

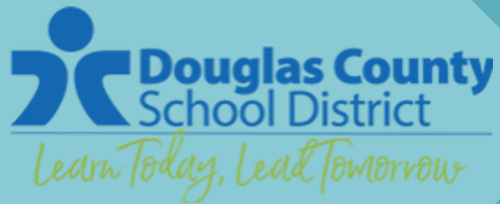
Mill Bond Exploratory Ad Hoc Committee

Final Presentation to the DCSD Board of Education

Sandra Brownrigg

Brad Geiger

June 7, 2022



Findings

Urgent, Demonstrable Needs



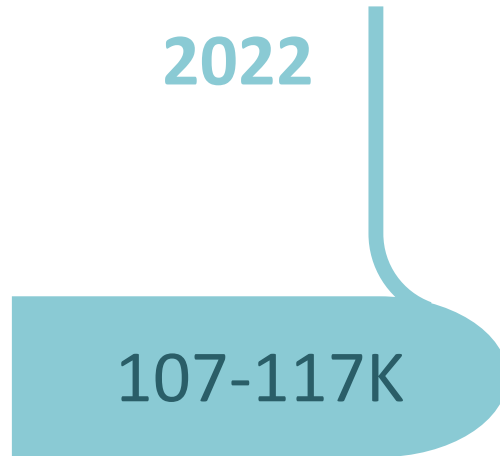
The demonstrated financial needs and commitments of the District are **so significant** that seeking additional funds from the voters in the near future is **vital** to the success of our current and future students and staff.

Feasibility Hinges on Prioritizing Community Outreach

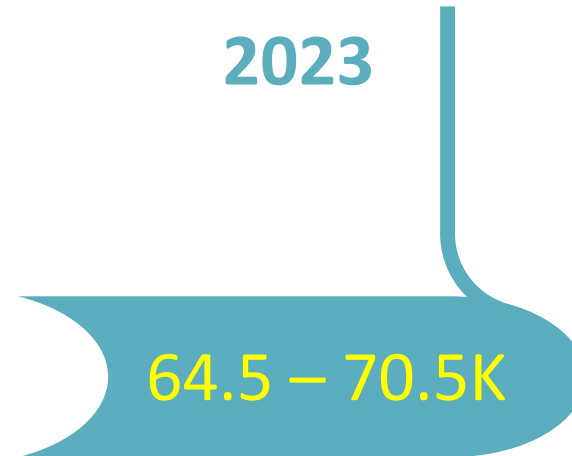
A successful Mill Levy Override (MLO) and/or Bond issue on the November 2022 ballot is **only** feasible if the District, Board and building leadership **make funding the top priority**, creating and executing a well-resourced, unified, strategic plan for community outreach.

The End Goal

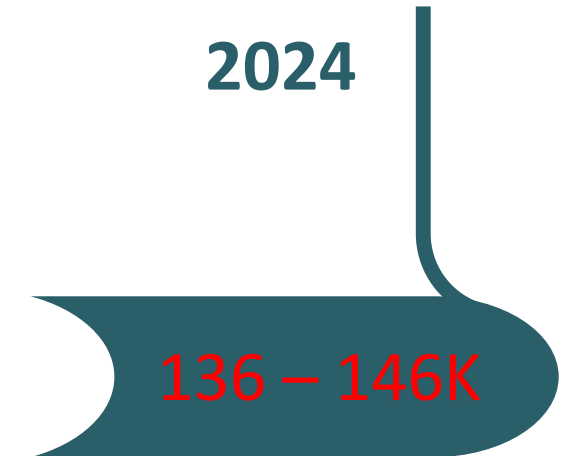
“YES” Voting Targets for the MLO and Bond Issues are:



- Short planning and campaigning window
- Gubernatorial election
- Inflation and economic factors



- DCSD BOE election
- Property revaluations
- Inflation and economic factors
- City and municipality ballot initiatives likely



- Presidential election

*Note: Estimates extrapolated from historical Douglas County voter turnout and registered voters
(Source: Colorado Secretary of State)*



MBEC Membership

Who We Talked To

Received Presentations From:

