

OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

September 30, 2026

Honorable Stephen Freccero
Presiding Judge
Marin County Superior Court
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

Derek Johnson
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Dear Judge Freccero,

The Marin County Board of Supervisors' response to the FY 2025-2026 Civil Grand Jury Report "Measure A and Voter Choice: Rethinking Parks and Agriculture Funding in Marin" (June 30th, 2026) is attached. The report was delivered to the Board of Supervisors and responds to all the requests made under law and requested by the Grand Jury.

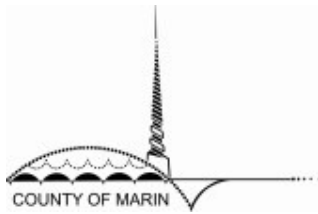
As always, thank you to the Court for overseeing this important part of local government and democracy. Please reach out if we can be of service to either the Civil Grand Jury or the Court.

Respectfully submitted,

Derek Johnson
Marin County Executive

ENC:

Marin County Board of Supervisors Response to Civil Grand Jury Report "Measure A and Voter Choice: Rethinking Parks and Agriculture Funding in Marin" (June 30th, 2026)



RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT TITLE: Measure A and Voter Choice: Rethinking Parks and Agriculture Funding in Marin
REPORT DATE: June 30, 2026
RESPONSE BY: County of Marin Board of Supervisors

GRAND JURY FINDINGS

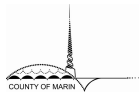
- We agree with the finding(s) numbered: **F1-5, F7**
- We disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: **F6, F8**

GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation numbered **R5** has been implemented.
- Recommendation(s) numbered **R1-4** have not yet been implemented, and will be implemented in the future.
- Recommendation numbered **R6** will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.

Date: August 25, 2026

Signed: 
President, Board of Supervisors



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RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS

F1. Marin County Parks has successfully administered Measure A funding and has evolved its focus from land acquisition toward stewardship, maintenance, wildfire resilience, and long term sustainability.

Response: Agree

The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding and acknowledges that Marin County Parks staff have diligently administered the Parks Measure A sales tax measures for the last fourteen years. Staff ensure revenue is spent in accordance with the voter-approved Expenditure Plan, receive annual audits, and ensure that grantees follow all required administrative and financial policies and procedures. Marin County Parks also reports on work completed with this funding through the [Measure A Annual Report](#), [Measure A Grant Compliance Audit Report](#), and [Independent Audit Report](#).

F2. Fixed allocation formulas within Measure A limit Marin County Parks' ability to adjust to changing priorities and long-term planning.

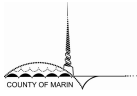
Response: Agree

The Board of Supervisors agrees that the fixed allocation formulas limit budgeting and spending flexibility of Measure A revenue. However, the current fixed allocation percentages were evaluated by voters both in preparation and ultimate approval of both ballot measures and was a result of significant collaboration between communities and partners. This process provides transparency to voters and predictability to funding beneficiaries. Marin County Parks, cities, towns, and districts, the Resource Conservation District, and FARE grant recipients often plan and implement projects reliant on Measure A funding over multiple years, and eliminating the percentages in the Expenditure Plan that create reliable sources of funding would destabilize these multi-year efforts and the grant programs providing this funding.

F3. The fixed allocation of Measure A funds to cities, towns, and special districts limits Marin County Parks' ability to direct funding toward larger regional projects and countywide priorities.

Response: Agree

The Board of Supervisors agrees that the fixed allocation formulas limit Marin County Parks' ability to direct city and town funding toward larger regional projects and countywide priorities. The cities, towns, and park-managing special districts that receive funding manage complementary facilities but are independent from the County. The 15% dedicated to these local entities is managed through an allocation formula agreed upon by all 19 entities to ensure predictable, year-over-year funding for both annual maintenance and significant park infrastructure projects based on decisions by local leadership in each jurisdiction. However, the Expenditure Plan does not limit local entities from partnering to implement shared park projects that may be regional priorities for their respective communities.



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F4. The Measure A Oversight Committee provides meaningful oversight of Measure A expenditures, but other bodies, including the Parks and Open Space Commission, provide similar oversight and opportunities for public participation.

Response: Agree

The Board of Supervisors agrees that the Measure A Community Oversight Committee has fulfilled its role in providing meaningful oversight of Measure A expenditures over the last fourteen years. However, the voter-approved Expenditure Plan (renewed in 2022) directs specific and differentiated roles for both the Measure A Oversight Committee and the Parks and Open Space to advise the Board of Supervisors and Marin County Parks leadership on policy and funding priorities to ensure oversight and accountability. The Measure A Oversight Committee is directed to perform functions such as the annual review of expenditures to ensure they conform with the Expenditure Plan, and oversight of annual audit and annual report preparation. The Parks and Open Space Commission is directed to hold an annual public meeting to gather public input on the selection of projects to be funded with sales tax revenues, as part of the County's annual budget development process.

