



San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Advisory Committee

**Recommendations from the Advisory Committee to the Governing Board on
Next Steps to Advance Measure AA Projects in Benefit of Economically
Disadvantaged Communities**

December 6, 2019

The following is a set of ten near-term recommendations from the Advisory Committee (AC) to the Governing Board regarding next steps to advance Measure AA projects that benefit Economically Disadvantaged Communities (EDCs) for the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (Authority). These recommendations were initially developed by an ad hoc subcommittee and presented to the AC at its meeting of October 11, 2019. Through discussion at the meeting, this revised list of near-term recommendations was developed and agreed upon; discussion and action of other longer-term recommendations will occur at the AC meeting on December 13, 2019.

While near-term is defined by a specific timeline for implementation of six to twelve months, the timing of implementation is dependent by the Governing Board's priorities and/or Authority staff capacity. However, there is a shared sense of urgency by the ad hoc subcommittee to deliver on Measure AA public commitment of prioritizing projects that benefit EDCs; and a shared strong commitment by the Governing Board and the AC to also advance environmental justice in the Bay Area.

The Advisory Committee commends the Governing Board for its insight and leadership in commissioning a community-based assessment to integrate racial and environmental justice into the Authority's operation over the life of Measure AA, which ushered the voices of marginalized community members and environmental justice leaders.

Recommendations

The AC recommends that the Governing Board approve the following near-term actions (six to twelve months) and direct staff to develop an Implementation Plan that identifies objectives and tasks with specific timelines.

1.1 Adopt Guiding Principles of Building Trust and Fostering Partnerships:

- Build trust with community-based organizations and economically disadvantaged communities.
 - Any grantee receiving funding from Measure AA should be responsible for trust and community building.
 - Trust building should be prioritized over capacity building, which may be better accomplished by project applicants.
- Foster partnerships between community-based organizations and local government and/or

project implementing entities.

1.2 Request a Letter of Inquiry prior to submitting grant application.

The Authority will allow prospective applicants for grant funding the opportunity to submit a letter of inquiry to determine if the proposed project is ready for funding and would make a strong application. If a project is not determined to have the basis for a strong application, the Authority will have the opportunity to provide feedback and guidance on how the project could become a better candidate for funding.

1.3 Conduct community outreach workshops for prospective applicants.

Offer community workshops for community-based organizations to inquire about application process and implementation expectations (intended outcomes).

1.4 Amend scoring criteria to show stronger nexus/relationships with EDCs.

- Incorporate social and racial justice principles into required criteria.
- Add specific scoring criteria for applicants to demonstrate that proposed projects have local community support and/or to demonstrate engagement with EDCs.
- Community workshops to be explicitly required in the grant application to demonstrate engagement with communities and support for proposed project.
- Go beyond applicants demonstrating their projects are adjacent to EDCs.

1.5 Visit economically disadvantaged communities residing along the bay shoreline with the Governing Board, Advisory Committee, and Authority staff to better understand issues and potential opportunities.

1.6 Examine the feasibility to extend compensation to community members and leaders for their participation and contribution.

1.7 Create a document with a basic template of what's expected of applicants with examples of what a competitive proposal looks like and how to implement the scoring criteria in order to help clarify eligibility requirements.

1.8 Create an application checklist for the applicants with a roadmap/blueprint of what they need to have ready in order to fulfill the grant criteria written in plain and accessible language.

1.9 Simplify language and phrasing in Measure AA communications materials. Phrasing and language of Measure AA can discourage smaller agencies and organizations from applying. The language needs to be concise and more inclusive.

1.10 Enter all funded and potential EDC projects into EcoAtlas as a project hub. Once these projects can be visualized, it will be easier to see if and how these projects can be consolidated or integrated with other bigger projects to achieve a higher level of benefits on a watershed scale.

Background

Measure AA states, “The Authority shall give priority to projects that...benefit economically disadvantaged communities,” or EDCs, which are defined by the Grant Guidelines as:

“An economically disadvantaged community (EDC) is defined as a community with a median household income less than 80% of the area median income (AMI). Within this set of low-income communities, communities of particular concern include those that: are historically underrepresented in environmental policymaking and/or projects, bear a disproportionate environmental and health burden, are most vulnerable to climate change impacts due to lack of resources required for community resilience, or are severely burdened by housing costs, increasing the risk of displacement.”

While the current Grant Guidelines also provide a description of benefits to EDCs and a performance metric to track percentage of projects providing benefits to EDCs was adopted by the Governing Board on September 21, 2018, the AC formed a Community Engagement / EDC Ad Hoc Subcommittee on October 5, 2018 to:

- Define actions in the form of recommendations that will meet Measure AA goal of prioritizing projects that benefit EDCs;
- Serve in an advisory capacity to the equity consultant commissioned to conduct a community-based assessment report to screen ideas as well as review findings and recommendations in advance of the Advisory Committee;
- Screen all body work for “mission creep”, to avoid overburdening community-based organizations and to avoid recreating the mistakes from the past.

Scope & Methods of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on EDCs

The Advisory Committee defined the scope of work for the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Economically Disadvantaged Communities (Subcommittee) as prioritizing projects that benefit EDCs. The recommendations above were developed through the review of several documents and practices including an Authority-commissioned equity-focused community-based assessment (CBA Report) entitled *Establishing an Equity and Community Engagement Program that Benefits Economically Disadvantaged Communities*. The CBA Report was distributed to AC members in digital format in advance of the October 11, 2019 AC meeting.

The Subcommittee took on the following tasks from October 2018 to October 1, 2019 based on the scope of work identified by the AC:

- Reviewed the feedback and recommended actions presented by the Environmental Justice Panel and follow-up document prepared by Authority staff with input from AC members.
- Met to develop near-term recommendations on most pressing needs (i.e., for the upcoming third grant round) and define the Subcommittee’s role of screening the consultant’s ideas prior to presenting them to the AC.
- Reviewed a draft of the CBA Report.
- Met to review best practices from others, including the Greenlining Institute, Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), and Portland Metro Parks; hear a presentation by the

equity consultant on the CBA Report and discuss the findings; and rank the CBA recommendations based on feasibility and impact through a mapping exercise.

- Met for a working session to screen recommendations for consistency with the Authority's mission, identify gaps, and solicit priorities.
- Conducted an online survey to better understand priorities, identify gaps, and categorize recommendations with respect to timing (near-term, short-term and long-term).
- Reviewed, coalesced, and prioritized ideas to develop recommendations.

For more information see, [Report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Recommendations to Benefit Economically Disadvantaged Communities](#).