Included in Evaluation section of document)*

5. Support countywide open space and housing coordination and comprehensive anti-displacement policy development.

- **Policy 1.** Support the development of a countywide anti-displacement taskforce that includes representatives from County agencies and expert stakeholders including representatives from the nonprofit sector, housing, parks, transportation, and planning.
- **Policy 2.** Support the taskforce's work on the identification of best practices, reduction of barriers, and opportunities for collaboration that contribute to the development of joint housing and parks projects using local and state funding sources.
- **Policy 3.** Support the taskforce's development of an incentive-based system to encourage local governments to adopt broader tenant protection, anti-displacement, and value capture policies.
- **Policy 4.** Support the taskforce's development of long-term, multi-sector partnerships that leverage private and public funds to sustain community revitalization, neighborhood stabilization, and equitable development.
- **Policy 5.** Support the taskforce's development of tools such as anti-displacement plan templates and other resources that can be used by communities experiencing displacement and gentrification.
- **Policy 6.** Support the taskforce in partnering with organizations and/or academic institutions to document existing gentrification and displacement trends in Los Angeles County using indicators such as year-over-year changes in property values, ethnicity, income, and the rate of property sales.

[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