

First 5 LA Strategic Planning for 2015–2020: Focusing for the Future Webinar FAQ

April 21, 2014

Q1. Will the webinar presentation be posted online?

A. Yes, the webinar slides and audio recording are available on the [First 5 LA Strategic Planning webpage](#).

Q2. What are the five geographies for the community input sessions? Do the geographies align to the SPAs?

A. The specifics of the geographies are not yet finalized, although we anticipate sessions in the northern, southern, eastern, western, central areas of the county. The geographies will not necessarily align to the SPAs. More information will be shared about the community input sessions in the coming weeks. Please check the [First 5 LA Strategic Planning webpage](#) for more details as the process moves forward.

Q3. Please clarify how the levers were developed, how they will be used, and how they will be approved. Are these pre-determined "categories" that are presented to the Board, and then the Board decides where on the continuum you want to land? Or did the Board pick these various categories?

Q4. What process will be used to determine which key lever to use to most effectively advance the Strategic Imperative with the needed accountability?

Q5. Can you give an example of how you might see a conclusion to the lever input? For instance, one of the levers is about prevention versus intervention. Are you expecting that the input will ultimately help give a specific percentage such as 40% of First 5 LA funds should go to prevention and 60% for intervention? Is that an example of how this works? Therefore, when we give input, we should express the percentage of effort to be given on each lever?

A. On April 10, 2014, the Board of Commissioners endorsed a [Strategic Imperative](#) to anchor the strategic planning process, which is to:

- Maximize return on the Commission's future investments to achieve mission and greatest possible impact for children 0–5 and their families

- Determine a clear, well-defined focus for First 5 LA
- Align goals to long-term financial projections and strategy

First 5 LA will advance its [Strategic Imperative](#) by articulating positions on 6 key levers for impact. The [Strategic Imperative](#) and the 6 key levers were identified by and emerged through the Listening, Learning, and Leading effort as well as other data collection and learning conducted in the past year. The levers reflect critical decision points that First 5 LA must address to refine our focus and role to best achieve our mission. They are:

- Upstream (Promotion) → Downstream (Intervention)
- Going Broad → Going Deep
- Growing Local Models → Leveraging Evidence-Based Models
- Single Impact Approaches → Multiple Impacts
- Go It Alone → Start with Partnership Opportunity
- Direct Services → Systems and Policy Change

Positions for each lever can fall along a continuum. The intent is not for the Commission to necessarily choose one far end of each continuum or to specify percentages of First 5 LA investments relative to a specific point on each continuum. Rather, home positions on each continuum indicate how First 5 LA will operate most of the time and provide a frame for future decisions in the strategic planning process, including goals, outcomes, role, and strategy.

The levers were introduced at the [April 10, 2014 Board of Commissioners meeting](#). At the April 24, 2014 Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners and Program & Planning Committee meeting (Item 10), the levers will be discussed in more depth through extended small group discussions. The anticipated outcome of this meeting is directional endorsement of home positions on each lever as well as identification of important considerations for applying the levers to future decision-making.

Once home positions are identified, the levers can serve as tools or filters that First 5 LA can use to ground future decision-making and advance its Strategic Imperative to achieve greater impact, focus and sustainability.

Q6. Is it true that First 5 LA is moving away from direct services for underserved families and communities and focusing more on a broad policy approach for LA County?

- A. As noted in the 6 key levers to advance the [Strategic Imperative](#), the continuum of direct services-to systems and policy change is an important area of consideration for First 5 LA. Where First 5 LA falls on this continuum and under what circumstances will be determined by the Board of Commissioners.

Many factors, such as, financial sustainability, participant versus population-level impact, and others, will be considered as the Board engages in discussions and makes decisions on where and how First 5 LA invests resources anchored by the [Strategic Imperative](#).

Q7. How do accumulated reserves need to be spent and how does that impact sustainability? Do reserves add to the amount to be spent down monthly, and how is reserve spending budgeted?

- A. In First 5 LA's early years, the agency accumulated a significant amount of unspent funds which contributed to a large fund balance. However, as reflected in the [Long Term Financial Projections](#) approved in February 2014 by the Board of Commissioners, First 5 LA expenditures have exceeded our revenue since FY 2008-08, requiring the agency to tap its fund balance to cover annual expenditures. Currently, nearly 80% of our fund balance is committed through multi-year allocations approved by the Board as well as through our FY 2013-14 appropriations. The new First 5 LA Governance Guidelines, approved in March 2014, specify that First 5 LA's multi-year investments will end pursuant to the timeline of the award. As outlined in the [Long Term Financial Projections](#), when factoring in the projected close out of several investments, our fund balance will still decrease by 65% by June 2018. Because our current rate of spending is not sustainable, our fund balance cannot be relied upon to support spending in the long term. The Strategic Planning process will determine First 5 LA's future direction as we transition to a more sustainable spending portfolio.

Q8. Are there efforts to find new fund sources beyond the tobacco tax?

- A. As outlined in the [Strategic Imperative](#), we must "align our goals to our long-term financial projections and strategy." The Commission recognizes that the long-term financial projections reflect the Proposition 10 tobacco tax as our revenue source, which is declining annually. As part of the strategic planning process, the Commission will discuss First 5 LA's financial strategy in addition to its programmatic strategy. Such discussions could include consideration of strategies to expand revenues beyond Proposition 10's tobacco tax revenue. .

Q9. When will the levers be discussed by the Board?

- A. The levers were introduced at the [April 10, 2014 Board of Commissioners meeting](#), and at the April 24, 2014 Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners and Program & Planning Committee meeting, the levers will be discussed in more depth. This is slated as [Item 10](#) on the April 24th meeting agenda. Throughout the Strategic Planning process, our Program & Planning Committee meetings will be held from 12pm to 5pm. The strategic plan discussions will begin at 2pm.

Q10. Are you requesting local models to be submitted?

- A. Throughout the planning process, we encourage external stakeholders to participate through First 5 LA's public meetings and community input opportunities. As of the April 21 webinar, we are not yet requesting specific information about models, programs, or strategies. However, such information may be required as the process moves forward. Please continue to check the

[First 5 LA Strategic Planning webpage](#) for information about input opportunities.