- Bond Financing (Kate Kotaska, Chief Financial Officer, DCSD; Hilltop Securities, Bond Consultants)
- Community Outreach (Stacy Rader)
- Erin Kane, Superintendent
- Property Taxes (Lisa Frizell, Douglas County Assessor)
- Finance (Kate Kotaska, CFO and Colleen Doan,)
- Operations and Capital Needs (Andy Abner and Rich Cosgrove)
- Presentations from members of the FOC, LRPC, MBOC
- Charter Application Review Team (CART) (Gordon Mosher)
- Campaign Priorities/Lessons Learned (Jake Meuli, Bright Futures for Douglas County Kids)
- Reaching Across the Political Aisle (Angela Thomas, chair, Douglas County Democrats and Andy Jones, former vice chair, Douglas County Republicans)

Outreach and Connection To:

- Outreach to/Polling of Parent/Teacher Organizations (PTOs) and School Accountability Committees (SACs)
- Focus Groups
- Church groups
- Neighborhood groups
- Political gatherings
- Outreach to Community Leaders
 - Political leadership, both Democrats and Republicans
 - Leadership of Bright Futures for Douglas County Kids
- Board of Education Advisory Committees

Data Collection and Analysis From:

- State and local polling from 2016 - present
- Surveys
- Voting info from the 2018 bond/mill
- Data from the school district

What We Found

Key Positives

- Strong support for increased compensation for teachers and staff
- Vital teacher support is available and will persuade community members to support funding
- Community outreach has commenced and is persuasive
- There is support for a multi partisan campaign committee despite the current polarized environment
- Recent negative media coverage can be modified
- Specific ballot language is preferred

Key Negatives

- Transparency and trust in the BOE and district remain concerns
- Tax Increases may not be favored in the current economic climate
- Upcoming property assessment Increase can affect support
- Political polarity nationwide and locally makes messaging more challenging
- Generic ballot language is discouraged



Findings

Budget Information

Since the 2018 Bond, The DCSD growth in year over year General Fund Expenses has exceeded the growth in General Fund Revenues

Projected DCSD General Fund Budget for:	<u>2022/2023</u> 2023/2024	show salaries and benefits increasing by:	<u>\$28M</u> \$37.6M	Resulting in a net loss of:	<u>\$9.8M</u> \$8.1M
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Inflation Information

Inflation exceeded the salary and benefit increase in 2020/2021 and is projected to exceed it in 2021/2022

The Good News

The community clearly supports District priorities

	Percent Extremely or Very Important
Attracting and retaining quality teachers and staff by increasing district salaries to be more competitive with neighboring districts	92%
Increasing availability of student programming in career and technical education	93%
Updating and repairing school buildings to continue providing safe, efficient, quality learning environments for students and staff	92%
Enhancing safety and security resources	94%
Constructing new neighborhood elementary schools and creating additions to existing neighborhood middle schools to reduce crowding in existing schools	77%

Source: New Bridge Strategies Public Opinion Poll;

May 6-12, 2022; N=400

MBEC Research, Polling and Focus Group Results

DATA COMING SOON

MBEC Research, Polling and Focus Group Results

DATA COMING SOON

The Bad News

The community does not yet support funding to address the needs.

- Less than 50% rate District performance an A or B.
- Less than 50% indicate they will vote for funding in November.

The Bad News

Support for funding has significantly declined since 2016

	2016	2018	% CHANGE FROM 2016-2018	2022	% CHANGE FROM 2018-2022
Bond	48%	59%	+11%	36%	-24%
MLO	60%	66%	+6%	39%	-27%
Democrats	78%			57%	
Republicans	51%			27%	
Unaffiliated	60%			42%	
Parents	70%			48%	
Non-Parents	52%			33%	

Sources: DCSD polling by Lori Weigel, Public Opinion Strategies and New Bridge Strategy, 2016 (n=500); 2018 (n=400); and 2022(n=400)

Statewide Survey Puts DCSD Community Sentiment in Context

DATA COMING SOON

Statewide Context

School districts throughout the state are facing challenges.

