



## Santa Cruz County Measure Q Citizens Oversight Advisory Board



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### **FINAL GRANT FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FY 25-26 MEASURE Q GRANT PROGRAM**

#### **Recommended Action**

1. Approve final staff grant funding recommendations for the FY 2025–26 Measure Q Grant Program as presented in this report; and
2. Direct staff to transmit final funding recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for approval at the June 9, 2026 Board meeting.

#### **Executive Summary**

This report presents final staff grant funding recommendations for the FY 2025–26 Measure Q Grant Program, incorporating feedback provided by the COAB at the May 6 preliminary review meeting. Staff developed a balanced portfolio drawing from the top 10 scoring applications across each tier, applying portfolio-level values identified through COAB deliberation at the May 6, 2026 meeting, including geographic balance, scale of community impact, institutional diversity, and balance of thematic priorities to align with the overall intent of the Measure Q Vision Plan.

The recommended portfolio funds 17 projects totaling \$2,740,000 across Tier 1, Community Catalyst, and Tier 2, Community Impact, categories. Seven Tier 1 grants are recommended for funding for a total of \$266,897. Five projects in the general Tier 2 grant pool are recommended for funding at a total of \$1,248,103. Two projects were selected to meet the statutory set-aside minimum of \$600,000 for projects serving the Pajaro Valley for a total of \$625,000. Lastly, 3 projects were submitted and are recommended for funding for the San Vicente Redwoods set-aside for a total of \$600,000.

Four Tier 2 projects are recommended for partial awards, 3 out of the general grant pool and 1 in the Pajaro Valley set-aside, to maximize the number of funded projects within the available grant budget.

Upon COAB approval, staff will transmit the final recommendation to the County Board of Supervisors for their approval on June 9, 2026.

## Discussion

### 1. Measure Q Grant Program Review

The Santa Cruz County Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Act was passed by Santa Cruz County Voters in November 2024 and generates approximately \$7 million annually through an \$87 annual special parcel tax. The Measure Q Grant Program allocates 40% of tax measure revenue, through a competitive grant program supporting community projects advancing water quality, wildfire resilience, habitat protection, and equitable parks access in Santa Cruz County. In the program's inaugural cycle, accumulated interest and administrative cost savings have increased the total available grant program budget to approximately \$2,740,000, highlighting an ongoing opportunity to increase program reach through responsible fiscal management.

Table 1 summarizes key milestones in the evaluation process from application close through final Board of Supervisors approval of award recommendations.

*Table 1 – FY25-26 Grant Cycle Milestones*

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>
Application close	March 13	Complete. 54 applications received.
Initial completeness review by County staff; request for information (RFI) process	March 15 – March 22	Complete. 1 application deemed incomplete.
Project scoring by internal and external evaluators	March 15 – April 14	Complete. 53 applications scored, 1 internal and 1 external review per application.
Synthesis of scoring results; development of alternative funding scenarios	April 14 – April 22	Complete. Top 10 scoring projects in each tier considered.
Publication of preliminary funding recommendations / May 6 COAB staff report	April 24	Complete.
May COAB Meeting # 1 – Preliminary funding recommendations	May 6	Complete.
Incorporation of May 6 feedback; revision of funding recommendations	May 6 – May 22	Complete.

Milestone	Date	Status / Notes
Publication of final funding recommendations / May 22 COAB staff report	May 22	Complete.
<b>May COAB Meeting #2 – Approve final funding recommendations</b>	<b>May 27</b>	<b>Today.</b>
Board of Supervisors – Approval of grant funding recommendations	June 9	Pending.

The inaugural grant cycle was heavily subscribed, with 29 Tier 1 applications (Community Catalyst, \$5K–\$50K) requesting \$1,137,484, and 24 Tier 2 applications (Community Impact, \$50K–\$500K) requesting \$7,754,593, for a combined total of \$8,892,077 and a demand ratio of approximately 3.3 to 1 in the inaugural grant cycle.

From March 15 – April 14, County staff led an evaluation process guided by the grant scoring rubric previously approved by the COAB and Board of Supervisors (Table 2). The evaluation team consisted of 2 internal County staff reviewers and 2 external evaluators. One internal and one external score was assigned to each Tier 1 and Tier 2 application. Final grant evaluation scores are an average of the two reviewers scores.

