

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 6, 2025

TO: Governing Board
San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority

FROM: Sara Haugen, Project Manager
Elle Bent, California Sea Grant Fellow

SUBJECT: Draft Gap Analysis of San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Projects that Benefit Economically Disadvantaged Communities

Background

Staff have worked collaboratively with the Advisory Committee (AC) to advance the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority's (Authority) Equity initiatives. Measure AA states, "[t]he Authority shall give priority to projects that... [b]enefit economically disadvantaged communities[,]" or EDCs.¹ The Governing Board and the AC have both expressed a strong commitment to achieving this goal. After seven rounds of funding, there is now enough project data to better understand how the Authority is performing in this area, and parse out which benefits are being delivered to EDCs through the Authority's grant programs.

Between May 2022 and June 2023, staff collaborated with the AC's Equity Ad Hoc Subcommittee to develop draft [Equity Guidelines](#) and a community outreach approach to collect feedback on the Authority's grant programs. During this process, members of the AC identified the need to understand where the Authority is delivering benefits to EDCs, and where there may be gaps in funding. Item 6(b) of the Guidelines calls for the need to "[c]ollect and analyze data on types of organizations, geographies, and programs where the Authority has made investments in order to identify potential gaps."

This gap analysis aims to address Item 6(b) of the Guidelines and is a tool that can be used to accomplish tasks in the Five-Year Equity Work Plan for 2025-2029. It is important to note that this gap analysis is not exhaustive and is meant to provide a visual representation of the types of benefits provided by Authority-funded projects, where these benefits exist in relation to the EDCs they aim to serve, and where future community engagement efforts should be focused in the near-term. Some EDCs appear to receive fewer types of benefits or fewer benefits altogether from Authority funding. This analysis aims to guide staff in prioritizing outreach to those communities.

¹ The Authority defines an EDC as a census tract with a median household income less than 80% of the area median income. Within this set of low-income communities, the Authority further defines high priority EDCs as groups that are historically underrepresented in environmental policymaking and/or projects; most economically impacted by heavy industrial activity and development; most vulnerable to climate change impacts, due to lack of resources required for community resilience; and severely burdened by housing costs, increasing the risk of displacement.

Methods

As of fiscal year 2023-2024 of Measure AA funding, the Authority has funded 30 projects (some with multiple phases) that selected “Yes” to the prompt: “Provides benefits to EDCs.” For the purposes of this gap analysis, “Projects” refers to these 30 projects, and excludes all other Authority-funded projects that answered “No” to this prompt (*see* Appendix II for this list). To determine the types of benefits directed towards EDCs, benefits were divided into two categories: those that belong to Measure AA’s Program Areas (habitat restoration, flood protection, clean water and pollution prevention, and shoreline public access) and those that have an EDC Engagement focus separate from these program areas. All projects have habitat restoration as a benefit (a requirement of Measure AA funding). These “EDC Engagement Benefits” were determined based on a project’s staff recommendation and grant agreement documents and include workforce development, youth involvement, and community engagement. For a description of the benefit categories, see Table 1 below.

Once projects were categorized based on their benefits, an [online map](#) was created to show the distribution of projects around the Bay Area. Each project’s shape represents its Measure AA Program Area Benefit(s), and its color represents the EDC Engagement Benefit(s) it provides. Figure 1 below shows a static image of the map, and the online map allows users to click on each project for more details, including the project name, grant amount, grantee, and a list of the project’s benefits. These projects were then overlayed on the Authority’s existing EDC layer to show where they exist in relation to EDCs in the Bay Area.

Category of Benefit	Benefit Name	Abbreviation	Description
Measure AA Program Area	Habitat Restoration	H	Each Authority-funded project satisfies at least one of the four program areas, which is one lens for analyzing benefits delivered to EDCs.
	Clean Water	CW	
	Flood Protection	FP	
	Public Access	PA	
EDC Engagement	Community Engagement	Community	Includes meaningful engagement, such as feedback, listening sessions, and workshops.
	Youth Involvement	Youth	Includes involvement of youth in the project’s activities, such as educational opportunities.
	Workforce Development	Workforce	Includes benefits to economy, internships for community members, trainings on habitat enhancement.

