

SAFE, CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

DACs, Equity, & Ongoing Stakeholder Involvement Subcommittee

Meeting Summary: March 6, 2018

MEETING IN BRIEF

This was the second meeting of the DACs, Equity, & Stakeholder Involvement Subcommittee for the Safe, Clean Water Program. The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Review existing governance structures, project selection criteria, and capacity-building programs that provide meaningful representation and tangible benefits to disadvantaged and underserved communities
2. Analyze which aspects of existing programs and projects are transferrable, and how we should address issues unique to the Safe, Clean Water Program
3. Establish definitions for equitable outcomes, and engage and consult on how the Safe, Clean Water Program can integrate equitable outcomes into overall program design through criteria, representation in governance, and provision of tools for meaningful participation

Attendees

Manal Aboeleta
Cecilia Estolano
Antoinette Andrews-Bush
Belinda Faustinos
Barbara Romero

Alina Bodke
Hector Gutierrez
Eric Wolf
Cynthia Guzman
Elva Yanez

Reuben DeLeon
David McNeill
Felipe Escobar

Agenda:

Welcome

The purpose of this meeting was to provide a listening session and discuss existing programs with DACs, Equity, and Stakeholder Involvement considerations.

Review of Board of Supervisors' Purpose and Intent for the Safe, Clean Water Program

The objectives and outcome of the Safe, Clean Water Program were reviewed.

Summary of Other Subcommittee Discussions

Meeting facilitators summarized the discussion topics of the Governance, Project Selection Criteria, and Credits/Rebates & Incentives Subcommittee's.

Review February 6th Subcommittee Summary Notes

Mr. Russ Bryden reviewed the subcommittee discussion summary of the February 6th, 2018 meeting.

Presentation of Existing DACs, Equity, Stakeholder Involvement Related Programs

Greater Los Angeles County IRWM - DACIP

Jolene Guerrero (LADPW) is a task force member involved with DACs in the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) process. Jolene provided background on IRWM and the DAC Implementation Plan (DACIP). IRWM is a group that was created at the behest of the State to collectively select projects from a regional perspective. IRWM's Leadership Committee submits projects for state grant funding. The Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) IRWM set up a DAC subcommittee, which includes representation from NGOs. Many studies have been conducted, which show a great need for community education and the most effective engagement strategies are those with existing community groups at the local level. DACs have not applied for grants through IRWM, which shows a need to build technical knowledge.

Development of the DACIP required three IRWM groups to work together. In addition to DACs, the DACIP is also working to reach other underrepresented groups, such as migrant workers and homeless populations. Outreach will be done by nonprofit organizations and the group anticipates 50 community meetings per year in the GLAC area. There are three main tasks associated with the DACIP: (1) community engagement to build a knowledge base, (2) conducting a needs assessment, and (3) providing technical assistance to develop projects and programs for future grant funding opportunities.

Comments/questions from the subcommittee include:

- Members of the subcommittee asked if a standard is in place to hire locally for outreach contracts and subcontracts.
 - Yes, outreach contracts will be with nonprofits in the communities.
- Members asked the nexus between projects developed through DACIP and projects that are already identified in planning documents
 - DACIP provides an opportunity to catch DAC projects that may have been overlooked in previous grant cycles.

- DACIP aims to address the need for capacity building for CBO's, specific needs of DAC's, and the need for technical assistance to develop projects.
- Suggestion to allocate funding for project implementation.

First 5 LA – Best Start Communities

First 5 LA Best Start Communities focus on early childhood development. In the first few years, the program focused on direct services to underserved communities, but has since shifted to a place-based approach where communities were targeted based on needs. Selection of recipients is data-driven and considers high-need communities based on strength and capacity, respect for natural community boundaries, and representation of diverse populations and regions. First 5 LA contracted with other community groups to identify communities' unique priorities and learned many lessons on how to partner with communities directly. First 5 LA allocated \$15 million per year to engage with the community and provide direct support. Each community was allocated \$1.95 million over the program's 5 years to implement a series of projects. Money was allocated equally, but utilized for whatever projects made the most sense in the context of each community. In order to be successful it became clear that projects needed to be owned by the community. First 5 LA's guiding principles and parameters were: (1) partnership with the community (2) no creation of a new entity, and (3) regional approach with local customization.

The First 5 LA team recommends the following when it comes to engaging with the community: use data to inform decisions, start with principles and parameters, include community voice and promote community ownership, consider size and boundaries of geographic areas, and build on community strengths.

Comments/questions from the subcommittee include:

- Members of the subcommittee asked how communities with greater needs were addressed, and how to leverage the experience for the Safe, Clean Water Program.
 - Equal distribution of funding was the best solution at the time. The need for capacity building is clear. First 5 LA believes that taking a step back and acting more as a partner than an implementing entity helps to build the community's capacity.
 - Over 1000 community members come together monthly to talk about issues
- Members expressed interest in building upon infrastructures like First 5 LA

Prevention Institute

Prevention Institute looks through the lens of public health to prevent injuries before they happen. One of their core principles is that all people have a right to live in healthy communities and disadvantages in these communities can be addressed to improve public health. There are many measures that are being considered or have been passed recently, which provide great opportunities to invest in communities. Prop 84 was not

very successful in addressing DAC needs because there were no specific criteria built into the program. AB 31 did a better job at including clear criteria by showing a lack of park space and using census data to identify needs. Measure A also did a good job in using an evidence-based approach and including clear language in the grant program.

There are some key strategies to consider for equitable land use: increase the percentage of public funds invested in communities of need, continuously build capacity for planning and policymaking, implement innovation and demonstration policies and projects in low-income communities and scale up, and foster cross-government collaboration in all decisions so that various programs work together to impact DACs.

The USC Measures Matter report is a good resource in that it describes how to build equity into public measures.

Prevention Institute recommends that new measures address past disadvantage (race is an important factor in DACs), contemporary participation (capacity building), and future consequences (checkpoints to see how successful our investments are and the ability to course-correct as we go along). They also recommend support of grassroots community groups and allowing communities to share in the decision-making process.

There has been very little written about equity as it relates to stormwater and there is a lack of accessible data for health and social disadvantage in the context of stormwater. To be successful, this measure will need to get over the barriers that keep DACs from participating in the process.

Discussion

Equity/Benefits to DAC

- Members discussed the difficulty of defining equity.
- Water is a public health issue. Suggestion to explore how other public health issues were addressed.
- Education is the first step to make connections between stormwater and community needs.
- Benefit definition varies between communities.
- Work from communities, up.
- Consider targeting cities that have successfully partnered with communities and organizations
- Suggestion to focus on equity in project funding and to implement jobs/job training.
- Suggestion to allocate 41% of funding to DACs. Invest in capacity building.
- Visible benefits will result in engagement/participation. Industries that harm communities should be held accountable.
- Underscore the importance of data to establish priorities and the need to evaluate change and improvements.
- Suggestion to prioritize projects that address other sector needs (transportation, parks, stormwater, homelessness, etc.).

- Raising the issue between stormwater and health might help with funding. Education is very important, but also policy change.
- Suggestion to include schools and parks. Need to build cross-participation among sectors and subcommittees
- Implement and explore scoring mechanisms on subject matter.

Public Comment

- Natural infrastructure is a way to address equity.

Closing Remarks

Written comments can be submitted via www.safecleanwaterla.org or sent to Russ Bryden (rbryden@dpw.lacounty.gov) or Alberto Grajeda (algrajeda@dpw.lacounty.gov).

Adjourn

Meeting Adjourned