F5. Information regarding conservation easement payments and recipients is not easily accessible to the public, in contrast to information regarding other Measure A-funded programs.

Response: Agree

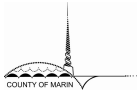
The Board of Supervisors agrees that published information regarding conservation easement payments and recipients is not as accessible to the public as other Measure A-funded programs are. On the Marin County Parks [website](#), a primary source of information used by Marin County residents, information on grants provided for agricultural easements are not explicitly summarized compared to other grant programs including the Food, Agriculture, and Resilient Ecosystems (FARE) program and Breathe/Respira Community Grant Program. The numerous investments in city and town park infrastructure are also not enumerated as comprehensively.

F6. Measure A combines parks and open space funding with sustainable agriculture funding in a way that is unusual among California county funding measures.

Response: Wholly Disagree

The County disagrees that Marin County is an outlier statewide for combining parks and open space, and sustainable agriculture funding. It is common practice to explore funding measures that combine several local priorities. This practice is part of a well-established and successful pattern for conservation and climate funding in California and nationally. There is an established precedent of funding and prioritizing open space, water, wildfire resilience, and working farmland together by voters and policymakers across the state due to genuinely linked outcomes. Some examples of comparable funding structures in California include:

- Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority [Measure D](#) Parcel Tax Measure (June 2026): funds wildfire risk reduction, clean water and creek restoration, open space conservation, agricultural land preservation, wildlife habitat protection, and public trail expansion.



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- California's [Proposition 4](#) (2024): funds projects to reduce climate risks and impacts, including safe drinking water and water resilience, wildfire prevention and extreme heat mitigation, protection of natural lands, parks, and wildlife, protection of coastal lands, bays, and oceans, clean energy; and agriculture.
- Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's [Measure T](#) (November 2020): funds the acquisition, preservation and management open space, wildlife habitat, agricultural lands, water resources, and public access to nature.
- City of Davis's [Measure O](#) (November 2000): funds the acquisition, restoration, operation, and maintenance of open space, habitat, and agricultural lands surrounding the City.
- Mid-Peninsula Open Space [Measure AA](#) (June 2014): funds protection of natural and working lands, opens preserve lands to the public, and restores open space land, forests, streams, watersheds and coastal ranch areas.
- Sonoma County [Measure F](#) (2006): funds the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.

F7. Agricultural conservation easements now protect more than half of West Marin County's agricultural land, and provide an additional layer of protection beyond A-60 zoning restrictions.

Response: Agree

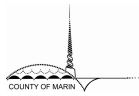
The Board of Supervisors agrees with the finding that conservation easements now protect more than half of agricultural land in West Marin. There is also significant overlap in the conservation and protection of parcels.

F8. Marin County voters have repeatedly demonstrated strong support for parks and open space funding, but have not had an opportunity to separately evaluate sustainable agriculture funding.

Response: Partially Disagree

The Board of Supervisors acknowledges that Marin County voters have not historically had an opportunity to vote on a county parks measure and county agriculture measure individually, however, the Board believes that voters have had the opportunity to evaluate combined funding for parks and open space, and sustainable agriculture in advance of the 2012 and 2022 measures being placed on the ballot. In advance of the Board placing both measures on the ballot for voters, Marin County Parks staff conducted public polling, surveys and public hearings to shape the measure.

Specifically, in advance of the 2022 measure being placed on the ballot, these methods for collecting public input informed several important changes. Support for parks and open space remained a priority, and funding to protect local agriculture continued to have sufficient support for its inclusion in the final measure. For example, Marin County Parks received public input that resulted in a reduction to the funding available for conservation easements, an increase to the funding available to the Resource Conservation District for stewardship, and the creation of a



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new set aside (later titled the "FARE Program") to increase investment in other areas of Marin's farm to table food system, for which Marin residents said there was underinvestment. The record of public input can be found in public presentations from the Parks and Open Space Commission ([November 2021](#), [January 2022](#)) and the Board of Supervisors ([February 8 2022](#), [February 15 2022](#)).

The Board also notes that California planning law recognizes agricultural land as a form of open space. [Government Code section 65560](#), which governs open-space planning, expressly defines "open-space land" to include agricultural lands, rangelands, and areas used for the production of food or fiber when designated for open-space use. Consistent with this statutory framework, Marin County has historically approached parks, open space, and agricultural land conservation as complementary components of a broader open space strategy.

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS

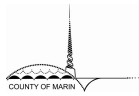
The Board of Supervisors recognizes that the Grand Jury's recommendations raise policy questions regarding the structure, funding priorities, allocation formulas, and oversight provisions of any future Measure A renewal. The Board believes these questions should be considered through a comprehensive and transparent public engagement process before decisions are made regarding a future ballot measure.