Table 1. Categories and descriptions of benefits to EDCs.

Map of Projects Benefitting EDCs

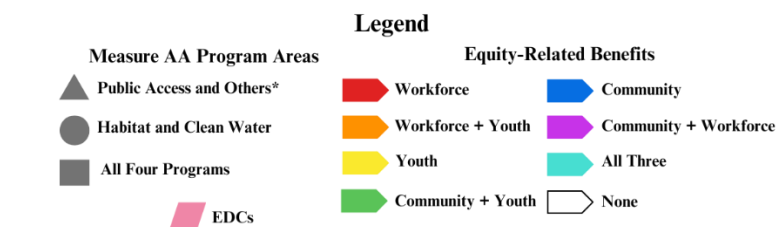
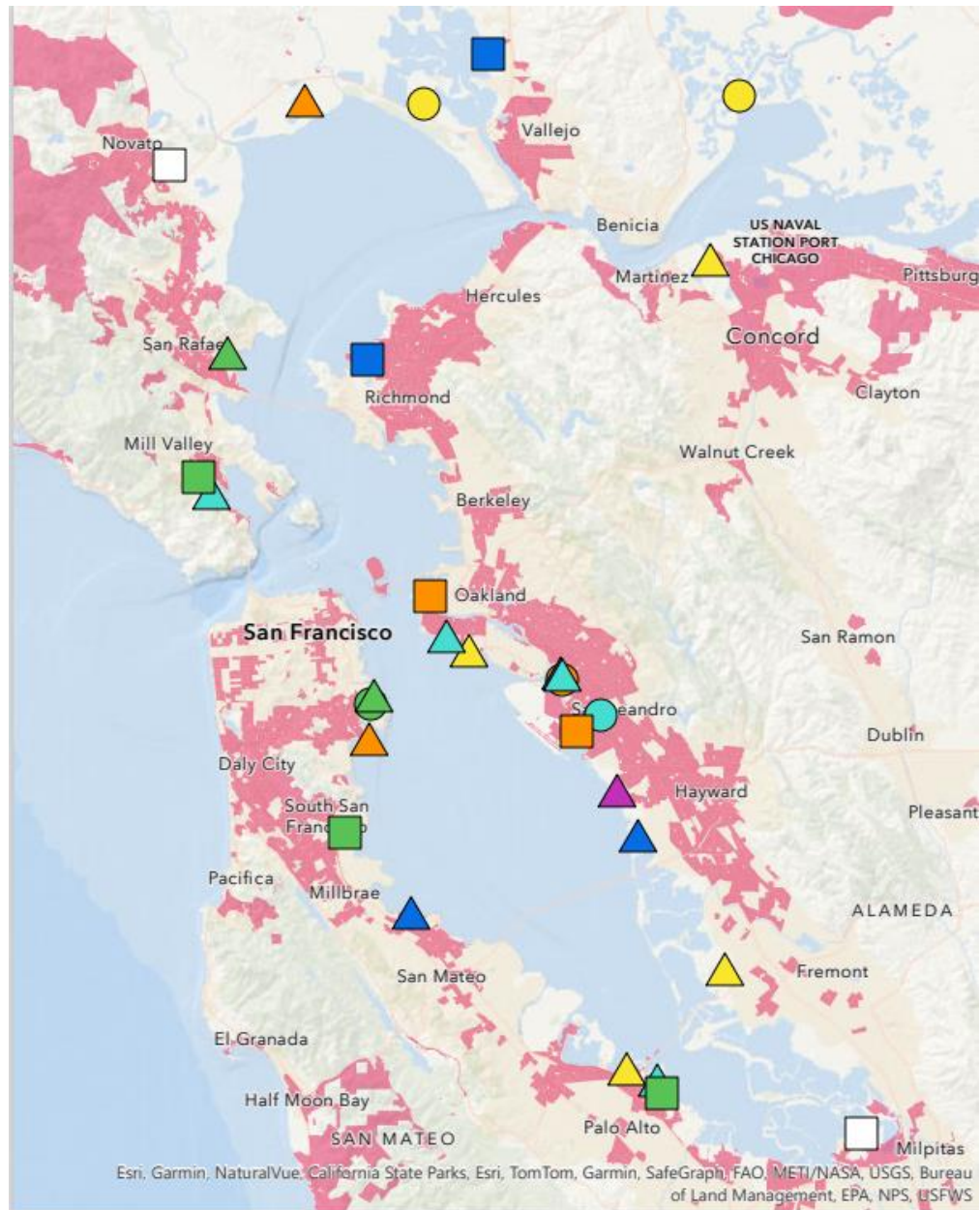


