



SAN FRANCISCO BAY
RESTORATION AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 28, 2025

TO: Governing Board
San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority

FROM: Amy Hutzler, Executive Officer
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San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority

SUBJECT: Staff's Anticipated Recommendations on Projects to be Considered for Funding in Grant Round 8

This memo provides staff's anticipated recommendations on projects to be considered for funding in Grant Round 8, a summary of the project selection process, and the reviewers' rationales for selection of specific projects in this grant round.

Grant Round 8 Overview

In response to its eighth grant solicitation, which closed on October 4, 2024, the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (Authority) received 17 eligible applications requesting a total of approximately \$40.4 million.

Although the Authority has close to \$24 million available annually for regular grant round projects, community grants, and contingency, about \$13 million is available for Grant Round 8 projects. The amount available for Grant Round 8 is dependent on other funding obligations during the fiscal year. In Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (FY24/25), the Authority authorized \$3 million for the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program Phase 2: Monitoring Implementation; \$25 million for the Newark Baylands Acquisition of which \$4 million would be disbursed in FY 24/25; and encumbered approximately \$3 million to augment grants for the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT). Finally, we are recommending leaving part of the contingency available for unexpected project expenses, as well as anticipated augmentations of grants from previous years.

Staff and members of the Advisory Committee reviewed and scored the Grant Round 8 applications and obtained additional information from applicants, as needed. Based on the process described in detail below, staff developed the following list of eight projects we

anticipate recommending for funding in Grant Round 8 listed in descending order of dollar amount:

- San Francisco Estuary Invasive Spartina Removal and Tidal Marsh Restoration Project – Phase II
- SAFER Bay Project
- McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration
- American Canyon Wetland Restoration and Public Access Project
- Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline Restoration and Flood Management Project
- India Basin Shoreline Park
- Huichica Creek Riparian and Salt Marsh Restoration Project
- Alviso Shoreline Habitat Restoration Project

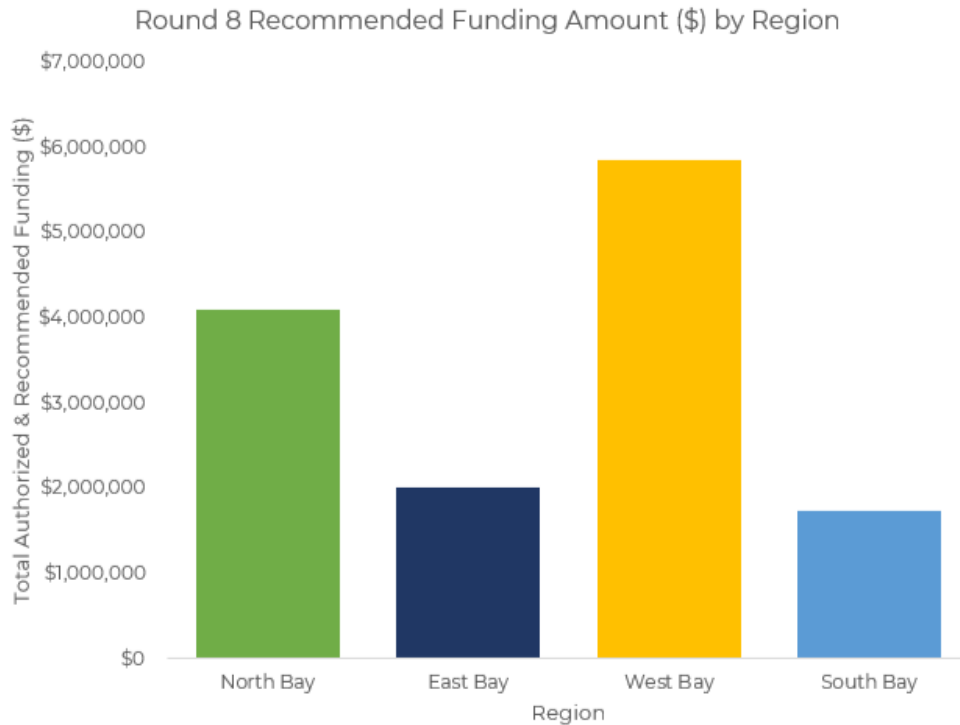
These include five planning projects, and three implementation projects.

Round 8 Project Selection Process

In the evaluation process, staff and Advisory Committee (AC) members reviewed proposals and associated updates based on the Request for Proposal's eligibility criteria, prioritization criteria, and the project's likelihood of success. Evaluation criteria included the extent to which the project would implement multiple goals of Measure AA; whether the project would benefit economically disadvantaged communities; whether the landowner had expressed strong support for the project, if the project proponent is not the landowner; the strength of relationships with community-based organizations or other partners; urgency of the project; and other criteria. Reviewers scored proposals; ranked them as high, medium, or low priority projects; and gave qualitative feedback on strengths and weaknesses of the proposals.

