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I. Introduction

This document outlines the approach planned by the Public Information Officer (PIO) of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (Authority), with input from the Advisory Committee's Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Communications, to inform and involve the public and stakeholders as Measure AA taxes and funds from any future measures or authorizations are collected and awarded to restoration projects around the Bay. The goals of the plan and principles guiding its implementation are discussed. The plan lists key audiences and key messages; outlines the package of outreach tools and strategies, and outreach evaluation methods that will be undertaken; and it lays out roles and responsibilities and a general work plan for the effort.

II. Goal

To use effective and inclusive communications practices to broaden awareness of the Authority's work, impact and grant program.

III. Background

Since the passage of Measure AA in 2016, the work of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority has ramped up while public awareness of the Clean and Healthy Bay campaign, so intensely promoted during the run-up to the election, has subsided. Consistent and effective communications about our role in Bay restoration helps to reconnect voters with what they supported years ago, taxpayers with the \$12 charge they see every year, and Bay Area decision makers with the important work of the Authority.

IV. Outreach Goals

- **Educate the Public about the Authority's Work and the Benefits of Restoration:** Amplify the message that "Restoration is Working" and provides benefits for people and wildlife, maintaining gratitude to Bay Area voters. Highlight projects that are underway and what they are expected to achieve; demonstrate the benefits that Measure AA is providing to communities, underscored by the threat of rising seas and the race against time to get this work done.
- **Show Accountability and Good Governance:** Expand awareness and ensure transparency about the Authority's grant management and oversight structure. Show the voters that funds are being spent effectively and in conformance with legal requirements.

- **Build Awareness among Potential Grantees:** Let potential grantees know this funding source exists and will be available for at least 20 years. This provides time to build capacity among groups that are not yet experienced in grant management.
- **Educate Elected Officials about the Need for Additional Funds.** Keep a high profile among elected officials to foster understanding and support for future funding measures and appropriations.

V. Resources

To deliver the activities outlined in this plan, the Authority can draw upon:

- The Authority PIO¹, currently budgeted at 12% of a full-time equivalent (FTE) staff position
- Other Authority staff, all of whom work only part-time on the Authority and none of whom have communications and outreach included in their assigned duties
- The Advisory Committee members, as their time allows
 - The resources of their parent organizations when appropriate
- The Governing Board, to be deployed when strategically necessary as the public faces and strategic leaders of the Authority
- Annual communications and outreach budget of approximately \$25,000 (subject to change each year)

VI. Audiences

Major categories of interested and/or potentially affected stakeholders include:

External Stakeholders

- Existing and potential grantees
 - Non-profit organizations – wildlife & habitat restoration, environmental justice, recreation & public access
 - Tribes
 - Cities
 - Counties
 - Bayshore Landowners
- Bay Area taxpayers

¹ The PIO of the State Coastal Conservancy provides PIO services to the Authority under the Conservancy's joint powers agreement with the Authority.

- Media (as a conduit of information and as an influencer of public opinion)
- Shoreline cities
 - Residents
 - Planners
 - Elected officials
- Local government
 - Elected officials & staff
- State elected officials & staff
- Federal elected officials & staff
- Federal, state and regional regulators
- Economically Disadvantaged Communities (EDCs)²
 - Community Leaders
 - Community-based organizations
- Business organizations, owners and employees
 - Business community: Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Bay Area Council
- Foundations

VII. Key messages and themes

The table below highlights major themes of the Communication Plan and corresponding key messages.

Key Messages	
Theme	Messages
The Bay is for everybody / Sharing our home (with each other, with wildlife)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These are public resources for all to enjoy, these projects benefit everyone. ○ We value living in a beautiful place. ○ “Sharing our home” (with other species). ○ Incorporate environmental justice messages about equitable access to resources, redressing historic injustices, Authority focus on creating opportunities in frontline communities

² EDCs are a communications audience, but they could also be included through a community outreach approach. See attached memo.

Restoration is working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wildlife is coming back to the Bay ○ Communities are being protected from flooding and sea level rise ○ Residents are enjoying these natural spaces ○ Other benefits include providing benefits related to human health, recreation, water quality, and job creation ○ In the race against sea level rise, we have the tools to make our region more resilient. These projects put them into action.
Measure AA and the Authority are achieving restoration outcomes, quickly and efficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measure AA started a <u>new era</u> of restoration in the Bay, with unprecedented long-term, locally sourced, financial stability to enable long-term planning. ○ The Authority is delivering on the commitments made to voters and campaign supporters in 2016 ○ Funding raised by Measure AA is being distributed quickly, efficiently and fairly throughout the region ○ The Authority is an effective, efficient organization with a clear track record of good governance and financial accountability ○ However, more funding will be needed to deliver the full ecological, recreational, water quality and flood protection benefits of a fully restored bay.