Figure 1. Map of Projects Benefitting EDC's as of Measure AA Grant Round 7

*This symbol represents projects with a combination of Public Access, Habitat Restoration, and either Clean Water or Flood Protection.

Analysis

A. Geographic Areas of Interest

The following six areas were identified as areas of interest based on the presence of high priority EDCs, the number of projects that provide benefits, and the types of benefits provided.

1. Geographic Gaps

Richmond, Vallejo, and Alviso are all areas of the Bay with high priority EDCs, and where there have been fewer projects funded (Figure 2).

- **Richmond:** North Richmond and the City of Richmond have a high concentration of EDCs, but there is currently only one Authority-funded project that benefits EDCs in this area. [The North Richmond Shoreline Living Levee Project](#) provides multiple Measure AA Program Area benefits, including Habitat Restoration, Public Access, and Flood Protection. For EDC Engagement benefits, the project has community engagement through a local community-based organization (CBO), The Watershed Project.
- **Vallejo:** Vallejo, like Richmond, has few Authority-funded projects with benefits to EDCs. The [American Canyon Wetlands Restoration Project](#) provides all four Program Area benefits in addition to community engagement as an EDC Engagement benefit. The other project in this area (but not geographically as close to the EDCs) is the [San Pablo Baylands Collaborative Protection and Restoration Project](#). This project provides Habitat Restoration and Clean Water as Program Area benefits, and youth involvement as an EDC Engagement benefit as it brings youth (predominantly people of color) from the Mare Island Technology Academy in Vallejo to participate in environmental education activities focused on tidal wetland habitats. Projects with EDC Engagement benefits that are more directly involved in these communities should be prioritized in this area in future grant rounds.
- **Alviso:** In Alviso, the [South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Project](#) is the current project that provides benefits to EDCs; while the project provides significant benefits from all four Program Areas, particularly flood protection for a low-lying, low-income community, more youth engagement and workforce development (EDC Engagement benefits) could be considered for future project funding.
- **Eastern Contra Costa County:** The Authority has not yet funded any projects in the cities of Pittsburg, Antioch, Oakley, and other EDCs in eastern Contra Costa County. This area should be a priority when funding projects that benefit EDCs in the future.