- Less than 50% rate District performance an A or B.
- Less than 50% indicate they will vote for funding in November.

Opportunities

- The size of the mill levy override or bond does not affect support.
- There is a substantial persuadable group of potential supporters.
- Additional information and education changes minds.

The Good News

The District presentation is persuasive.

After hearing the District presentation, people are **highly likely** to vote yes for funding

Superintendent Kane's Exit Survey Results

Based on the information you heard today, how likely would you be able to vote "yes" on a Mill Levy Override or Bond for DCSD?



Source: DCSD exit surveys from leadership presentations to staff and community” April and May, 2022; N=160

Current District activities

The District is already engaged in community outreach and stakeholder identification, outreach and training.

January and February

- Staff presents initial funding needs/challenges to BoE
- BoE Votes to form Mill Bond Exploratory Ad-hoc Committee
- Staff presents 2021-22 Master Capital Plan and Priority Capital Needs to BoE

Current District activities

The District is already engaged in community outreach and stakeholder identification, outreach and training.

April

- Draft presentation presented to BoE for feedback
- Funding Challenges Presenter Kit/Materials Sent to District leadership team, BoE, Board committees, Foundation Board
- Principals begin presenting to staff, PTOs and SACs
- Presentation training to school and department leaders

May

- Superintendent Funding Challenges Presentations Begin (district presentations to continue through August)
- Presentation training to BoE Members, Board committees
- Initial feasibility polling

Upcoming District activities

The District is already engaged in community outreach and stakeholder identification, outreach and training.

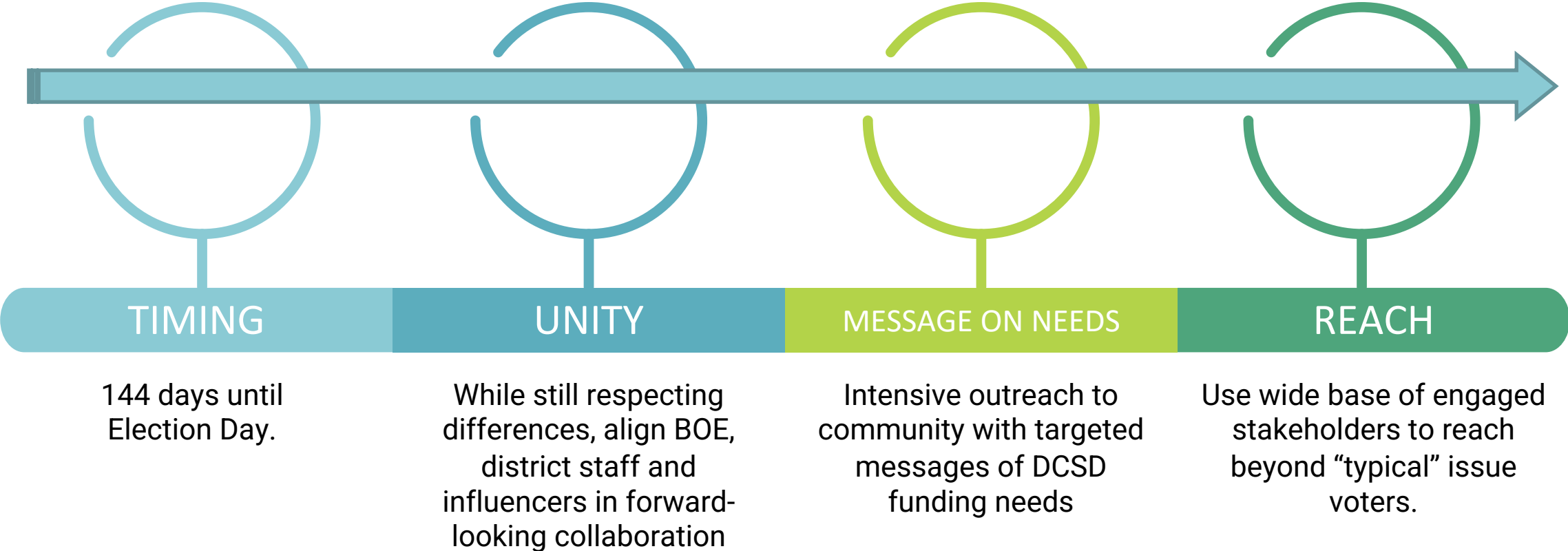
- Deploy Director of Parent, Community and Civic Engagement to facilitate our summer outreach work
- BoE and executive leadership continue presentations to major external groups
- Help coordinate/engage volunteers and train ambassadors • Release video messaging to staff and community
- Be present at community events over the summer
- Host at least three virtual town halls in late June
- Facilitate Board of Education editorial(s)
- Media Outreach