VIII. Communications Tools and Channels

The Plan relies on a variety of different tools to keep stakeholders and the broader public informed and engaged in the Authority's work. These tools include:

What	Notes	Audience	Maintained by

Contact Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Authority maintains a contact database for distribution of all electronic material and announcements. This list is comprised of people who have signed up on the Authority's website. The Coastal Conservancy has a database of 3,000+, which can be sorted geographically and could be used to promote Authority events and announcements. The parent organizations of AC members, as well as Board members, may have access to additional contact databases. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission³ (MTC) also maintains a mailing list 	Audiences that are already engaged and invested in the Authority's work (or the work of its partner orgs.)	Self-subscribing. Authority staff can send to Authority mailing list. AC members responsible for access to their orgs' lists
Website	The Authority's website, sfbayrestore.org, is hosted by MTC and was redesigned in 2019. The website is the repository of information about Measure AA and the Authority and where Grant Guidelines and RFP documents are hosted.	Needs to serve a broad audience of people who come to it cold knowing nothing about the Authority as well as grant applicants who need to find info and documents easily	Authority PIO, clerk, grant program manager, MTC
Social Media	The Authority has a Facebook page and Twitter account	Generally aimed at the public; also a useful place to tag other organizations/electeds to show partnership and collaboration	Authority PIO, staff
Webinars	The Authority has hosted a series of webinars, mostly geared towards new Advisory Committee members and prospective grantees	NGOs, cities, counties, landowners, tribes	Authority Staff

³ MTC provides staff services to the Authority under MTC's joint powers agreement with the Authority, including program and project management by the staff of the San Francisco Estuary Partnership and financial management by other MTC staff.

Authority signage	There is a requirement for grantees to install signs acknowledging the Authority's funding at their project sites.	Neighboring communities; users of public space	Authority PIO, project managers
One Pager, Two Pager, As-needed special handouts	There is currently a one-page and two-page overview of the Authority and its work and a one-page FY 2017-2018 Annual Report Summary, as well as as-needed special handouts that have, so far, been produced for meetings with legislators,	Legislators, electeds. Other influencers. Could be event and audience specific	Authority PIO, project managers
Project fact sheets and map	These are now digital first, with a project fact sheet page on the website for each project and interactive map on EcoAtlas	Neighboring communities, stakeholders	Authority PIO
Earned media coverage	The Authority has had good success getting media attention for funded projects in the first round of grants, and an expected drop-off for the second round.	General public, city managers, local gov't	Authority PIO
Paid media	The Authority has budget to sponsor media coverage in OpenRoad, Bay Nature and other publications that reach out target audiences	Voters, the conservation community, potential grantees	Authority PIO, staff
<u>Annual Reports</u>	The Authority produces an Annual Report each year, which is required by Measure AA, is an opportunity to highlight our accomplishments to-	Legislators/electeds, Governing Board, funders, foundations, business	Authority staff and PIO
Microtargeting within communities	For grant awards and project milestones, target specific media and communication channels within communities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local papers - Newsletters from local electeds - Online forums and message boards including NextDoor - Project partner and supporter communication channels 	Voters, taxpayers, local elected	Authority PIO, project managers

Authority Public Meetings	The meetings of the Advisory Committee and Governing Board are public meetings that can be leveraged to bring in new ideas and perspectives	Community-based organizations, community organizers, environmental justice groups	Authority Staff, Committee and Board Chairs
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Partner and Potential Future Channels Not Currently in Use

- Websites of partners, AC parent organizations and grantees
- Social media of partners, AC organizations and grantees
- E-Bulletin newsletter (piggyback on existing newsletters such as San Francisco Bay Joint Venture and/or create Authority newsletter)
- Advertising in targeted media
- Geotargeted online ads, e.g., Google Adwords

IX. Communications Principles

The following principles are designed to keep consistency in our communications practices.

- Communications will be in line with Authority central messaging and endorsements
- Information about how to stay informed about project activities will include sharing:
 - Current contact information
 - How to sign up for email updates
 - Information about links to web-based sources of information
 - Information on how to access important project documents
- Outreach messages and techniques will align with project milestones and schedule and may change depending on the project progress.

X. Risks

As with any communications plan, there are risks and known vulnerabilities.

1. The foremost vulnerability in our current approach is that all of our materials are in English, our meetings are conducted in English without translators available, our grant documents are in English and we have no mechanism to review submittals in any language other than English. The Authority has not currently budgeted for a translation service of materials or at meetings.
2. To engage with the Authority requires the ability to access and use a computer with internet connection; we have not made materials

available offline. Nor have we deliberately applied any accessibility best-practices for people with disabilities to our materials or website.

3. Further, our public meetings are held during the work week and we have not made stipends, childcare or food available to the public.

The barriers to access above are common to many public agencies. Though we are not aware that they have reduced engagement or made us a less effective public body, we can't prove that negative. (See "Further Recommendations" below for more on the Authority's equity work.)

There is also a risk that ineffective communication – saying the wrong thing to the wrong audience – could diminish support for a project or the Authority as a whole. Restoration projects often require a short term or permanent change in land use that could cost communities' support. To counter this, we should consider community support and outreach and engagement planning when reviewing grants.

Bay Area property owners will see the \$12 tax long after they've forgotten the Clean and Healthy Bay campaign; if we do not provide a regular, reliable flow of information on how this money is supporting the region in a way the benefits residents, we could lose voter support by the time the renewal of AA or other funding measures go on the ballot.