*Table 2 – FY25-26 Grant Scoring Rubric*

Tier	Scoring Criteria
Tier 1 – Community Catalyst (100 points)	Alignment with Measure Q Vision Plan – 40 pts Community Benefit – 30 pts Feasibility – 20 pts Innovation or Capacity – 10 pts Bonus (optional) – up to 5 pts
Tier 2 – Community Impact (100 points)	Alignment with Measure Q Vision Plan – 25 pts Community Benefit – 20 pts Wildlife and Environmental Benefit – 15 pts Project Feasibility and Readiness – 15 pts Partnerships and Collaboration – 10 pts Budget, Cost-Effectiveness and Leveraging – 10 pts Long-term Maintenance and Monitoring – 5 pts Bonus (optional) – up to 5 pts

Following scoring, County staff ranked applications within each tier by averaged score and reviewed the resulting pool against the broader program values and priorities identified in the Measure Q Vision Plan. Because the

scoring rubrics are not aligned it is not appropriate to rank all scores against each other, this is why ranking was only performed within each Tier. Drawing from the top 10 ranked projects in each tier, staff developed 3 alternative funding scenarios for COAB consideration at the May 6 meeting (Table 3): one scenario based entirely on scores (Scenario A), and two scenarios which apply a specific organizing value to select from the top 10 ranked projects in order to achieve greater geographic balance (Scenario B) and measurable impact (Scenario C) across the recommended funding portfolio. The original 3 funding scenarios were published on May 22 alongside complete application content and evaluator scores and comments. These materials are available on the Measure Q website.

*Table 3 – Description of Funding Scenarios Presented at 5/6/26 COAB Meeting*

<b>Scenario</b>	<b>Organizing Value</b>
A – Score-Driven	Fund projects in strict rank order by <b>average score</b> .
B – Geographic Balance	Adjusted selection from the top 10 scoring projects across Tier 1 and Tier 2 to achieve greater countywide <b>geographic distribution</b> of impact
C – Scale of Impact	Adjusted selection from the top 10 scoring projects across Tier 1 and Tier 2 to prioritize projects with the largest <b>measurable outcomes</b>

At the May 6 meeting, the COAB received preliminary funding proposals using the three alternative funding scenarios for consideration and feedback. COAB, participating applicants, and public discussion organized around three main themes:

1. Portfolio-level values to inform the final investment decision
2. Additional context and data needed to evaluate those values
3. Opportunities to return in August with a formal after-action review and proposed refinements to program guidelines.

***Theme 1: Portfolio – Level Values to Inform Final Funding Recommendations***

COAB members engaged substantively on how portfolio-wide values should shape final award decisions beyond strict rank order. Key themes included:

- **Geographic balance and equity** – funding projects strictly by rank order (Scenario A) results in an award portfolio heavily concentrated in the Pajaro Valley. COAB members discussed the differences between geographic vs. needs-based equity and the importance of

demonstrating broad county-wide impact in Measure Q's inaugural grant cycle, which was partially addressed by Scenario B, but not completely to the COABs preference. At the same time, South County projects do map favorably onto multiple Vision Plan priorities and grant rubric scoring criteria that were included specifically to address historic underinvestment in this part of the county.

- **Scale of impact and measurable outcomes** – Several COAB members expressed support for Scenario C on the basis that visible, high-impact projects could provide a more objective basis for departures from rank order.
- **Fidelity to published process** – one COAB member expressed preference for a straightforward rank scoring approach (Scenario A) which aligns most closely with grant guidelines and scoring criteria made available to applicants during the solicitation period.
- **Institutional balance** – COAB members and organizations who delivered public comment noted that public agencies are structurally advantaged in competitive grant process; commissioners asked whether direct allocation recipients should be viewed differently in the competitive process.
- **Thematic balance** – COAB members sought to ensure all Vision Plan priority themes (wildfire risk reduction and forest health, water resources, parks/access/equity) were meaningfully represented in the first grant cycle. Additional comments reflected the importance that wildfire risk reduction and forest health projects are reflected in the final portfolio.

### **Theme 2: Additional Context & Data**

COAB members requested the following visualizations, data and analysis to accompany the May 27 final award recommendations:

- Geographic maps of all recommended projects and direct allocation recipient projects or programs.
- A summary of Measure Q direct allocations and identification of any overlap with competitive grant applicants.

- Comparing geographic and thematic composition of final award recommendation with the composition of the underlying applicant pool.
- Clear labeling of set-aside vs. competitive awards in portfolio analysis – one COAB member noted that presenting statutory set-aside dollars alongside competitive awards in the geographic breakdown misrepresents the actual concentration of discretionary funding in the Pajaro Valley, since set-aside minimums are fixed by the Measure Q Act and do not reflect competitive judgment.

### **Theme 3: “After Action Review” – Program Improvement and Refinement**

Several issues raised during deliberation were acknowledged as questions for the program’s long-term design rather than decisions for this grant award cycle. Staff will return to the COAB in August with a comprehensive after-action review (AAR) of the inaugural cycle and potential program guideline revisions for COAB consideration ahead of the next grant cycle which will be in early 2027.