To determine the list of recommended projects that would be presented to the Governing Board, staff began with the quantitative scoring but took many qualitative factors into consideration. Staff had robust discussions with AC reviewers to parse through the strengths and weaknesses of proposals relative to one another. Staff also paid attention to reviewers' priority rankings (high, medium, or low), the geographic distribution of project sites, and the amount of funds available in the current grant round, among other factors.

Regarding geographic distribution of funds, staff are aware of the need to ensure adequate funding for each of the four regions of the Bay. In the North Bay, staff anticipates recommending full funding for two projects and partial funding for one project totaling \$3.5 million. In the East Bay, staff anticipates recommending partial funding for one project for \$1 million. In the West Bay, staff anticipates recommending partial funding for two projects totaling \$4.85 million. In the South Bay, staff anticipates recommending full funding for one project for \$330,730. Staff also anticipate recommending one project that spans all regions for \$4 million (estimated funding divided among the four regions as follows: North \$600,000; East \$1 million; West \$1 million; South \$1.4 million).



Reviewers' evaluation comments are provided to applicants upon request, and staff may suggest other appropriate funding sources for projects that do not receive Authority funds. Some unsuccessful applicants return in a later grant round and submit improved proposals based on Authority feedback.

Rationale for Round 8 Project Selection and Funding Amounts

The applications received in Round 8 and anticipated recommendations for funding amounts are listed in Attachment 1. The rationales for selection of projects and funding recommendations are provided below.

North Bay

- **McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands.** The County of Marin aims to restore up to 30 acres of tidal marsh in southern McInnis Marsh and address subsidence of the McInnis Marsh Main Basin through beneficial reuse of up to 100,000 cubic yards of dredged sediment from a portion of Gallinas Creek. Full funding of the grant request would support planning and permitting for a sensible objective of reusing dredged material from a nearby site to achieve habitat restoration goals.
- **American Canyon Wetland Restoration and Public Access Project.** The City of American Canyon proposes to conduct environmental review, advance design, and initiate permitting of a wetland restoration and public access project along the lower Napa River. The multi-benefit project aims to restore or enhance over 60 acres of wetlands and transitional habitat, raise 1.2 miles of existing Bay Trail for sea level rise resilience, and build a new Bay Water Trailhead. Full funding of the grant request would

help the City of American Canyon build upon planning and feasibility studies, which the Authority helped fund in a prior grant round.

East Bay

- **Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline Restoration and Flood Management Project.** K to College, doing business as SupplyBank.org, aims to restore tidal wetlands, improve flood management, and enhance public access along Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline in Oakland. The project would invest in an economically disadvantaged community, and has support from community members, landowners, and other partners. Partial funding of this grant request would support feasibility studies, design, and permit applications for an acre of tidal marsh restoration and adjacent bioswales, as well as substantial community engagement to help design public access features.

West Bay

- **SAFER Bay Project.** The San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority leads the SAFER Bay Project, which is a multi-jurisdictional, public-private collaboration that aims to advance flood protection, ecosystems, and recreation along the shorelines of Menlo Park and East Palo Alto. The overall project spans 7.5 miles of bay shoreline and would restore approximately 560 acres of former salt ponds to tidal marsh and nearly 450 acres of managed ponds. Building on an Authority grant that supports 30% design of project elements, partial funding of this grant request would support 60% design to move forward restoration and levee design for several ponds within the project site, which would lead to nature-based flood protection for economically disadvantaged communities that are vulnerable to risks of sea level rise.
- **India Basin Shoreline Park.** The City and County of San Francisco Recreation and Park Department proposes to construct a public park that provides new shoreline access, enhances existing shoreline habitat, reduces bay water pollution, and expands Bay Trail in southeast San Francisco. The project is in an economically disadvantaged community and has had broad support and deep engagement with the community over many years. Partial funding of this grant request would support enhancement of a segment of Bay Trail and installation of stormwater bioretention planters.

South Bay

- **Alviso Shoreline Habitat Restoration Project.** Grassroots Ecology proposes to enhance shoreline habitat at a 201-acre site in Alviso, with a focus on improving habitat for the burrowing owl and monarch; and engage young adults and local community members in meaningful opportunities for stewardship, education, and workforce development. Full funding of this grant request would support hands-on stewardship activities, hosted by an organization that is experienced in leading community restoration and building partnerships, including with local community groups.