XI. Activities, Roles and Responsibilities

Communications activity for the Restoration Authority will be overseen by the Authority's PIO, with staff and members of the Advisory Committee supporting as and when needed and available.

The matrix below indicates lead and participating/assisting roles for various outreach and engagement tools, events and content, including some ideas for engagement that the current level of communications resource cannot support.

Partner Roles and Responsibilities				
Tool or Event	Authority PIO	AC members	Timing	Notes
Website redesign	X		FY 18/19	Complete
Logo update, signage guidance for grantees	X		FY 18/19	Complete and posted on website
Maintain Authority social media account(s)	X		Ongoing	The Authority has a Facebook page and twitter page, maintained by the PIO and Authority staff

Media relations and events	X		Ongoing	
Promote and circulate RFP announcement	X	X	Annually in the Fall	
Hold a webinar and give in-person presentations to describe grant program eligibility requirements and answer questions from grant applicants			Annually in the Fall	The Authority Deputy Program Manager leads these efforts.
Create messaging and material for use by all Authority partners	X		Ongoing	Created a presentation providing an update on the Authority's work to date and grant eligibility criteria and distributed to AC members for their use.
Update one-pagers, fact sheets, project map	X		Ongoing	Created a one-page Annual Report Summary for FY 2017-2018.
Responding to Public Records Act requests	X			Not necessarily strategic, but necessary and should be factored in when considering draws on resources.
Briefings and events with elected officials	X		Ongoing	
Coordination with ABAG/MTC outreach teams	X		As needed	
Bay Day 2019, Earth Day, etc. participation/pop-up tent	X	X	TBD	Host community events or shoreline tours to bring local residents out to learn about wetlands and promote Measure AA funding opportunities
Equity and community engagement plan, policy, practices				NEEDS SEPARATE APPROACH; COMMUNICATIONS CAN SUPPORT THIS WORK BUT CANNOT DRIVE IT. For further discussion if equity effort can/should be rolled into a community outreach plan.
Create calendar of public and community events where the Authority can table or have presence at partner's table		X	TBD	This is a downstream idea; or could be done strategically in constituencies of specific elected officials we need to win over

Create a calendar around key project milestones to schedule times to highlight Measure AA throughout the year as projects are being implemented e.g. ribbon cutting, breach event, public meetings, etc.		X	2019 onwards	
Paid media sponsorship of OpenRoad/Bay Nature/Estuary	X		2020 TBD	Within the Authority's communications and contingency funding, there is resource to sponsor paid media. Paid media gives us editorial control over the output and access to that outlet's audience. NBC's OpenRoad and Bay Nature or Estuary magazines are options to target engaged, conservation-minded voters and create content that can be repurposed across many channels.
Webinar series on Measure AA funded projects to share technical expertise		X	2020 onwards	
Create content calendar of new stories to write for website and social media topics and themes to focus on	TBD	TBD	TDB	This would be a resource-heavy approach, and not one that our current level of staff time could support
Audience survey on messages that resonate			TBD	Test messages with different audiences to see how value of the Authority to the region is changing

XII. Long Term Communications Planning

The activities above are achievable in the short term future. Looking further than three years ahead, the Authority should anticipate:

- Regional polling on Measure AA awareness and attitudes.
- Marking milestones (5 years, 10 years) with publicity blitzes measuring effectiveness – number of projects, number of acres restores, amount of money allocated, etc.

- Piggybacking on regional science updates and reports, legislative hearings and activity.
- Staying flexible and open to new partnerships and considerations as the region changes in the next 20 years

XIII. Evaluation

The success of the Authority's communications work can be measured in a number of ways. Below are some suggestions but these metrics should be brought into alignment with those recommended by the AC's Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Performance Metrics.

- Number of grant applications received each cycle
 - Cross compare where they are from year-on-year to ensure we are reaching all sub-regions of the bay and expanding our engagement with NGOs and agencies serving EDCs
- Number of website visitors
- Audience surveys of recognition of Authority, support of our work, appreciation for wetland habitats
- Awards or other types of recognition (e.g., the Authority won a 2019 Bay Area Metro Award)
- New funding allocations from legislature
- Number of projects delivered

XIV. Further Recommendations

The need for community outreach and engagement has been identified as a key strategy in achieving equity and inclusion of EDCs. This will require sustained effort, a considered strategy and dedicated resources – all of which fall beyond the current scope of the Communications Plan and ability of the Authority PIO.

The Authority contracted with an equity consultant to identify gaps in the Measure AA grant program related to serving and engaging disadvantaged or frontline communities and identify recommendations, opportunities and challenges associated with the Authority's overall approach for integrating racial and environmental justice into its operations. The consultant's report, [Establishing an Equity and Community Engagement Program that Benefits Economically Disadvantaged Communities](#), was completed in September 2019. The Advisory Committee has developed a set of recommendations to the Governing Board regarding next steps to advance Measure AA projects that benefit Economically Disadvantaged Communities, based upon the report and other information about best practices for advancing equity in grant programs. If supported by Governing Board, the implementation of these recommendations should be done in close coordination with communications activities.