Topics for this conversation raised at the May 6 COAB meeting include:

- **Post-scoring decision process** – sticking to scoring criteria provides most transparency to applicants; future grant guidelines could explicitly state the role of factors that will inform portfolio-level recommendations post-scoring
- **Geographic balance guardrails** – considering “ceilings” of investment in any one geographic area or any one applicant
- **Recurring eligibility limits** – setting clear limits around successive award eligibility could ensure that funds are used to support discrete projects or capacity building, rather than baseline program/operations support
- **Protecting nonprofit and tribe accessibility** – monitor application trends over time and consider how grant program guidelines can support accessibility for tribes and nonprofits and build long-term capacity.

- **Pro-active / targeted outreach** - assess opportunities for outreach, fiscal sponsorship, and proactive project scoping in thematic or geographic areas under-represented in this grant cycle
- **Projects versus Programs** – ensuring resilience projects with visible and measurable impacts are supported

## **2. Final Funding Recommendations**

### ***Recommended Portfolio***

Staff recommends the following final grant portfolio for COAB approval. The recommended portfolio funds 17 projects and is grounded in competitive scoring results, with adjustments to reflect additional priorities consistent with COAB direction. Total recommended awards reflect current grant program Measure Q bucket revenues of \$2,740,000.

Table 4 shows recommended award amounts out of the top 10 scoring projects in each Tier. Additional narrative following Table 4 provides explanation and context for the final staff recommendation based on feedback received at the May 6 COAB meeting. Project summaries and complete application content can be accessed on the Measure Q website.

Table 4 – Final Staff Funding Recommendation

Rank	Project	Organization	Avg. Score	Asked	Recommended Award
<b>Tier 1 - Community Catalyst (7)</b>				<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$266,897</b>
1	River Stewards	Coastal Watershed Council	97	\$50,000	\$50,000
2	Pinto Lake Water Quality Monitoring	Santa Cruz County Parks	92	\$48,000	\$48,000
3	Truck Trail Emergency Response Navigation	Santa Cruz County Fire Dept.	86.5	\$6,000	—
4	Kids2Parks	Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks	85	\$14,915	\$14,915
5	Real-Time Digital Signage for Wildfire Preparedness	Santa Cruz County Fire Dept.	81.5	\$43,982	\$43,982
6	Strategic Water Supply Enhancements	Santa Cruz County Fire Dept.	79.5	\$29,158	—
7	Accessible Park Experiences — Blind & Visually Impaired	Vista Center	79	\$50,000	\$50,000
8	Expanding Coastal Access, Ocean Safety & Surf Education	Black Surf Santa Cruz	78.5	\$50,000	\$50,000
9	Outdoor Equity & Wellness Initiative	Boys & Girls Clubs of SC County	76.5	\$50,000	—
10	Las Cumbres Shaded Fuel Break Project	South Skyline Firesafe Council	76	\$10,000	\$10,000
<b>Tier 2 — Community Impact (10)</b>				<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$2,473,103</b>
<i>(Subtotal – PV Set-Aside)(2)</i>					<i>(\$625,000)</i>
<i>(Subtotal – other)(53)</i>					<i>(\$1,248,103)</i>
<i>(Subtotal – SVR Set-Aside) (3)</i>					<i>(\$600,000)</i>
1	Pajaro Valley Watershed Stewardship <b>PV</b>	Watsonville Wetlands Watch	94	\$350,000	\$350,000
3	Watsonville City Plaza Revitalization <b>PV</b>	City of Watsonville	82	\$600,000	\$275,000*
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2	Rural Lands Assistance Program Pilot	RCD Santa Cruz County	85.5	\$342,140	\$320,337*
4	Mesa Village Park Phase 1 <b>PV</b>	Friends of SC County Parks	81	\$279,500	\$279,500
4	PVUSD Rolling Hills Track & Field <b>PV</b>	Pajaro Valley Unified School District	81	\$500,000	—
6	Pajaro River Bridge to Bay & College Lake <b>PV</b>	Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency	79	\$390,000	\$150,000*
7	Sol Y Tierra: Climate Justice Learning & Adaptation	Community Action Board	77	\$509,000	—
8	San Lorenzo Flood Control — Debris Boom	City of Santa Cruz	76	\$300,000	\$100,000*
9	Resilience-Ready SCC: Zone-0 Equity & Workforce	Long Term Recovery Group	74.5	\$398,266	\$398,266
10	Wildfire & Ecology Resilience via Beneficial Fire	Central Coast Prescribed Burn Assoc.	73	\$399,360	—
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-	SVR — Targeted Stream Crossing Repairs <b>SVR</b>	Peninsula Open Space Trust	—	\$425,000	\$425,000
-	SVR — Botanical Resource Management <b>SVR</b>	Peninsula Open Space Trust	—	\$75,000	\$75,000
-	SVR — Public Access Improvement <b>SVR</b>	Peninsula Open Space Trust	—	\$100,000	\$100,000
<b>Total award (max: \$2,740,000) (17 Projects)</b>				<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$2,740,000</b>

\* Indicates proposed award reduction relative to requested amount.

