



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

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C. H. HUCKELBERRY
County Administrator

March 3, 2004

Richard Myers
Southern Arizona Leadership Council
4400 East Broadway, Suite 710
Tucson, Arizona 85711

Re: **Open Space Bond Question - May 18, 2004 Election**

Dear Mr. Myers,

Given all of the iterations of multi-committee review and recommendation, I agree that it is a little difficult to follow the final bond allocation on the ballot for open space. The following is a brief point by point review of the evolution of this bond question.

1. In June of 2003, the Steering Committee of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan recommended that the Board consider placing on the ballot a \$250 million bond question for the purpose of acquiring lands to meet the compliance requirements of Section 10(1)(a)(B) of the Endangered Species Act.
2. The Board, in the following weeks, voted to formulate a number of bond advisory committees for the purpose of determining whether or not a bond election should be called for 2004. The Board emphasized two primary areas of concern: 1) open space, and 2) neighborhood reinvestment. The Board also kept open the option of addressing other County needs if a 2004 election was pursued.
3. The Board, at about the same time, formulated three advisory committees regarding the proposed bond issue. The first was an overall County Bond Advisory Committee made up of 19 members of the community, with two members appointed by each Board member, two members by the County Administrator, a member from each incorporated jurisdiction or municipality, and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and Tohono O'odham Nation. The Board also appointed two committees to deal with what the Board felt were the most important questions they wanted referred to the voters, one being for open space and the other for neighborhood reinvestment. A Conservation Bond Advisory Committee was formed with ten members and a Neighborhood Reinvestment Bond Advisory Committee with ten members. The recommendations of the Conservation Bond Advisory Committee and the Neighborhood Reinvestment Committee were made to the full Bond Advisory Committee.

4. The Conservation Bond Advisory Committee recommended a \$249 million bond question referral composed of two matters: 1) \$230 million for open space, and 2) \$19 million for cultural and historic preservation. The Conservation Bond Advisory Committee recommended habitat protection and community open spaces or "signature properties," with the \$230 million being split 75 percent for habitat protection and 25 percent for community open space.
5. In the iterative processes of deliberation, jurisdictions made requests for open space considerations to the full County Bond Advisory Committee. The County Bond Advisory Committee referred the jurisdictional requests to the Conservation Bond Advisory Committee. The Conservation Bond Advisory Committee returned their recommendation to the full County Bond Advisory Committee, recommending no changes considering the jurisdictional requests.
6. The County Bond Advisory Committee then recommended that the Board consider an open space bond question of \$182.3 million, earmarking \$10 million for Davis-Monthan and \$15 million for jurisdictional open space requests, but taking no position on allocation of the remaining bonds between habitat protection and community open spaces.
7. I then recommended, based on competing interests and the need to reduce the overall bond amount, that the open space bond amount be reduced by \$15 million to \$167.3 million. The Board, when considering the recommendations of the County Bond Advisory Committee, Neighborhood Reinvestment Committee, and Conservation Bond Advisory Committee, made minor adjustments to my recommendations and increased the open space question by \$7 million.
8. Based on the current deliberations of the Conservation Bond Advisory Committee, as well as the deliberations that will occur during March of the County Bond Advisory Committee to develop a bond implementation plan, the present status of distribution of fund amounts for the open space program is still fluid, but at this point I believe it is represented by the following.
 - A. The total amount of open space bonds to be placed before the voters will be \$174.3 million, and \$10 million of the bond question is to be for the purpose of preventing development encroachment on Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.
 - B. Another \$15 million is earmarked for jurisdictional open spaces, as follows by jurisdiction:

City of Tucson	\$11,000,000
Town of Sahuarita	1,500,000
Town of Oro Valley	2,500,000

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- C. The balance of funds, being approximately \$149.3 million, is to be distributed where no more than \$53 million will be spent on community or open space and not less than \$96.3 million is to be spent on habitat protection. If community open space projects identified are not available for acquisition due to either high appraised value or development, then the funds allocated should be used for habitat protection. Further, the jurisdictional and Davis-Monthan allocations are capped at not more than the amount specified, and if, for whatever reason, those amounts are not spent, then they, too, will revert to habitat protection. In this latter discussion, there is ongoing discussion regarding how the bond implementation plan will be drafted. I would expect that the Conservation Bond Advisory Committee will make a recommendation on this distribution in the near future. Their recommendation is then forwarded to the County Bond Advisory Committee for review and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors when considering the bond implementation plan that must be adopted prior to the election. I am also enclosing, for your use, an information sheet indicating all of the projects by question in the proposed May 18, 2004 bond election, and a map showing the general location of the projects.

I hope this information helps you understand the evolution of the open space bond question.

Sincerely,



C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/jj

Attachments

- c: The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
Larry Hecker, Chair, Pima County Bond Advisory Committee
Carolyn Campbell, Vice-Chair, Pima County Bond Advisory Committee
John Bernal, Deputy County Administrator - Public Works
Jim Barry, Executive Assistant to the County Administrator
Nicole Fyffe, Special Staff Assistant, County Administrator's Office