Multi-Region

- **San Francisco Estuary Invasive Spartina Removal and Tidal Marsh Restoration.** California Invasive Plant Council proposes to restore and protect native wetland habitat

across 70,000 acres in the Bay Area by removing invasive Spartina, revegetating marshes with native plants, building high tide islands as wildlife refugia, and providing workforce development internships. Full funding of this grant request would support Bay-wide coordination among many partners required for the success of this long-standing project to prevent the spread and move towards eradication of invasive Spartina.

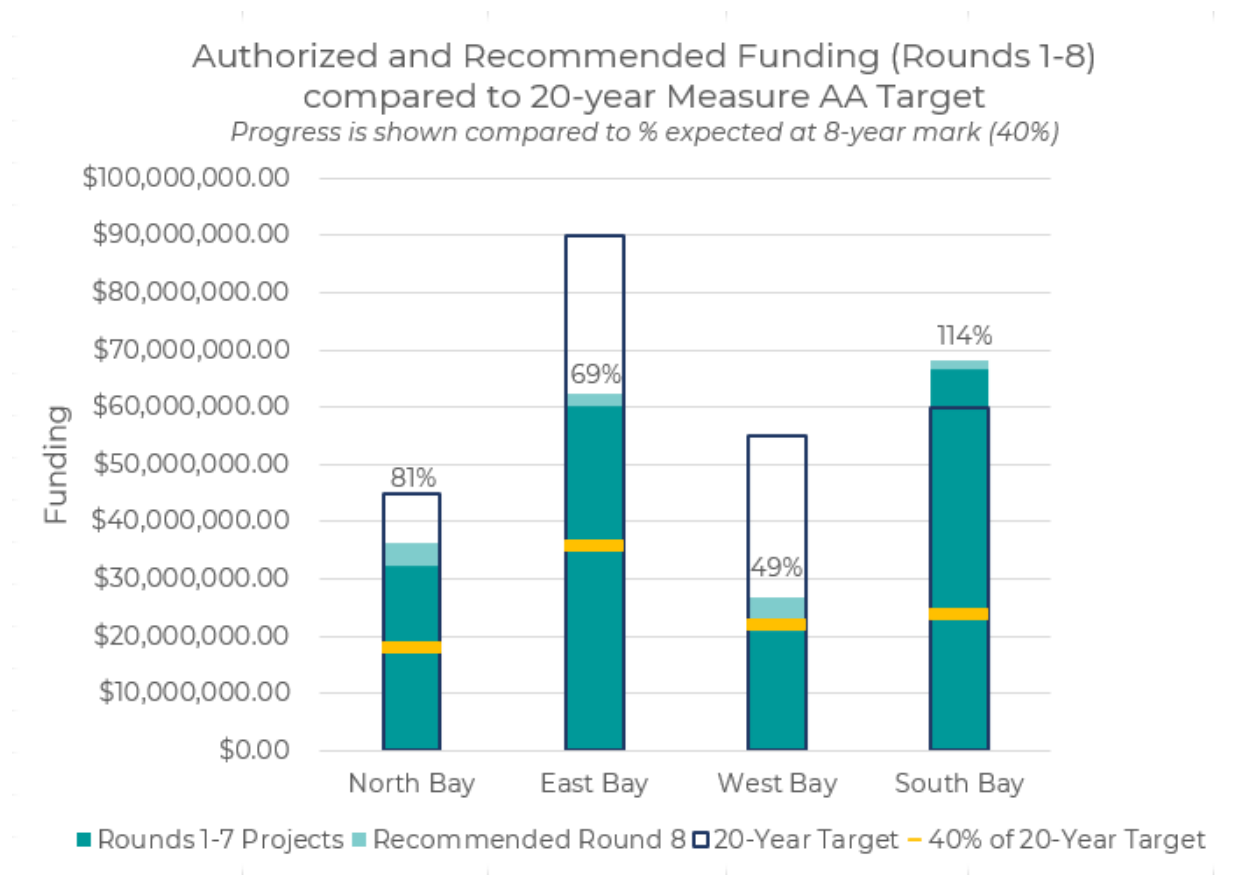
The following sections describe the expected cumulative distribution of funding by region and project phase if the recommended projects are authorized.

Cumulative Distribution by Region

Measure AA requires that revenue be allocated to projects throughout the region, with 50% of funds allocated to the four Bay Area regions in proportion to each region's share of the Bay Area's population, as determined in the 2010 census, and 50% allocated without regard to region. Per this requirement, the minimum percentages that must be allocated to each of the four Bay Area regions are listed below:

- North Bay (Sonoma, Marin, Napa, and Solano Counties) = 9% minimum allocation;
- East Bay (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties) = 18% minimum allocation;
- West Bay (City and County of San Francisco and San Mateo County) = 11% minimum allocation; and
- South Bay (Santa Clara County) = 12% minimum allocation.