## ***Final Funding Recommendation***

The final award recommendation represents a synthesis of the 3 funding scenarios presented at the May 6 meeting, incorporating portfolio-level values deliberated by the COAB.

### **Tier 1 Recommendations**

Non-profits were most heavily represented in the Tier 1 application pool, and the top-ranking projects included a high number of educational programs designed to provide equitable stewardship and recreational access opportunities to countywide populations.

The primary considerations in selecting Tier 1 awards out of top 10 scoring projects were institutional equity, scale of impact, and representation of Vision Plan thematic priorities, when choosing between similar types of projects.

Santa Cruz County Fire Department was limited to a single award with the broadest impact, Digital Signage for Wildfire Preparedness, which will install proactive emergency signage along two heavily trafficked road corridors in Felton (Graham Hill) and Corralitos (Freedom Blvd.).

Among recreational programs, "River Stewards", "Kids to Parks", "Accessible Park Experiences", and "Expanding coastal access" were recommended for funding in this category with the highest countywide impact metrics (number of individuals served).

Finally, thematic balance was considered to ensure that no one Vision Plan thematic area (wildfire risk reduction, parks, recreation, access & equity, water resource management) dominated the Tier 1 portfolio. River Stewards (Coastal Watershed Council) and Pinto Lake Water Quality Monitoring (Santa Cruz County Parks) performed well against multi-benefit scoring criteria, and the Las Cumbres Shaded Fuel Break Project represents a pilot small-scale implementation project that addresses wildfire risk reduction in a rural summit community.

### **Tier 2 Recommendations**

Among Tier 2 top ranking projects, public agencies were well positioned to make larger scale investments in the first year of the grant program.

Geographic balance, scale of impact, and thematic balance were primary themes emerging from the May 6 COAB meeting and inform final award

recommendations. Additional context regarding year 1 direct allocation investments further informed strategic reductions to public agency projects included in the final award recommendations.

Most notably, three of the top five ranked projects which performed well against the Tier 2 scoring criteria singularly addressed parks as a thematic priority, and all served the greater Pajaro Valley area (City Plaza, Mesa Village Nature Play, and Rolling Hills Middle School Track Access). The City Plaza award is reduced from the requested amount to expand resource distribution and address direct allocation recipient balance. Mesa Village was recommended due to its inclusion of environmentally beneficial design features which provide a nexus to Vision Plan priorities. While projects serving the Pajaro Valley still represent approximately 40% of the Tier 2 portfolio, this brought it down to less than 35% when excluding both set-asides from this total.

Award reductions for the Watsonville City Plaza, Rural Lands Assistance program (RCD), Pajaro River Bridge to Bay project (Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency) and the San Lorenzo Debris Boom (City of Santa Cruz) reflect a deliberate effort to right-size public agency or direct recipient awards and preserve budget capacity for nonprofit participation in the Tier 2 portfolio.

It worth noting that two recommended Tier 2 projects which dedicate significant funding resources to staff capacity – the RCD’s Rural Land Assistance Program and Long Term Recovery Group’s Resilience Ready SCC – direct resources toward staff capacity and program infrastructure to address wildfire and climate resilience efforts. Both are designed and well positioned to leverage outside state and federal funding and private cost-share, meaning the initial Measure Q investment is envisioned to catalyze larger follow-on resources rather than sustain ongoing program delivery.

### **Summary of Award Recommendation and Applicant Pool**

At the May 6 meeting, COAB members requested staff compare thematic and geographic composition of the final award recommendation relative to the underlying applicant pool. Figures 1 and 2, and Tables 5 and 6, compare the proportional geographic and thematic composition of the grant application pool with top-scoring projects and the final staff recommendation.

