

City of Sacramento  
**Measure U Community Advisory Committee Report**  
915 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814  
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**File ID:** 2022-02463

3/20/2023

**Discussion Item 7.**

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**Approval of the Measure U Focus Groups Implementation Proposal**

File ID: 2022-02463

**Location:** Citywide

**Recommendation:** 1) Discuss the Measure U Focus Groups Implementation Proposal (Proposal); 2) finalize the Proposal details; and 3) pass a **Motion** approving the Proposal, as discussed.

**Contact:** Ash Roughani, Special Projects Manager, (916) 808-7751, aroughani@cityofsacramento.org, Office of the City Manager

**Presenter:** Committee Member Sala

**Attachments:**

1-Description/Analysis

**Description/Analysis**

**Issue Detail:** At the November 20, 2022 meeting, the Committee discussed the possibility of conducting focus groups with community members to inform the Committee's budget priorities and recommendations to City Council. Approximately 500 respondents to the City Auditor's 2022 Community Survey indicated their interest in participating in a focus group regarding the use of Measure U funds and provided their email address to be contacted.

During the November 20 discussion, various Committee members suggested the following:

- Committee members appointed by individual City Council members should contact their appointing members to learn about their specific Fiscal Year (FY) 2023/24 budget priorities and request the type of community input they would like to receive to inform budget development discussions.
- The Committee should schedule 2-3 community meetings in high priority areas where the Committee desires to encourage participation.
- The Committee should invite open participation among residents, in addition to inviting the

participation of the approximately 500 respondents who indicated their interest in response to the City Auditor's survey.

- Funding should be prioritized to provide live interpretation, food/refreshments, transportation, and gift cards (if possible).
- A professional facilitator must be hired to conduct the focus groups, and ideally the facilitator should be a local business.
- Background materials regarding Measure U should be developed and provided to participants to ensure that they are grounded in the discussion with the same information.
- The Committee should follow-up with participants to close the feedback loop and reflect how their participation made a difference in the resulting end-product.
- The Committee should consider how to reach and recruit community members who are traditionally not engaged in civic processes.

Based on this input, Committee Member Sala proposes the following:

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Measure U Focus Groups is to seek community input regarding Measure U spending priorities for the City of Sacramento's FY2023/24 Approved Budget.

### **Timing**

The focus groups will take place during April 2023 with the final results published in no later than May 1, 2023.

### **Location**

Two in-person focus groups will take place at the following locations:

1. Hagginwood Community Center, 3271 Marysville Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95815
2. Sam & Bonnie Pannell Community Center, 2450 Meadowview Rd, Sacramento, CA 95832

A third community forum will take place virtually to solicit broader community participation in a town hall style format.

### **Participation Composition**

The two in-person focus groups will each have a participation limit of 12 participants to accommodate in-depth discussions. To the extent practicable, the in-person focus groups will comprise a representative sample of City residents. The virtual focus group will have a participation limit of 500 participants and have an open community forum format.

**Budget**

Committee members suggested a total budget of \$7,800. This budget may be allocated as follows:

<b>Description</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Professional Facilitation Services	\$1,000	3 meetings	\$3,000
Live Translation/Interpretation Services	\$750	3 meetings	\$2,250
Participant Transportation (round trip)	\$25	2 meetings x 12 participants	\$600
On-site Child Care	\$200	2 meetings	\$400
Food (e.g., pizza)	\$300	2 meetings	\$600
Beverages (e.g., water/sodas)	\$50	2 meetings	\$100
Gift Cards	\$25	24 participants	\$600
Contingency	n/a	n/a	\$250
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>\$7,800</b>

Because the Measure U Committee does not have an operating budget, it must secure this funding from the City Council. Moreover, City staff cannot support implementation without the City Council directing the City Manager to do so. City community centers and library facilities are potential locations that may be able to accommodate focus group session(s) at no cost during normal operating hours. In addition, the City may be able to provide virtual meeting technology for any focus groups that meet online.

**Other Implementation Considerations**

The Committee should clarify its intent to conduct focus groups versus larger community forums in a town hall style format. Focus groups are typically smaller, more intimate discussions with a carefully selected group of participants. This can be helpful for gathering detailed and in-depth feedback on a specific topic. Focus groups are also more controlled, which can make it easier to keep the discussion on track and prevent it from becoming too chaotic.