Twenty-year targets for minimum allocations were calculated assuming that Measure AA generates roughly \$500 million over 20 years. The table and chart below show progress toward these targets. Funding for the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team Project is not included in the regional totals because it is a special project focused on permitting. The grant of \$4,000,000 for the San Francisco Estuary Invasive Spartina Removal and Tidal Marsh Restoration Project is divided among the four regions as follows, based on the estimated level of effort in each region: North 15%, East 25%, West 25%, South 35%.



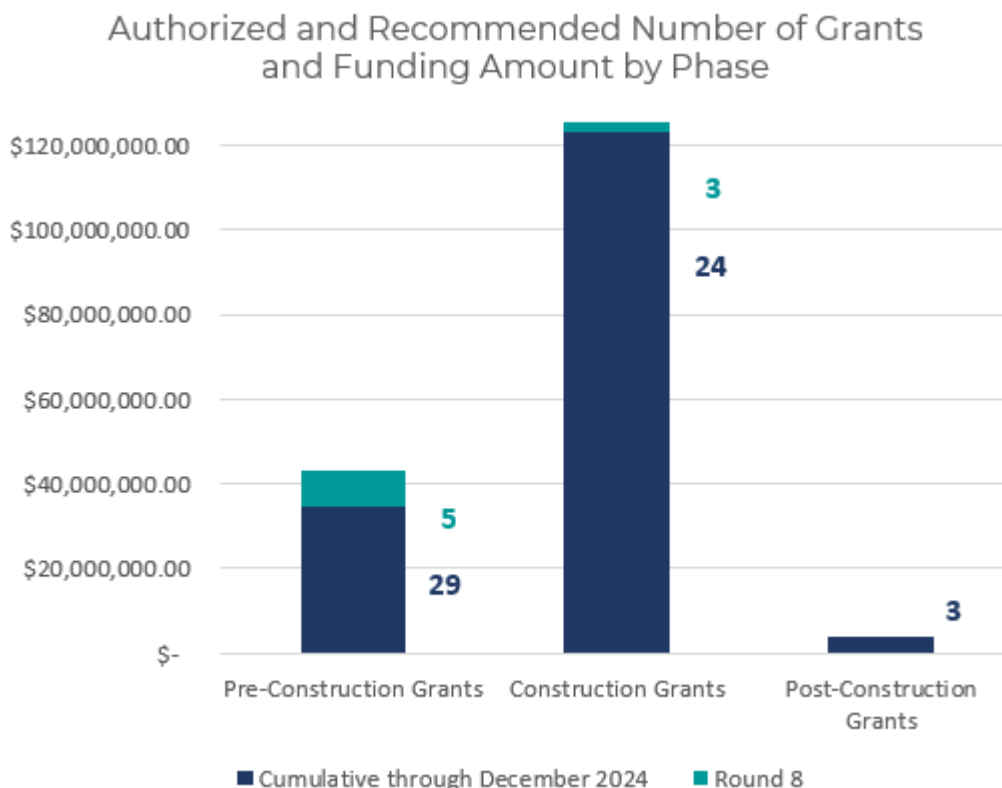
	North Bay	East Bay	West Bay	South Bay
Rounds 1-8 Projects	\$36,414,318	\$62,265,710	\$26,753,733	\$68,366,809
20-Year Target	\$45,000,000	\$90,000,000	\$55,000,000	\$60,000,000
% of 20-Year Target	81%	69%	49%	114%
At 40% of target? (Year 8 out of 20)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

As noted in the table, we would expect each region to be at least 40% of the way toward its target after eight out of twenty years of the Measure AA parcel tax period, and the table shows that all regions are on track.

Cumulative Distribution by Phase

The Governing Board has expressed interest in tracking the number of construction grants as compared to pre-construction only grants. (A small number of grants support post-construction only, i.e., monitoring and adaptive management.) Making progress toward the Measure AA Campaign Goals requires prioritizing construction grants. The Governing Board has also directed staff to ensure that pre-construction phases are also funded, so that more construction grants can

be made in future years. The breakdown between pre-construction only grants (including acquisition, planning, design, environmental documentation, and permitting) and construction projects (used here to mean all forms of on-the-ground implementation), as well as post-construction only grants, is provided in the chart. The BRRIT is included as a pre-construction project.



Please see Attachment 1 for the full list of projects, including brief project descriptions, and funding amounts requested and recommended. Staff have sent letters to proponents indicating these anticipated recommendations and will bring projects to the Governing Board as they are ready for consideration and possible approval of funding.