The final award recommendation closely tracks the thematic composition of the underlying full applicant pool, with no significant departures introduced

by funding portfolio-level adjustments. Parks, Recreation, Access, and Equity is the most represented theme across both tiers at every stage of selection, which is more a reflection of what the grant program attracted in its inaugural funding request cycle than a scoring artifact. This is a useful data point for the August AAR conversation about how program guidelines and outreach shape grant submissions upstream of scoring. Water Resource Management and Wildfire Risk Reduction and Forest Health are both represented in the awarded portfolio, with wildfire having 2 of 10 projects, 20%, in Tier 2 and 2 of 7, 29% in Tier 1 and Water Resource Management having 3 of 10, 30%, in Tier 2 and 3 of 7, 43%, in Tier 1. (see Figure 1 & Table 5)

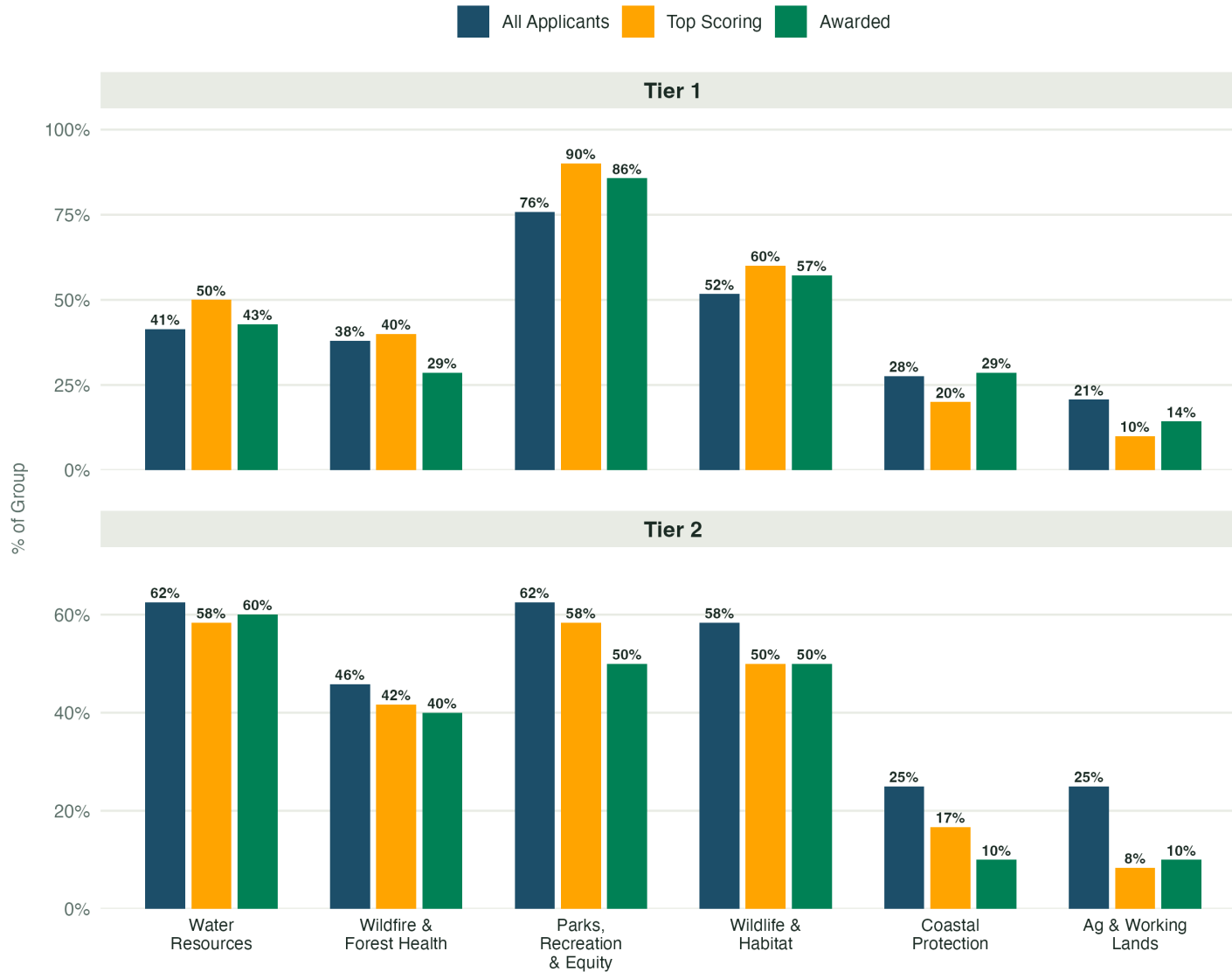
Geographically, the Tier 1 portfolio is broadly distributed with no single geography exceeding 24% of awarded dollars. Tier 2 requires more careful reading; of the \$2,473,103 in total Tier 2 awards, \$1,225,000 or nearly half is pre-committed through the two statutory set-aside minimums, leaving \$1,248,103 where competitive scoring and portfolio-level values drove decisions. The Pajaro Valley's 43% share of total Tier 2 dollars reflects that structure: \$625,000 of awards (Watsonville Wetlands Watch and City Plaza) satisfy set-aside requirements, and the remaining \$429,500 represents 17% of remaining Tier 2 dollars, and 34% of competitive award dollars (excluding both set-asides),