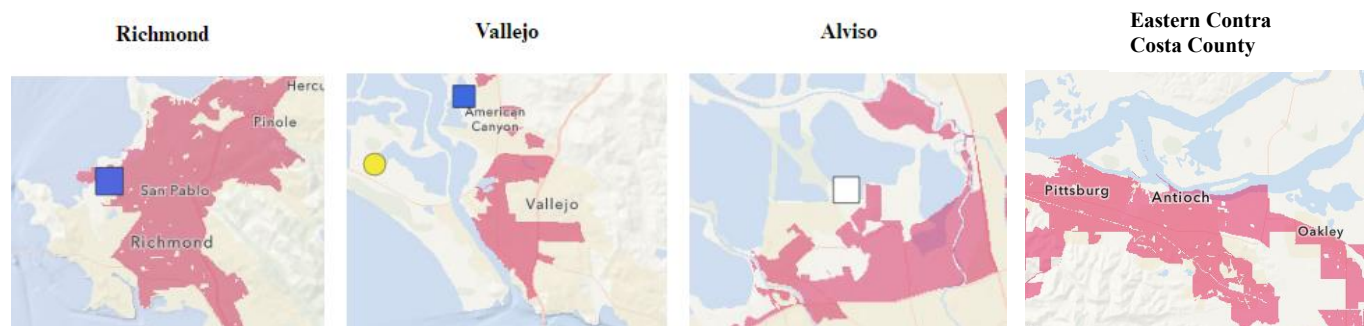


Figure 2. Areas of interest with fewer projects that benefit EDCs

2. Geographic Coverage

In contrast, other priority areas, such as East Oakland, Bayview Hunter's Point, and East Palo Alto have a higher number of projects that benefit EDCs and more variety of benefits provided. As shown in Figure 3 below, East Oakland has both the highest concentration of projects benefiting EDCs and the greatest diversity in types of benefits.

- **East Oakland:** Three of the projects pictured below (Figure 3) that are clustered along the Martin Luther King Jr. Shoreline in East Oakland are all run by CBOs with strong ties to the surrounding communities. Two of the projects in this area (shown in light blue) provide all three EDC Engagement benefits. [Storytelling Shoreline Futures: Youth Visioning and Action](#), run by the Mycelium Youth Network, includes youth empowerment and education, community events, and will pay interns that participate in their Leadership in Storytelling program. The [San Leandro \(Lisjan\) Creek Community Project](#), run by the David R. Brower, Ronald V. Dellums Institute for Sustainable Policy Studies and Action, is recruiting and training students and community members to steward the San Leandro Creek and its surrounding habitat. Another project in this region, the [Bay Restoration: Youth Engagement and Service Learning in East Oakland Project](#) run by Planting Justice, provides both workforce development and youth involvement by developing curriculum for a series of workshops for youth interns on environmental justice issues and San Francisco Bay habitat restoration techniques.

Bayview Hunter's Point and East Palo Alto both have a relatively high presence of projects that benefit EDCs; however, they have slightly fewer varieties of benefits than East Oakland.

- **East Palo Alto:** In East Palo Alto, larger habitat projects, such as the [South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project](#) and [SAFER Bay Planning Project](#), have incorporated equity into their work and include benefits, such as youth involvement and community engagement. The third project in this area, the [Baylands Habitat Restoration and Community Project](#) run by Grassroots Ecology, is restoring and enhancing marsh-upland transition zone habitat with paid habitat restoration interns, and works closely with a local CBO, Climate Resilient Communities, for deeper community engagement.
- **Bayview Hunter's Point:** In Bayview Hunter's Point (BHP), two of the projects are often cited as strong examples of community engagement. The [Heron's Head Shoreline Resilience Project](#) worked with Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ), a CBO that hired "Eco-Apprentices" from the surrounding community to engage in the restoration work. The [900 Innes Remediation Project](#) engaged residents of BHP and utilized a Community Task Force and partnerships with CBOs to create an Equitable Development Plan that includes the 900 Innes Project. The [Candlestick Point Stewardship Project](#), run by LEJ, exemplifies meaningful youth engagement through their Eco-Apprentice Program. All three of these projects demonstrate the effectiveness of partnering with CBOs to ensure projects provide benefits suited to the surrounding communities.

