

# West Contra Costa Unified School District

## Citizens Bond Oversight Committee Measures M, D & J

### 2006 Annual Report

Final: Approved 1-30-08

#### **I. Introduction**

This is the 2006 Annual Report of the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee for Measures M, D & J of the West Contra Costa Unified School District. This report is prepared, in conformance with California law, to summarize the work of the Bond Oversight Committee and review the past year of activity in the District's Bond Construction Program.

#### **II. History and Overview of the Bond Oversight Committee(s)**

The voters of the West Contra Costa Unified School District passed the first construction bond, Measure E, in 1998. This measure was a 2/3 vote bond, which did not require citizen oversight committee review. However, the community and the Board of Education determined that in order to ensure citizen understanding of the expenditure of the bond funds, it would be appropriate to name the District's first oversight committee. The Measure E Citizen Oversight Committee was formed in 1999, and included many members who have continued to serve the community through the most recent bond measures.

The November 2000, the District passed Measure M. The Board included in the bond language requirements for a citizens oversight committee, even though this was not required for a 2/3 vote bond. This \$150 million bond was to cover renovations to the District's Elementary Schools. The Measure M Bond Oversight Committee focused on working with the District to develop reports and presentations related to the facilities program which would continue to increase the knowledge and understanding of the community related to the bond measure.

In March 2002, the District passed Measure D for the renovation of the District's Secondary schools. This facilities bond totaling \$300 million, was passed under the provisions of Proposition 39 which allowed passage by 55% majority and included statutory requirements for appointment of a citizens oversight committee to monitor the expenditure of funds. The Measure M Citizens Oversight Committee was expanded on the passage of Measure D to include all statutorily required members. California Education Code Section 15282 (a) requires members from a Business Organization, Senior Citizen Organization, Taxpayers Organization, Parent or Guardian, and Parent/Guardian & PTA.

In November 2005, the voters of the District passed Measure J, a Proposition 39 Bond requiring 55% voter approval. This bond, totaling \$400 million, was targeted to complete renovations at 4 secondary schools and 13 elementary schools. In January 2006 the Board of Education appointed the Measure D Bond Oversight Committee as the Measure J Bond Oversight Committee. Throughout 2006 the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee for Measures M, D, and J has continued to meet and oversee expenditures on the Districts facilities program.

### **III. Committee Membership**

During 2006-2007 the West Contra Costa Unified School District Citizen's Bond Oversight Committee saw several changes in membership and leadership. Many long time members have left the Committee. Changes in membership are reflected in the Membership by Categories documents posted on the CBOC website.

### **IV. CBOC Actions and Concerns 2006**

During 2006 members of the Committee continued to push for greater accountability in the management, administration, and Board of Education direction of the Bond Program. The Committee sent forward a number of proposed changes to the administrative structure of the Bond Program and the administrative regulations governing the CBOC.

### **V. Performance and Financial Audit Reports**

**Performance Audit.** The 2006 Annual Performance Audit has been prepared by the audit team from Total School Solutions. The draft report was issued to the District in December 2006, in accordance with the most recently approved timelines. District staff completed their response to findings and comments in March 2007. The Performance Audit was accepted by the Board of Education at its regular meeting of April 4, 2007.

The Performance Audit included an evaluation of the quality control program. The quality control program has three major components, including pre-construction quality control, procurement quality control, and construction quality control. The Performance Audit found that the pre-construction program had significant improvements due to inclusion of the Option 1C standards in the bid documents, as well as a more effective job of document development and bid sequence. These improvements have addressed weaknesses encountered during previous project phases. The procurement quality control process, which is under the purview of the bond manager, is in place and followed. The Performance Audit found satisfactory outcomes in this area.

The Performance Audit included an extensive review of Construction Quality Control. This review included a report on two projects, Peres and Kensington Hilltop Elementary Schools. The Audit Subcommittee selected these two projects for testing to verify that the delivered project outcomes meet the specified standards in regard to the deliverables. The Audit Subcommittee also wanted to verify equity in allocation of District resources among various school projects.

