

Measure Q Grant Program Scoring Calibration Guide

Based on approved FY 2025–26 Guidelines

TIER 1 Rubric – Community Catalyst (100 Points)

1. Alignment with Measure Q Vision Plan (0–40)

Range	Descriptor										
0–15	<p>Little or no connection to Vision Plan Priority Thematic Focus Areas (Wildfire Risk Reduction and Forest Health, Water Resources Management and Parks, Recreation, Access and Equity), listed project types, or priority geographies. Core and Secondary Principles are absent or unclear.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i></td> <td>None, or non-priority themes only</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project Type</td> <td>Not listed or absent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Geography</td> <td>Not a priority geography</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i></td> <td>None demonstrated</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i></td> <td><1 demonstrated</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>* Score of 15 is a hard ceiling for projects aligning ONLY with non-priority themes (Wildlife and Habitat Protection, Agricultural and Working Lands Protection, Coastal Protection and Adaptation)</i></p>	Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i>	None, or non-priority themes only	Project Type	Not listed or absent	Geography	Not a priority geography	Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i>	None demonstrated	Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i>	<1 demonstrated
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Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i>	<1 demonstrated										
16–30	<p>Aligns with one priority Thematic Focus Area; within that theme, at least one Vision Plan-listed project type OR named priority geography are identified. Demonstrates some Core and/or Secondary Principles.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i></td> <td>1 priority theme</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project Type</td> <td>At least 1 explicitly listed in Vision Plan, OR</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Geography</td> <td>Served at least 1 named priority geography</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i></td> <td>At least 1, OR</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i></td> <td>At least 2 (if no Core principle met)</td> </tr> </table>	Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i>	1 priority theme	Project Type	At least 1 explicitly listed in Vision Plan, OR	Geography	Served at least 1 named priority geography	Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i>	At least 1, OR	Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i>	At least 2 (if no Core principle met)
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31–37	<p>Aligns with one to two priority Thematic Focus Areas. Both a Vision Plan-listed project type and a named priority geography are explicitly identified. Demonstrates Core and Secondary Principles.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i></td> <td>1-2 priority themes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project Type</td> <td>At least 1 explicitly listed in Vision Plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Geography</td> <td>Serves at least 1 named priority geography</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i></td> <td>At least 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i></td> <td>At least 1</td> </tr> </table>	Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i>	1-2 priority themes	Project Type	At least 1 explicitly listed in Vision Plan	Geography	Serves at least 1 named priority geography	Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i>	At least 2	Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i>	At least 1
Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i>	1-2 priority themes										
Project Type	At least 1 explicitly listed in Vision Plan										
Geography	Serves at least 1 named priority geography										
Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i>	At least 2										
Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i>	At least 1										

Range	Descriptor										
38-40	<p>Directly advances two or more priority Thematic Focus Areas. Vision Plan-listed project types and named priority geographies are explicitly called out for each theme claimed. Strongest alignment across Core and Secondary Principles.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Future Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i></td> <td>2+ priority themes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project Type</td> <td>At least 1 explicitly listed in Vision Plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Geography</td> <td>Serves at least 1 named priority geography</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i></td> <td>At least 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i></td> <td>At least 2</td> </tr> </table>	Future Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i>	2+ priority themes	Project Type	At least 1 explicitly listed in Vision Plan	Geography	Serves at least 1 named priority geography	Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i>	At least 3	Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i>	At least 2
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Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i>	At least 2										

2. Community Benefit (0-30)

Range	Descriptor
0-10	Limited or unclear public benefit; population served is not identified
11-20	At least one benefit type identified (recreation, public access, ecological health, watershed, or wildfire resilience). Population served is generally described. Limited or no disadvantaged community* focus.
21-30	Clear, specific benefit across one or more benefit types. Project delivers clear, well-described benefit to a broad or countywide population OR directly serves disadvantaged communities, with need clearly articulated.

* Under Chapter 4.65 of SCC Code, "disadvantaged community" defined as census tract ranking within top 40 percent highest scoring census tracts in the current State [EnviroScreen](#) OR is identified as disadvantaged in the [US Council on Environmental Quality and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#).

3. Feasibility (0-20)

Range	Descriptor
0-7	Scope, timeline, or staffing is unclear or unrealistic. Deliverables are absent or poorly defined.
8-14	Generally sound scope and timeline with minor gaps apparent in deliverables, staffing, or organizational capacity
15-20	<p>Realistic scope, achievable timeline, clear deliverables, and demonstrated capacity. Applicant shows experience delivering similar projects or programs.</p> <p><i>* Full points (20) available for projects already underway where use of Q funds will lead to completion within the performance period.</i></p>

4. Innovation or Capacity (0–10)

Range	Descriptor
0–3	Little or poorly demonstrated innovation or capacity-building element. Approach is standard with no clear potential to inform future work.
4–7	Some innovative or capacity-building element present. Project tests a new approach or builds organizational capacity, but replicability or future application is not clearly described.
8–10	Clear pilot or demonstration approach with explicit potential for replication or scaling. Project meaningfully builds organizational or community capacity to support future Measure Q projects.