Countywide projects represent 29% of total Tier 2 awarded dollars and extend the geographic impact of Tier 2 investment towards programs that serve WUI residents countywide. Within the Tier 2 allocation Countywide projects represent 58% of the eligible funding outside the two geographic set asides. (see Figure 2 & Table 6)

Figure 1 – Project Thematic Distribution Across Application Pool, Top Scoring and Award Recommendation

### Project Themes by Applicant Group

% of projects in each group touching each theme | Measure Q FY 2025–26



Based on theme flag columns. Projects may touch multiple themes; values may exceed 100%.  
Denominator = total projects in that group x tier.

Figure 2 – Project Geographic Distribution Across Application Pool, Top Scoring and Award Recommendation

### Geographic Distribution of Dollars by Applicant Group

% of group's total dollars + dollar amount | Measure Q FY 2025–26



All Applicants and Top Scoring use amount requested. Awarded uses amount awarded.  
Denominator = total dollars in that group x tier.

**Table 5 – Thematic Composition by Applicant Group and Tier**

*n* (% of projects in group). Values may exceed 100% as projects may address multiple themes

Theme	Tier 1 – All (n=29)	Tier 1 – Top Scoring (n=10)	Tier 1 – Rec. Award (n=7)	Tier 2 – All (n=24)	Tier 2 – Top Scoring (n=12)	Tier 2 – Rec. Award (n=10)
Water Resources	12 (41%)	5 (50%)	3 (43%)	15 (62%)	7 (58%)	6 (60%)
Wildfire & Forest Health	11 (38%)	4 (40%)	2 (29%)	11 (46%)	5 (42%)	4 (40%)
Parks, Recreation & Equity	22 (76%)	9 (90%)	6 (86%)	15 (62%)	7 (58%)	5 (50%)
Wildlife & Habitat	15 (52%)	6 (60%)	4 (57%)	14 (58%)	6 (50%)	5 (50%)
Coastal Protection	8 (28%)	2 (20%)	2 (29%)	6 (25%)	2 (17%)	1 (10%)
Ag & Working Lands	6 (21%)	1 (10%)	1 (14%)	6 (25%)	1 (8%)	1 (10%)

**Table 6 – Thematic Composition by Applicant Group and Tier**

*(% of project dollars directed towards geography in group).*

Theme	Tier 1 – All (\$1,137,484)	Tier 1 – Top Scoring (\$352,055)	Tier 1 – Rec. Award (\$266,897)	Tier 2 – All (\$7,754,593)	Tier 2 – Top Scoring (\$4,268,906)	Tier 2 – Rec. Award (\$2,473,103)
Pajaro Valley	\$288,309 (25%)	\$48,000 (14%)	\$48,000 (18%)	\$3,148,728 (41%)	\$2,119,500 (50%)	\$1,054,500 (43%)
<i>Pajaro Valley (set aside)</i>	–	–	–	–	–	<i>(\$625,000 / 25%)</i>
<i>Pajaro Valley (remaining)</i>	–	–	–	–	–	<i>(\$429,500 / 17%)</i>
San Vicente Redwoods (set-aside)	–	–	–	\$600,000 (8%)	\$600,000 (14%)	\$600,000 (24%)
Countywide (Broad Impact)	\$216,799 (19%)	\$70,915 (20%)	\$64,915 (24%)	\$963,863 (12%)	\$740,406 (17%)	\$718,603 (29%)
Countywide (Multi-Site)	\$123,140 (11%)	\$123,140 (35%)	\$43,982 (16%)	\$908,360 (12%)	\$509,000 (12%)	–
Countywide (Coast)	\$142,550 (13%)	\$50,000 (14%)	\$50,000 (19%)	–	–	–
City of Santa Cruz	\$146,230 (13%)	\$50,000 (14%)	\$50,000 (19%)	\$673,642 (9%)	\$300,000 (7%)	\$100,000 (4%)
San Lorenzo Valley	–	–	–	\$1,000,000 (13%)	–	–
Summit Communities	\$106,500 (9%)	\$10,000 (3%)	\$10,000 (4%)	–	–	–
North Coast	–	–	–	\$135,000 (2%)	–	–
City of Capitola	–	–	–	\$325,000 (4%)	–	–
Live Oak / Other	\$79,800 (7%)	–	–	–	–	–
Bonny Doon	\$34,156 (3%)	–	–	–	–	–