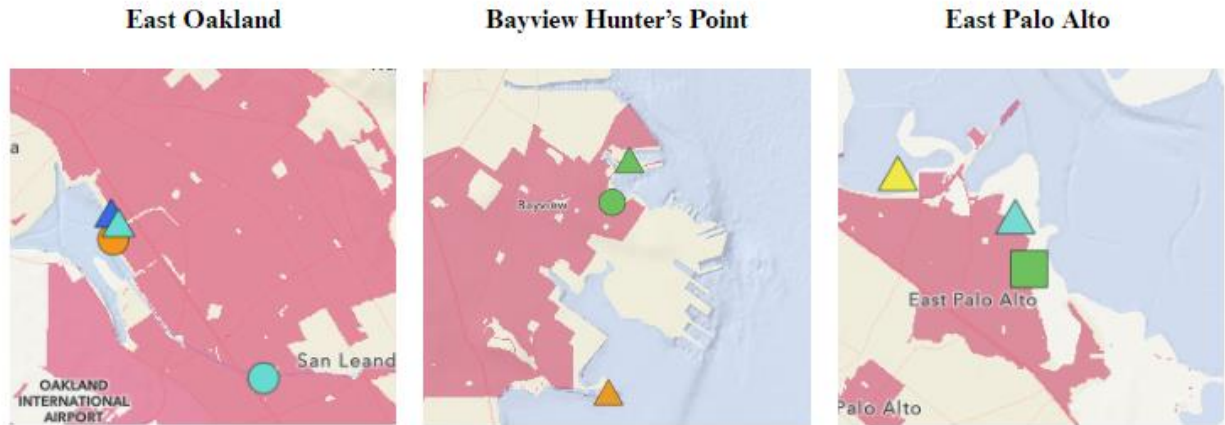
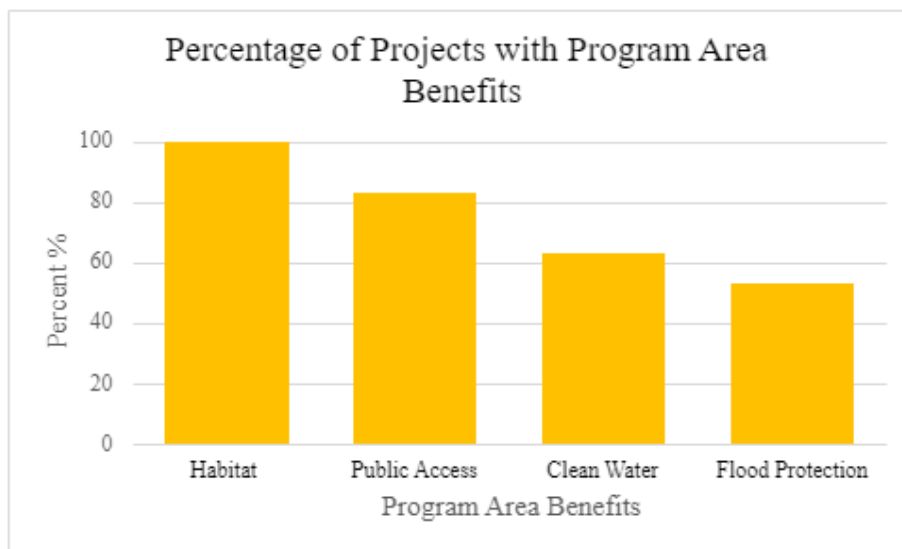


Figure 3. Areas of interest with higher numbers of projects that benefit EDCs

B. Benefit Gaps and Coverage

In addition to geographic gaps, there were also gaps in the types of benefits that projects are providing. For example, while all projects have Habitat Restoration as a benefit (a requirement of Measure AA funding), the percentage of projects with flood protection was the lowest of the four program areas. For EDC Engagement benefits, 70% of projects involved youth involvement, 57% community engagement, and 37% included workforce development as a benefit (Figure 4). Staff might use these results as future discussion points with EDCs to better understand their priorities. For example, if a community has a strong desire for more Habitat and Clean Water projects that incorporate youth and workforce development, Authority staff could support local applicants with scoping a project that provides those benefits.