5. Bonus (0–5): Strong partnerships, leveraged funds, or exceptional cost efficiency.

TIER 2 – Community Impact (100 Points)

1. Alignment with Vision Plan (0–25)

Range	Descriptor										
0–9	<p>Little or no connection to Vision Plan Priority Thematic Focus Areas (Wildfire Risk Reduction and Forest Health, Water Resources Management and Parks, Recreation, Access and Equity), listed project types, or priority geographies. Core and Secondary Principles are absent or unclear.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i></td> <td>None, or non-priority themes only</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project Type</td> <td>Not listed or absent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Geography</td> <td>Not a priority geography</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i></td> <td>None demonstrated</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i></td> <td><1 demonstrated</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>* Score of 9 is a hard ceiling for projects aligning ONLY with non-priority themes (Wildlife and Habitat Protection, Agricultural and Working Lands Protection, Coastal Protection and Adaptation)</i></p>	Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i>	None, or non-priority themes only	Project Type	Not listed or absent	Geography	Not a priority geography	Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i>	None demonstrated	Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i>	<1 demonstrated
Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i>	None, or non-priority themes only										
Project Type	Not listed or absent										
Geography	Not a priority geography										
Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i>	None demonstrated										
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10–17	<p>Aligns with one priority Thematic Focus Area; within that theme, at least one Vision Plan-listed project type OR named priority geography are identified. Demonstrates some Core and/or Secondary Principles.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i></td> <td>1 priority theme</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project Type</td> <td>At least 1 explicitly listed in Vision Plan, OR</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Geography</td> <td>Served at least 1 named priority geography</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i></td> <td>At least 1, OR</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i></td> <td>At least 2 (if no Core principle met)</td> </tr> </table>	Thematic Area <i>water resources, wildfire risk, parks access</i>	1 priority theme	Project Type	At least 1 explicitly listed in Vision Plan, OR	Geography	Served at least 1 named priority geography	Core Principles <i>multi-benefit, match leverage, equity, climate</i>	At least 1, OR	Secondary Principles <i>public benefit, readiness, strategic alignment</i>	At least 2 (if no Core principle met)
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Range	Descriptor										
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2. Community Benefit (0-20)

Range	Descriptor
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8-14	At least one benefit type identified (recreation, public access, ecological health, watershed, or wildfire resilience). Population served is generally described. Limited or no disadvantaged community* focus.
15-20	Clear, specific benefit across one or more benefit types. Project delivers clear, well-described benefit to a broad or countywide population OR directly serves disadvantaged communities, with need clearly articulated.

3. Wildlife & Environmental Benefit (0-15)

Range	Descriptor
0-5	Environmental benefits are vague, indirect, or limited to required regulatory mitigation. No clear connection to water quality or supply, habitat, or climate resilience as a project goal.
6-10	At least one environmental benefit type is identified as part of the project scope – water quality or supply, habitat restoration or protection, or climate resilience. Benefits go beyond regulatory requirements but outcomes are not yet quantified.
11-15	Environmental benefits are a central, intentional component of the project scope across two or more benefit types. Outcomes are measurable and explicitly described – such as acres restored, linear feet of riparian habitat, or volume of stormwater managed.

4. Project Feasibility & Readiness (0–15)

Range	Descriptor
0–5	Methodology is unclear or underdeveloped. Permitting pathway*, staffing, or key readiness elements have significant gaps.
6–10	Sound approach with most readiness elements addressed. Minor gaps in staffing, permitting identification, or milestone specificity.
11–15	Technically strong with qualified staff or experience contracting, achievable milestones, and permits identified where applicable. Demonstrated experience delivering similar projects or programs.

** Note to evaluation team: Permitting requirements will be confirmed during the post-award period. Evaluators should not attempt to verify applicant-reported permit requirements. As a general guide, projects involving ground disturbance or physical changes to the environment should provide either a description of applicable permits or a justification for CEQA exemption.*

5. Partnerships & Collaboration (0–10)

Range	Descriptor
0–3	Single-agency project with limited external engagement. No documented partnerships or outside support.
4–7	Documented partnerships or support from outside agencies, community organizations, or organized citizen groups described in the application. Letters of support, if provided, strengthen this score.
8–10	Scope involves multi-agency, CBO/NGO, citizen group partnership with strong, documented collaboration. Volunteer and/or community engagement is a clear component of the project. Letters of support from partners reflect active, substantive involvement.

** Note to evaluation team: Letters of support are an optional attachment. Their presence and substance should inform scoring, but absence alone should not drop a project to the lowest band if partnership is otherwise documented in the narrative*

6. Budget, Cost-Effectiveness & Leveraging (0–10)

Range	Descriptor
0–3	Budget detail is sparse, unclear, or lacks sufficient explanations to assess costs. Little or no narrative context provided.
4–7	Generally reasonable budget with costs that align with scope. Narrative and attachments partially support the budget. Some leveraging present but not fully described or documented.

Range	Descriptor
8-10	Well-constructed, logical budget with sufficient detail. Narrative and attachments support the costs presented. Indirect costs efficient and justified. Committed leveraged funds documented with a strong leverage ratio.

7. Long-term Maintenance & Monitoring (0-5)

Range	Descriptor
0-2	No post-grant plan described
3-5	Clear plan for sustained community benefits independent of future Measure Q grant funding and monitoring, data collection, and/or maintenance (if applicable) beyond grant term.

8. Bonus (0-5): Exceptional readiness, regional significance, or long-term stewardship commitments.