### **3. FY25-26 Direct Allocation Preliminary Report**

At the May 6 COAB meeting, COAB members also requested additional context regarding projects funded through Measure Q's direct allocation program to better contextualize grant awards. Outside of the competitive grant program, sixty percent of Measure Q grant revenue is distributed through direct allocation to the following entities:

- 20% of measure revenue / approximately \$1.4M annually to the County of Santa Cruz for projects serving the unincorporated county
- 20% of measure revenue / approximately \$1.4M to the four cities, distributed on the basis of population size
- 10% of measure revenue / approximately \$700k annually to the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County
- 10% of measure revenue / approximately \$700k annually to the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County

Unexpended funds may be accrued for expenditure in future years to enable sufficient funding for larger or long-term projects.

The information provided in this section was collected by County staff following additional COAB direction at the May 6 meeting and is intended to provide additional context for final grant award recommendations, as opposed to satisfying annual Measure Q direct allocation reporting requirements established by SCCC § 4.65.060. Additional details will be provided by agencies in subsequent reports to the COAB.

#### ***County of Santa Cruz***

#### **\$1,402,370 allocated / \$1,092,767 committed**

The County's allocation is distributed across seven projects spanning multiple Supervisorial districts, anchored by a major multi-year lake restoration effort in the Pajaro Valley. The \$309,603 uncommitted balance reflects unallocated district discretionary funds that remain available for expenditure within the fiscal year.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Q Funds</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Outside Match</b>
Freedom Lake Restoration	In Progress	\$720,000	Greater Watsonville	Water Resources, Parks & Access, Wildlife & Habitat	—
Evacuation Route Fuels Reduction	In Progress	\$80,000	Countywide (52 road miles)	Wildfire & Forest Health	\$1,239,762 (FEMA, Measure K)
Corralitos Creek Hydrologic Forecasting Model	In Progress	\$75,000	Corralitos Creek Watershed	Water Resources	—
Mesa Village Youth Soccer Field (D4)	In Progress	\$12,000	Greater Watsonville	Parks & Access	—
Valle del Pajaro Master Plan Outreach (D4)	In Progress	\$5,767	Greater Watsonville	Parks & Access	—
Pinto Lake Water Quality Monitoring (D2)	In Progress	\$40,000	Greater Watsonville	Water Resources, Parks & Access, Wildlife & Habitat	\$1,050,000 (EPA 319h pending)
South County Aquatics Feasibility Study (D2)	In Progress	\$60,000	Greater Watsonville	Parks & Access	—
Winkle Ave Park (D1)	In Progress	\$100,000	Live Oak	Parks & Access	-

**Resource Conservation District**

**\$700,000 allocated / fully committed**

The RCD's allocation funds a broad countywide conservation services platform organized across six program areas. Rather than discrete projects, the RCD model delivers technical assistance, grant leveraging, and program development on private and public lands across all Vision Plan themes, with specific implementation activities identified within each program area.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Q Funds</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Outside Match</b>
Watershed Restoration (incl. AJC Park Conservation Plan)	In Progress	\$179,000	Countywide / Soquel	Water Resources, Wildlife & Habitat, Ag & Working Lands	County Parks (in-kind)
Forest Health (Oak Woodland Restoration, cost-share program)	In Progress	\$73,000	Countywide / Larkin Valley	Wildfire & Forest Health, Wildlife & Habitat	DOC/Coastal Conservancy, USDA NRCS (pending)
Stewardship in Agriculture (Cover Crop, Irrigation Mgmt)	In Progress	\$79,000	Pajaro Valley, North Coast	Water Resources, Wildlife & Habitat, Ag & Working Lands	PVWMA, CDFA, USDA (pending)
Community Engagement & Resilience (chipping, outreach)	In Progress	\$173,000	Countywide / WUI communities	Wildfire & Forest Health, Water Resources	USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant (pending)
Impact Evaluation and Administration	In Progress	\$96,000	Countywide	All themes	—
Contingency and Disaster Response	Planned	\$100,000	Countywide	All themes	—