The Peres project, located in Richmond, included 10,245 sq. ft. of demolition and 59,210 sq. ft. of construction. The cost of the Peres project was \$13.6 million or \$229.72 per sq. ft. The Kensington Hilltop project, located in the unincorporated community of Kensington, included 42,810 sq. ft. of construction. The cost of the Kensington project was \$12.5 million at \$293 per sq. ft. The reason for the substantial cost per sq. ft. difference was due to the site conditions of Kensington. The Kensington site is small and hilly, while the Peres site is large and flat. Construction at Kensington included retaining walls, foundations designed for a hilly topography, elevators and storm drain/sewer improvements. In addition, the temporary housing for students during construction could not be accommodated on-site. By removing the cost for temporary housing out of the construction cost and including a factor for escalation because the projects were not built at the same time, the adjusted cost per sq. ft. difference was much smaller (\$236.75 for Peres and \$249.26 for Kensington). This is only a five percent net difference. Based on this information, it was determined that there was parity

in the scope of work and allocation of resources by e the District for these two projects. Based on the Performance Audit and extensive site review, the Audit Subcommittee agreed with this conclusion.

**Financial Audit.** The 2006 Financial Audit has been prepared by the audit team from Perry Smith LLP. The Financial Audit was accepted by the Board of Education at its regular meeting of January 17, 2007. The audit was then accepted by the CBOC at its regular meeting of January 24, 2007. This audit indicated that expenditures made under the program were in accordance with the requirements of the voter approved measures.

## **VI. Communications with the Public**

A specific and up to date website is maintained under the supervision of the Committee to provide regular reports and information concerning the progress and compliance of the activities involving bond fund expenditures. The District also maintains a strong and current website effort to provide public information.

## **VII. Progress Report on Our Schools**

Look around your community. It is probably safe to say that within a mile of your home or business, there is evidence of major improvements in your neighborhood schools. From Harding School and El Cerrito High School near the Alameda County border to Washington School in Pt. Richmond to Ohlone School and Hercules Middle/High School near the District's northern border, there are beneficial changes in our schools under way - because of your generous support for the bond program.

**2006 Summary of Work.** The District made substantial progress during 2006 on the long-range renovation of its major facilities. The year was marked by the start of major secondary construction projects, final completion of a number of elementary projects and by continuing impacts and concerns due to construction cost escalation.

### **Measure M Elementary Projects.**

- Seventeen Phase 1A and Phase 1B Elementary school projects renovated using Measure M Bond funds were all completed and in the "closeout" process during this last year. Construction management staff worked on punchlist, warranty issues, construction defects, as-builts, furniture issues, and final contract closeouts.
- The last of the District's Phase 1B schools, **Edward Downer Elementary**, continued under reconstruction during 2006. The major building construction contract at Downer was approved in May. The building is now rising adjacent to the existing campus, with slabs being poured, steel erection underway, and wall framing beginning in earnest. Work will continue throughout 2007 and into 2008 on this project—the largest elementary school in the District.
- Design work was completed and construction was underway on the **Elementary Sitework** projects. These included 8 sites with playgrounds, fields, landscape and hardscape upgrades that were not originally included in the original renovations of the schools.
  - Harding and Stewart projects are nearly complete, with fields at both sites in the "establishment" phase.
  - Riverside is nearly complete, with final irrigation going in at the field.
  - Sheldon, Tara Hills, Bayview and Mira Vista are all just beginning construction at the end of 2006.

- Montalvin Playground upgrades were completed during summer. The second phase of site work at Montalvin is the soccer field reconstruction, which is anticipated to be awarded for construction in 2007.
- Project designs were completed and construction documents reviewed by the Division of State Architect (“DSA”) for the **Community Kitchens**. This group of projects will retrofit the recently completed elementary school projects with small cooking areas for fundraisers and site use.
- **Modular buildings relocation.** The District continued the process of removing modular buildings from the 17 campuses that had completed renovation in the Measure M program. Three staging areas have been developed to receive portables which were on the sites and used previously for classrooms or which were part of the transitional housing at the site during construction. The last phase of this relocation is the OPSC portables which will be moving from Tara Hills to the Parr Blvd. site.