On the other hand, open town hall meetings are larger public gatherings where anyone can participate. These meetings are useful for gathering broad input and opinions from a diverse group of people, and they can be a good way to get a sense of the overall sentiment of a community. However, open town hall meetings can be more difficult to manage, as there may be more people with different agendas and it can be harder to control the flow of the discussion.

In deciding between focus groups and open town hall meetings, the Committee should consider the

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following:

- **What is the purpose of the meetings?** If the Committee is seeking in-depth feedback on a specific topic, focus groups may be a better choice. If the Committee wants to gather broad input from a diverse group of people, an open town hall meeting may be more appropriate.
- **How much time and resources are available?** Focus groups require more time and resources to organize, as the Committee would need to carefully select and recruit participants. Open town hall meetings are generally easier to set up, as anyone can attend.
- **What is the best format for participants?** Consider the preferences and needs of the intended participants. Some people may feel more comfortable participating in a smaller, more intimate focus group, while others may prefer the anonymity of a larger open town hall meeting.

To recruit traditionally unengaged residents who are reluctant to participate, the Committee should pursue a targeted outreach strategy that meets people where they already are and encourage participation through the following methods:

- **Acknowledge their concerns:** Validate the person's feelings and acknowledge their frustrations that have influenced their desire not to participate.
- **Emphasize the value of civic participation:** Explain how civic participation can help to make government more responsive and accountable to the needs of the community.
- **Highlight success stories:** Share examples of how civic participation has led to positive change in the past.
- **Offer opportunities for meaningful involvement:** Make sure that the person has a chance to have their voice heard and to contribute to the discussion.
- **Connect them with other resources:** If the person's concerns are outside the scope of the focus groups, consider connecting them with other organizations or resources that may be able to help.

To address the Committee's desire to provide a feedback loop that reflects each participant's contributions, the Committee should consider how it might:

- **Share the results:** Share the outcomes of the meetings with participants and explain how their contributions made a difference.
- **Provide personalized feedback:** Provide individualized feedback to participants, thanking them for their specific contributions and highlighting their impact.
- **Offer recognition:** Recognize the contributions of participants in a public way, such as acknowledging their names in any recommendations that the Committee provides to the City Council.
- **Keep in touch:** Stay in touch with participants and update them on the progress of the City

budget development.

- **Provide ongoing opportunities for involvement:** Offer additional opportunities for participants to get involved in the future. This can help to build a sense of community and encourage continued engagement.

The Committee should also determine whether its intent is to focus on broad spending categories or specific projects. The best approach for asking about budget priorities will depend on the goals of the focus group and the level of detail that is appropriate for the discussion:

- Asking about **broad spending categories** can be a good way to get a sense of the overall priorities of the group. For example, the Committee might ask about priorities such as housing, public safety, or economic development. This can help to identify the areas that are most important to the group and can provide a high-level overview of their priorities.
- Asking about **specific projects** can be a good way to gather more detailed and specific input. For example, the Committee might ask about specific initiatives or programs that the group would like to see funded. This can provide more concrete ideas for budgeting and can help to identify specific needs and priorities within the community.

In general, it may be most effective to use a combination of both broad spending categories and specific projects. This can help to provide a more complete picture of the group's priorities and can help to inform the Committee's budget recommendations to Council.

**Policy Considerations:** City Council Resolution 2018-0393 adopted October 2, 2018 outlines the purpose and the powers and duties of the Measure U Committee specifically, to ensure that the expenditures of City resources reflect Council and community priorities, the committee shall review, report, and make non-binding recommendations on revenue and expenditures of certain funds from the Transactions and Use Tax (Sacramento City Code chapter 3.27.). The Resolution also specifies that a duty of the Committee is to, "work with City staff on community engagement with respect to the Transactions and Use Tax."

**Economic Impacts:** None.

**Environmental Considerations:** None.

**Sustainability:** None.

**Commission/Committee Action:** None.

**Rationale for Recommendation:** A primary purpose of the Committee is to make Measure U spending recommendations to the City Council that reflect community priorities.

**Financial Considerations:** The Measure U committee does not have an operating budget. The source of funding for \$7,800, whether it's a new appropriation or absorbed in a City department's budget, would need to be determined. Moreover, staff will need to validate the proposed budget to ensure all estimated costs are accurate and accounted for. For example, the identified community centers are generally not open during the evening. So additional costs may be incurred to use City facilities outside of normal operating hours.

**Local Business Enterprise (LBE):** None.