### ***Land Trust of Santa Cruz County***

#### **\$700,000 allocated / fully committed**

The Land Trust's allocation funds four programs across its network of preserves and conservation properties, with active work in the San Lorenzo Valley, Scotts Valley, Bonny Doon, and Watsonville. The Land Trust is leveraging \$543,158 in donations and other non-public funds alongside its Measure Q investment.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Q Funds</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Outside Match</b>
Recreational Trail Establishment and Maintenance	In Progress	\$62,811	Countywide (Glenwood, San Vicente, multiple preserves)	Parks & Access	\$211,097 (donations, City of Scotts Valley)
Endangered Species Recovery and Habitat Stewardship	In Progress	\$84,657	Soquel Creek watershed, Scotts Valley	Wildlife & Habitat	\$192,062 (donations, developer mitigation)
Expanding Public Access at Watsonville Slough Farm	In Progress	\$87,436	North Watsonville / Pajaro Valley	Parks & Access	\$75,056 (donations)
Vegetation Management and Fire Risk Reduction	In Progress	\$104,280	Bonny Doon, Ben Lomond, Felton, Scotts Valley (sandhills)	Wildfire & Forest Health	\$64,943 (donations, rental income)

**City of Santa Cruz**

**\$544,567 allocated / fully committed**

The City's allocation focuses on building long-term open space operations capacity through two new staff positions and investing in wildfire resiliency planning across its major open space areas. The City has secured \$475,819 in CalFire grants directly catalyzed by its Measure Q wildfire planning investment.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Q Funds</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Outside Match</b>
Brookwood Drive Roadway, Drainage & Fire Road Improvements	In Progress	\$209,020	DeLaveaga Park	Water Resources, Parks & Access, Wildlife & Habitat	—
Assistant Urban Forester (new position)	In Progress	\$142,773	Citywide	Wildfire & Forest Health, Water Resources, Parks &	—

Project	Status	Q Funds	Geography	Themes	Outside Match
				Access, Wildlife & Habitat	
Park Maintenance Worker – Open Space Operations (new position)	In Progress	\$142,774	Pogonip, DeLaveaga, Moore Creek	Wildfire & Forest Health, Water Resources, Parks & Access	–
Wildfire Resiliency and Forest Health Grant Planning	In Progress	\$50,000	Pogonip, DeLaveaga, Moore Creek	Wildfire & Forest Health	\$475,819 (CalFire)

## City of Watsonville

### \$461,458 allocated / uncommitted

The City of Watsonville has not approved an expenditure plan, citing concern about the Local Taxpayer Protection Act ballot measure that has qualified for the November 2026 statewide ballot. Three projects have been identified as intended uses but all remain in planned status with nominal budget entries pending formal Council authorization.

Intended Project	Status	Q Funds	Geography	Themes	Outside Match
Pinto Lake Water Quality Monitoring (match)	Planned	\$0*	Pinto Lake	Water Resources, Parks & Access, Wildlife & Habitat	–
Ramsay Park Renaissance completion	Planned	\$0*	Downtown Watsonville	Parks & Access	–
City Plaza gap funding	Planned	\$0*	Downtown Watsonville	Parks & Access	–

## **City of Capitola**

### **\$200,000 allocated / fully committed**

The City's allocation addresses a longstanding parks staffing gap, funding the first additions to the parks maintenance crew in over 20 years alongside general parks and open space maintenance activities serving the Capitola community.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Q Funds</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Outside Match</b>
Two new parks maintenance workers	In Progress	\$150,000	City of Capitola	Parks & Access	—
Parks and open space maintenance	In Progress	\$50,000	City of Capitola	Parks & Access	—

## **City of Scotts Valley**

### **\$200,000 allocated / partially committed**

The City's allocation funds four parks maintenance and infrastructure projects across Scotts Valley's park system, two of which are already complete. Work ranges from routine building and grounds upkeep to drainage and retaining wall repairs that address both park access and water management.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Q Funds</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Outside Match</b>
Parks Related Support (maintenance, safety, accessibility)	In Progress	\$80,000	Scotts Valley parks	Parks & Access	—
Siltanen Gazebo repairs	Complete	\$40,063	Siltanen Park	Parks & Access	—
Parks Buildings Roofing at Skypark	In Progress	\$27,300	Scotts Valley	Parks & Access	—

Project	Status	Q Funds	Geography	Themes	Outside Match
Glenwood Retaining Wall Culvert repair	Complete	\$34,300	Siltanen Park / Glenwood East Preserve	Water Resources, Parks & Access	—

**Financial Impact**

Staff identified savings in administrative costs which, along with interest earned to date, has resulted in \$2,740,000 currently available for grant awards. No additional direct financial impact is associated with COAB’s approval of final grant program funding recommendations. The program will distribute its portion of annual Measure Q revenue consistent with the Measure Q Vision Plan previously adopted by the Board.

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**Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:**

*Claude Sonnet 4.6, an Artificial Intelligence (AI), was used to draft components of this report and associated materials.*