Measure A Implementation

Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District

Summary Meeting Notes
Steering Committee Summer Workshop B
Technical Assistance
September 7, 2017 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Jean Armbruster	Karen Ginsberg	Linda Lowry
Jane Beesley	Mark Glassock	Norma Martinez
Scott Chan	John Guevarra	Cara Meyer
Hugo Enciso	Andrea Gullo	Stefan Popescu
Belinda Faustinos	John Johns	Barbara Romero
Hugo Garcia	Clement Lau	Bruce Saito

AGENDA ITEM: TOPIC 1- TYPES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Public Comment

1. Simplify the process and language surrounding the program—the various delivery methods and phases of Technical Assistance (TA*) are confusing.
2. Provide resources: Workshops and trainings for every phase; calendar of deadlines; checklist of required forms; examples of funded projects/success stories, sample grant applications. Toolkits should provide specific content in order to be effective.
3. Strategic Partnerships: are critical to a successful TA Program. Partners should include paid consultants from CBOs, agencies, consultants and other private sector experts/funders. We will need to find ways to incentivize the private sector.
    a. Organizations contracted with RPOSD should be able to serve as regional hubs to both provide direct services and serve as a local connector between under-resourced community groups and local experts/TA providers
4. TA should also be provided during the Maintenance and Servicing phase

Committee Comment

1. Types of Assistance
    a. Include training related to sustainability that focuses on sustainable approaches to development, sustainable materials, etc.
    b. Include legal training such as workshops for reading, writing, and understanding contracts and legal issues such as liabilities and deed restrictions.
    c. Assistance for outreach is very important:
        i. Outreach should also take place during implementation phase
        ii. CBOs doing outreach for agencies in partnership with RPOSD is a form of TA
        iii. Provide examples of different ways to do community outreach

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           iv.   Agencies need assistance collecting data and compiling statistics to verify who is using regional facilities to prove who they're serving and if they're meeting regional need
      d.   Outline expectations for outreach and engagement at onset. People will be more likely to pursue TA if they know expectations.
      e.   Resources and toolkits: Provide examples of best practices and detailed resource guides
2.   Delivery Methods
      a.   Mentor programs: Create teams of mentors that work with agencies and help them through the entire process. Toolkits and webinars miss the human element that mentoring can provide.
      b.   Workshops and trainings: Provide certification for completing certain trainings.
      c.   Resource toolkits: Show examples of other successful applications; consultant list with statements of qualifications.
3.   Program Goals
      a.   Goals should identify benchmarks to show overall desired outcome.

AGENDA ITEM: TOPIC 2- BARRIERS TO RECEIVING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Public Comment
1.   Barriers include:
      a.   Limited resources and capacity
      b.   Unclear expectations and guidelines
      c.   Not knowing a TA program exists/lack of adequate engagement and recruitment to the program
      d.   Disconnect between community groups who know how to build parks but don't know where the needs is and agencies who don't have capacity to build parks
2.   How can the TA program mitigate the barriers?
      a.   Clear information and expectations up front
      b.   Grant writing workshops
      c.   Transparent and specific feedback from RPSOD staff
      d.   Provide TA throughout all stages of process in different forms
      e.   Regional information hubs to connect applicants to resources and TA providers
      f.   Mentor programs
      g.   Bench consultants
      h.   Staff assistance

Committee Comment
1.   Barriers include:
      a.   Lack of TA programs; available technical assistance can be bought but it's costly
      b.   Lack of organizational capacity
      c.   Lack of awareness that TA exists
      d.   TA tends to be too general.
2.   How can the TA program mitigate the barriers?
      a.   Time the delivery of TA so that it's not too early or late in relation to application deadlines
      b.   TA must be specific to be effective.
      c.   Provide regional mentors/experts who can work with communities, especially ones who have high staff turnover and low capacity.
      d.   Volunteers are good but there is also a need for paid consultants for increased reliability.
      e.   Develop a model with the cooperation of other organizations that have experience providing or receiving TA.
      f.   Outreach to high need areas to find out what types of assistance they need

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    g. Strategic Partnerships
  3. Examples of TA:
    a. Natural Resources Agencies, COGs, Board Offices, grant writing by councilmembers, Strategic Growth Council training workshops, LA Unified

AGENDA ITEM: TOPIC 3- PRIORITIZING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

Public Comment

1. Prioritized Technical Assistance Needs:
   a. Community outreach
   b. Pre-application workshop/training to help with eligibility and application
   c. Grant writing training and/or services
   d. Grant administration training
   e. Ongoing staff support
   f. Financial assistance
   g. Toolkits
   h. Project implementation
2. Priorities for TA will vary, depending on the type of applicant
   a. Government agencies will most likely need assistance with:
      i. Outreach and engagement
      ii. Strategic partnership programming
      iii. Implementation/administration
   b. CBOs will likely need assistance with:
      i. Grant writing/application assistance
      ii. Strategic partnerships
      iii. Eligibility/enrollment
3. Focus on quality not quantity. Need to develop the model and invest in it

Committee Comment

1. Prioritized Technical Assistance Needs:
   a. Beginning stages—everything leading to grant application, including assistance with planning and design
   b. Financial assistance and strategic partnerships
   c. Stages of need will change over time. After a few years, TA for eligibility phase won't be as necessary
   d. Community outreach and engagement across all categories and phases
2. Monitoring Effectiveness
   a. After first few rounds RPOSD should analyze to evaluate where the needs have been and why
   b. If applications aren't coming from some areas RPOSD should explore the reasons
   c. Funds from innovation and oversight can be used to evaluate the program over time
   d. Need to identify specific ways to monitor growing competency

AGENDA ITEM: TOPIC 4- FUNDING

Public Comment

1. Potential Funding Sources:
   a. Strategic partnerships could be a source for funding and/or service delivery
   b. Could fund with a separate allocation from the BOS
   c. Fund 15% from innovation and oversight, in addition to the 3% from Categories 3 and 4

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2. Investment Priorities
   a. Invest more funding in early stage TA that might reduce the need for assistance during later stages
   b. Invest less in the beginning to see if it meets need and adjust accordingly after evaluation.
   c. Invest time forming strong strategic partnerships that could supplement funding or services
   d. Incentivize the private sector
   e. Focus on quality of the program versus quantity
   f. If TA is available to all applicants, a pot of TA funds should be set aside for high/very high need areas

Committee Comment
1. Amount of Funding
   a. 1% and 3% are both too low
   b. 5-10% is more likely to meet need
   c. Invest more money in the beginning years with the idea that as capacity is built, need for TA will decrease, and therefore funding can decrease
   d. Valuate effectiveness of TA and adjust funding level accordingly
2. Potential Funding Sources
   a. Applicants should understand the tradeoff when funding TA from Categories 3 and 4. Pulling funds for TA means less money to build projects
   b. Strategic partners could provide funding and collaborative resources such as training and toolkits
      i. COGs, Metro, private foundations, educational institutions, county departments, LA Thrives, private sectors businesses, Strategic Growth Council
   c. Fund from BOS 2% set-aside
3. Investment Priorities
   a. Mentoring program
   b. Strategic partnerships
4. Other Considerations
   a. Design the program first and then figure out how to fund it. There can be a creative mixture of funding the program once it is designed.
   b. RPOSD should work with cities, CBOs and other potential grant applicants to determine their needs. This will help inform the design of the program and the potential cost.
   c. Technological advances should make things easier and serve as a form of TA. Agencies need to know what technology will be available to inform their need for TA.
   d. TA should be available to high and very high need areas and those serving high need areas

Meeting Adjourned.

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