

Measure AA Public Comment Form #12.txt

From: Ana Ruiz
Sent: Friday, September 12, 2014 2:31 PM
To: Ana Ruiz
Subject: FW: Measure AA Public Comment Form [#12]

[REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2014 8:29 PM
To: web; Ana Ruiz
Subject: Measure AA Public Comment Form [#12]

Name *
Louise Wholey
Email *

[REDACTED]
City *
Saratoga
Comment *

The voters voted on Measure AA based on their personal values. The same should be used to evaluate projects. The items listed on your website ARE your CRITERIA:

- . Expand public access to protected land
- . Save local redwood forests
- . Provide clean air and water by restoring land that feeds our lakes, streams, ponds and waterways
- . Preserve agriculture along the San Mateo Coast
- . Restore native vegetation to create a healthy habitat for wildlife and preserve biodiversity.

In terms of the Ballot Language as approved by the voters:

- . To improve access to hiking and biking opportunities,
- . protect and preserve redwood forests, natural open spaces, the scenic beauty of our region and coastline, critical wildlife habitat,
- . restore creeks to protect water quality, and reduce forest fire risk

People did not vote on the 25 projects, now called portfolios. Most had no idea they existed. They voted based on values, their personal values. They want access and they want nature to be preserved.

Here is a separate issue. To say that all parts of every portfolio meet the wishes of the public is to use the election in a misleading way. People voted by values, not by project (portfolio). Not all of the 96 projects in the 25 portfolios would be approved by the voters. I voted yes on Measure AA but I do not want all projects in every portfolio to be implemented!

You need to figure out which projects are really important and which are quite low in priority in the minds of the voters. People want bike trails! People want bike trails!! People want bike trails!!! People want to walk their dogs on Mid-pen trails. People want to take their families out in the woods. People want nature to be preserved. People want what was offered in the election: access and preservation. That sounds like a contradiction. Sorting out how to manage that contradiction needs to be part of

establishing your CRITERIA.

Not all projects in your portfolios contribute to access and preservation. Not all of the projects would please most voters.

I attended your meeting Sept 10 and came away thinking these issues were not addressed.

Measure AA
Implementation
Process
Public
Notification
List

* Please add my name to the email list to receive public notifications about the Measure AA implementation process.

DRAFT RESPONSE FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION

October 8, 2014

Louise Wholey
[REDACTED]

RE: Electronic Comment Dated September 10, 2014 on Measure AA Prioritization Criteria

Dear Ms. Wholey,

Thank you for attending our Board Study Session of September 10, 2014 and for submitting your comments regarding the Prioritization Criteria that will be used to help develop the implementation schedule for Measure AA projects.

In your email, you list the various public benefits/values that Measure AA will provide and question whether the criteria should be based on these benefits. Also, you state that the projects should reflect the ballot language and personal values that compelled voters to approve Measure AA. Please let us take a moment to explain how the Measure projects indeed reflect both the public values and benefits that are attributed to Measure AA and how these are also fully consistent with the ballot language and the Ordinance and Expenditure Plan that were both included as part of the June 3 Voter Pamphlet and also made available for public review on our District website. We believe that this connection was not made particularly clear at the September 10 Study Session, possibly adding to this confusion.

To begin, an Ordinance with an accompanying Expenditure Plan was approved by the Board of Directors on February 26, 2014 as part of approving the placement of Measure AA on the June 3, 2014 election. As mentioned earlier, the Ordinance and Expenditure Plan were made part of the Vote Pamphlet information for Measure AA and posted on the District website for public review at <http://www.openspace.org/news/downloads/2014.02.26.OrdinanceCallingElection.pdf>. The Expenditure Plan in particular outlines the 25 priority actions (now called Portfolios) identified by the public as part of the District's Vision Plan process as those actions that would be funded with the bond proceeds. The 25 Portfolios listed in the Expenditure Plan are organized by area and include a brief description of the various related project elements and total cost. Each of the individual projects that we are now looking to prioritize to develop a 5-year work plan serves to implement these various project elements, and thus the 25 Portfolios. As such, each individual project also serves to implement the clearly stated intent of the ballot language, which reads

“To improve access to hiking and biking opportunities, protect and preserve redwood forests, natural open spaces, the scenic beauty of our region and coastline, critical wildlife habitat, restore creeks to protect water quality, and reduce forest fire risk”

As you will find in October, once the detailed project list is made available for public review as part of the upcoming Study Session packet, all projects are consistent with the abovementioned ballot language and include:

- New public access facilities (like the Ravenswood Bay Trail to complete a critical Bay Trail gap) to “improve access to hiking and biking opportunities”;

DRAFT RESPONSE FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION

- New property purchases (including the purchase of forested lands and Coastal agricultural lands) to preserve “redwood forests, natural open spaces, the scenic beauty of our region and coastline”;
- Resource improvements (e.g. pond repairs, fisheries enhancements) to “protect critical wildlife habitat”, “restore creeks”; and,
- Other site improvements to “reduce forest fire risk”.

Given that all projects meet the intent of Measure AA, it is impossible to prioritize the projects based on the ballot language, as they are all priorities in this respect. Therefore, a set of prioritization criteria is necessary to help identify those projects that are most urgent (e.g. time sensitive) or provide the greatest overall beneficial impact. All projects will be implemented. The criteria will simply provide guidance on those projects that rise to the top and should be given greater consideration for early implementation. As you may appreciate, the Board of Directors’ decision on which projects to initiate first will be a difficult one and should be based on many factors, including urgency, total benefit, and public value. Using the criteria to help screen projects will help inform this decision-making process. Other information, including public input, is also critical. As such, we hope that you will be able to join us at the October Study Session when we review the results of the screening process and receive public input regarding the individual projects.

I would like to thank you again for taking the time to attend the September 10 meeting, for submitting your comments, and for providing us the opportunity to respond and clarify the purpose of the prioritization criteria and the connection between Measure AA Projects, Portfolios, and ballot language. Please feel free to contact Ana Ruiz, Assistant General Manager, with any other questions or comments via email at aruiz@openspace.org or via phone at (650) 691-1200.

Sincerely,

Cecily Harris, Board President

cc: MROSD Board of Directors
Steve Abbors, General Manager
Ana Ruiz, Assistant General Manager