Recommendations

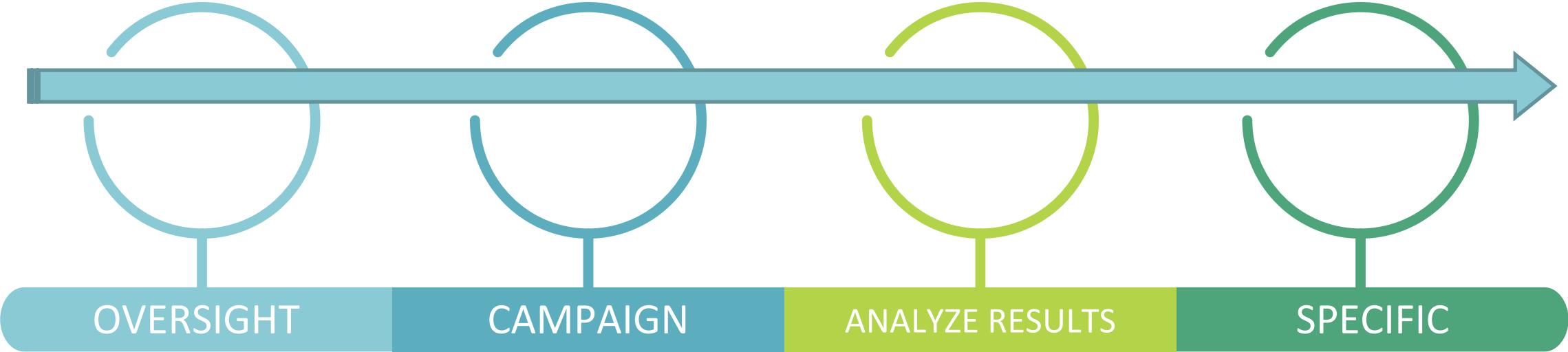
Recommendations to the BOE (1)

Pursue MLO and Bond in 2022



Recommendations to the BOE (2)

Pursue MLO and Bond in 2022



OVERSIGHT

Review, and if necessary, revise community oversight policies of taxpayer funds contemporaneous with the campaign.

CAMPAIGN

Educate the community primarily through a community campaign committee, to focus on issues and needs of the District.

ANALYZE RESULTS

Keep centralized records of outreach and analyze results critically, to provide rubric for future funding efforts.

SPECIFIC

Ballot language must be specific to build transparency and trust and the bond plan must be detailed and public

Community Engagement is Critical

Continue sustained community connection and stakeholder identification, outreach and training.

It is vital that all elements of the district and supporters of the district participate immediately in robust community engagement, including specific outreach to:

- District citizens without school-age children
- Unaffiliated voters
- Traditional supporters of education funding
- Center-right voters and groups thought to be opposed to additional funding

Mobilize Essential, Influential Stakeholders

- Principals
- Teachers
- District and Board Committee Members
- Business Leaders
- Political Leaders
- SAC and PTO Leadership

Emphasize Community Involvement

Clear community oversight builds trust

- Include community involvement as a well-thought-out, major plank in future strategic plan.
- Review current procedures and establish policy to ensure open and transparent financial oversight, which includes involvement of citizen committees as well as appropriate professional review.
- Build trust with the community by listening to and carefully considering feedback provided by the committees.
- Develop and publish spending plan, available to the public on the District's website prior to the vote, that includes an easily understandable change management process so the plan can evolve to match changing circumstances.