#### **Measure D Secondary Projects.**

- **El Cerrito High School.** Work continued on the reconstruction of El Cerrito High School. The major building construction contract was let in August. Work on grading and utility infrastructure was underway during the year and completed by the end of summer. Plans for the new auditorium, a part of the administration/library building, were finalized and being reviewed by DSA.
- **Pinole Middle School.** Work on Pinole Middle School project proceeded after delays due to geotechnical issues associated with the original location of the proposed new gym building. Construction of the site grading package was completed. The contract for construction of the new gym and classroom buildings was awarded in November.
- **Helms Middle School.** Plans for the Helms Middle School reconstruction were finalized and submitted to DSA for review. Work continued under Department of Toxic Substances Control (“DTSC”) oversight on the review of the underground contamination at the Helms site. The draft Preliminary Endangerment Assessment (“PEA”) was completed. It is anticipated that DTSC will issue a “no further action” letter in December to allow for construction to begin at Helms.
- **Portola Middle School.** The Portola Middle School project, has been delayed and now redirected, continued to be a major issue for the District’s facilities program. Staff continued to work with the engineering team on response to the earthquake-induced landslide hazard at the site. DSA has provided its concurrence letter regarding the presence of the geohazard and the need to correct this student safety issue. Staff has begun the Hardship Application process with the state’s Office of Public School Construction (“OPSC”). Dr. Harter has initiated the public process for input and review of potential sites for a middle school in El Cerrito to replace Portola. It is anticipated that a decision on the new campus will be made in early 2007.
- **Secondary Track and Field Projects.** The District continued the renovation of high school track and field projects during 2006. Pinole Valley High School, the first project to be completed, had repairs to the track installation finalized in spring. Construction began at Richmond HS during late summer. Work at that site is nearly complete, with the soccer team using the field for the start of the season in November. Kennedy HS started construction in fall

2006 and is anticipated to be complete by spring 2007. Designs for the DeAnza track and field project are being finalized and will be bid out in early 2007 for construction.

- **Vista Hills Education Center** started construction in late summer of 2006. This alternative secondary + staff development site was approved by the Board as an additional Measure D project. Throughout 2006 District staff worked on designs to accommodate the Alternative School, and a variety of District administrative program functions. It is anticipated that work will be complete on the project in early 2007.

### **Measure J Implementation**

- **Phase I Elementary Projects.** Castro, Dover, Ford, King and Nystrom began the Programming and Master Planning process in 2006. By the end of the year it is anticipated that the Master Plans for Ford and King will be approved by the Board. Planning is continuing at the other elementary sites. Castro site is being considered as a part of the Portola/El Cerrito Middle School relocation process. Nystrom has a complex site planning process underway with the City of Richmond and other groups which is taking additional time to resolve. Dover planning started later than the other schools with the architectural team and site facilities committee close to conclusion on an approach for this campus.
- **The DeAnza High School Reconstruction** project continued Master Planning during 2006. A series of community meetings was held during spring to review proposed reconstruction plans and elicit input from the surrounding community and site. An overall preferred Master Plan, which involves the complete demolition and reconstruction of the campus has been developed by the architects. Unfortunately, the project cost for this approach is substantially higher than the budget. Staff and the architects are developing a renovation option for Board consideration. It is anticipated that this project Master Plan will be approved in December.

### **VIII. Conclusions**

Members of the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee encourage your comments regarding and your support for the most significant construction program in the District's history. We are proud of all that has been accomplished through 2006 because of voter support. The successes (and struggles!) teach us a great deal each year. But we should never lose sight of our mission to educate and care for our children – and support the wellbeing of our community.

Prepared for review by: William Savidge, District Engineering Officer and Submitted by the CBOC Audit Sub-Committee: David Duer, Maureen Toms.