Prior to developing a Measure A renewal proposal, Marin County Parks will conduct public outreach and engagement, including public polling, surveys, public meetings and hearings, and engagement with Measure A funding partners and beneficiaries. This process will provide the public an opportunity to evaluate and provide input on the issues raised by the Grand Jury, including the appropriate balance between parks, open space, and sustainable agriculture funding; whether those purposes should continue to be combined in a single measure; the use of fixed allocation formulas; funding for cities, towns, and special districts; and appropriate oversight structures.

The results of this public engagement process, together with an evaluation of Measure A program outcomes and funding needs, will inform recommendations presented to the Board of Supervisors before the Board determines the structure and contents of any Measure A renewal proposal to be submitted to voters. The Board's consideration of the Grand Jury's recommendations through this process does not presuppose the outcome of that process or any future decision by the Board or Marin County voters.

The Marin County Civil Grand Jury recommends the following:

R1. Prior to placing a Measure A renewal proposal before voters, expected to occur before the current measure expires in 2031, the Marin County Board of Supervisors should consider developing separate ballot measures for (a) parks and open space funding and (b) sustainable agriculture funding, to allow voters to separately evaluate each measure.



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This recommendation has not been implemented and will be in the future

This response does not indicate that the Board has determined that two separate ballot measures are warranted. As described above, this recommendation will be evaluated as part of the comprehensive public engagement process conducted in advance of consideration of a Measure A renewal. This work is expected to be completed from 2028 through 2031.

R2. Prior to any vote on renewing sustainable agriculture funding, the Marin County Board of Supervisors should direct Marin County Parks to conduct a public outreach process focused on sustainable agriculture priorities, similar to the public engagement process used to identify parks and open space priorities.

This recommendation has not been implemented and will be in the future

As described above, this recommendation will be evaluated as part of the comprehensive public engagement process conducted in advance of consideration of a Measure A renewal. This work is expected to be completed from 2028 through 2031.

R3. In future Measure A renewals, the Marin County Board of Supervisors should consider reducing or eliminating fixed allocation formulas, and provide Marin County Parks with greater discretion over spending.

This recommendation has not been implemented and will be in the future

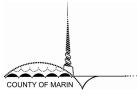
This response does not indicate that the Board has determined that the allocation formula should be reduced or eliminated. As described above, this recommendation will be evaluated as part of the comprehensive public engagement process conducted in advance of consideration of a Measure A renewal. This work is expected to be completed from 2028 through 2031.

However, the Board notes that the public has previously expressed strong support for an allocation formula as an important tool to ensure an appropriate investment for local community priorities. The fixed allocation formulas are also supported by the Board of Supervisors and Marin County Parks. Marin County Parks will continue to engage regularly with cities, towns and special districts as trusted partners in the shared goal of a strong parks and open space system throughout the county.

R4. In future Measure A renewals, the Marin County Board of Supervisors should consider eliminating the fixed allocation of Measure A funds to cities, towns, and special districts and instead allow Marin County Parks to direct funds based on regional priorities and public benefit.

This recommendation has not been implemented and will be in the future

This response does not indicate that the Board has determined that the allocation formula should be reduced or eliminated. As described above, this recommendation will be evaluated as part of the comprehensive public engagement process conducted in advance of consideration of a Measure A renewal. This work is expected to be completed from 2028 through 2031.



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However, the Board notes that the 15% dedicated to these local entities is managed through an allocation formula agreed upon by all 19 entities to ensure predictable, year-over-year funding for both annual maintenance and significant park infrastructure projects based on decisions by local leadership in each jurisdiction. These jurisdictions operate their parks systems alongside the county system for the benefit of residents and understand their local park infrastructure and maintenance priorities better than Marin County Parks. The Board also acknowledges that many of these jurisdictions have few other funding opportunities available to them. These local jurisdictions can partner on projects under the current Expenditure Plan, and Marin County Parks convenes these local partners to share information about current projects, future priorities, and strategies for improving cost savings and efficiency county-wide.

The fixed allocation of Measure A funds to cities, towns and special districts is also supported by the Board of Supervisors and Marin County Parks. Marin County Parks will continue to engage regularly with cities, towns and special districts as trusted partners in the shared goal of a strong parks and open space system throughout the county.

R5. By July 1, 2027, Marin County Parks should maintain a centralized and publicly accessible reporting system identifying Measure A grant recipients, conservation easement recipients, and payment amounts.

This recommendation has been implemented.

Marin County Parks has published a list of grant recipients, conservation easement recipients, and payment amounts to the Marin County Parks [website](#).

R6. In future Measure A renewals, the Marin County Board of Supervisors should consolidate existing Marin County Parks oversight structures, including the Measure A Community Oversight Committee and the Parks and Open Space Commission.

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.

The Board of Supervisors will not take action to consolidate existing Marin County Parks structures, including the Measure A Oversight Committee and the Parks and Open Space Commission due to the support for independent oversight when the measure was approved by voters. However, Marin County Parks will utilize public feedback from public polling, surveys, and public hearings to consider consolidating oversight structures before a Measure A renewal is developed.