Worst Case:
Delayed is not Denied

District Challenges if the MLO or Bond Do Not Pass

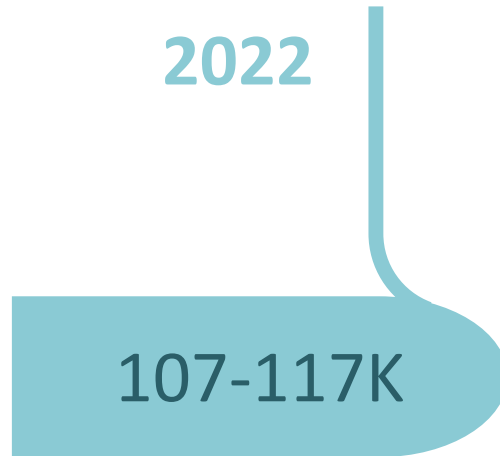
- Without increased funding for competitive compensation the district will need to find other methods to retain and recruit qualified teachers and other staff. Reductions in force may be necessary.
- The District will continue to use operating funds to meet only the most critical maintenance needs in its current buildings and will be limited its ability to provide safety and security upgrades.
- Without community anchor neighborhood schools in high-growth areas other options such as longer bus rides to crowded schools that are not in the students' immediate community will be necessary. Reliance on charter school expansion may be required

Regardless of when funding passes...

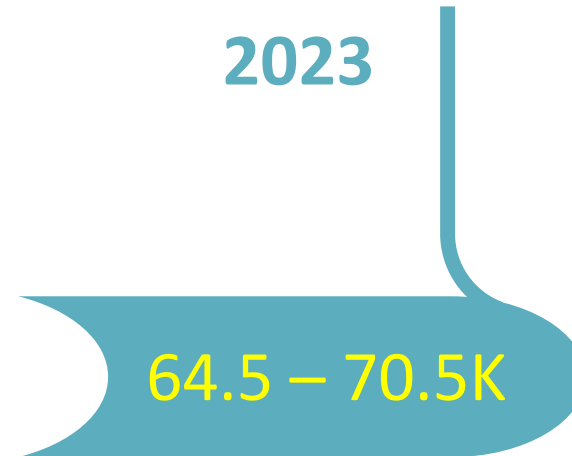
- Continue to engage the community in ongoing outreach and education
- Continue to gather, examine, and analyze data to gauge community support
- Conduct regular focus groups to evaluate public understanding of the District's needs and the factors that may impede support
- Engage further with the public to address the needs and concerns of voters by creating an ongoing standing subcommittee of the FOC, LRPC, DAC, and MBOC to accomplish the following:
 - Continue to explore feasibility and the needs for additional funding
 - Collaborate with Communications on outreach to educate the community about the District's needs, operations, and long-term objectives
 - Provide an annual report on feasibility issues

The End Goal

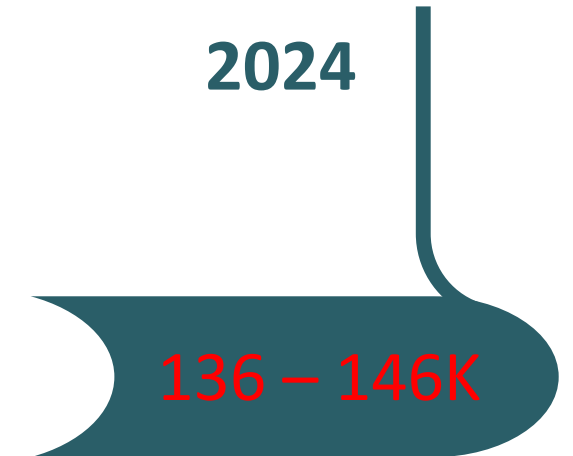
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Overall Finding

A successful Mill Levy Override (MLO) and/or Bond issue on the November 2022 ballot is **only** feasible if the District, Board and building leadership **make funding the top priority**, creating and executing a well-resourced, unified, strategic plan for community outreach.

Prioritize ongoing community outreach, education and connection.

If time does not allow us to pass funding this year, continue to unify the community and place funding on the ballot in 2023.



Questions