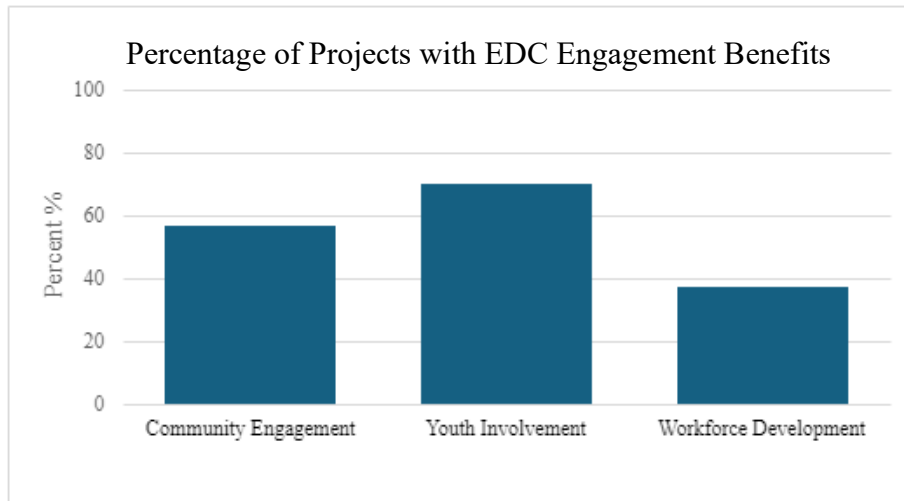


Figure 4. Percentage of Projects with types of Benefits

Finally, the types of EDC Engagement benefits are broken down in the pie chart below, showing that the combinations of EDC Engagement benefits are spread evenly across the projects, though only 5 of the 30 projects included all three EDC Engagement benefits. While the Authority welcomes projects that have any number of EDC Engagement benefits, the strongest projects tend to be multi-benefit. Some projects have no EDC Engagement benefits, with all benefits related to Measure AA program areas. This coincides with observations from AC members that some projects select the “Provides benefits to EDCs” box, but don’t seem to have direct engagement with nearby EDCs. Overall, the suite of individual Authority-funded projects is not expected to meet every Prioritization Criterion listed in the Request for Proposals, but it is informative that most of the applicants selecting the EDC box do in fact provide some sort of EDC Engagement benefit outside of the Measure AA program areas.

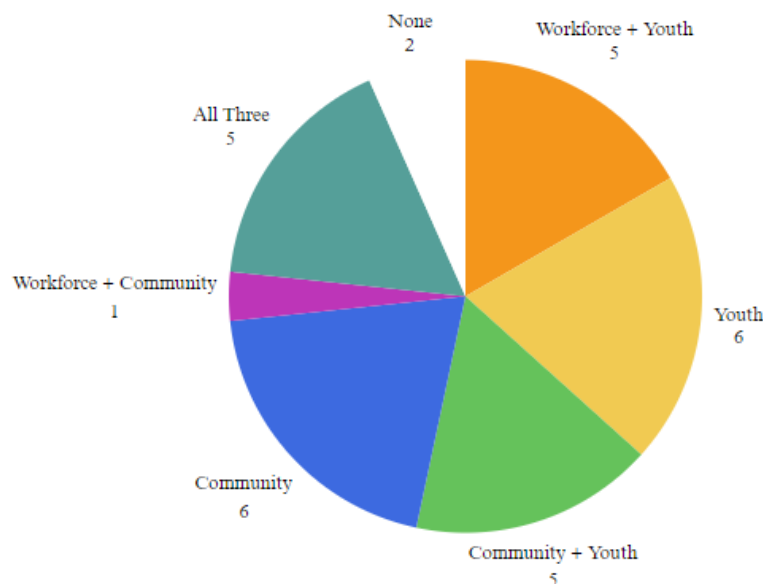


Figure 5. Projects with EDC Engagement benefits

Proposed Next Steps and Preliminary Recommendations

1. **Prioritize areas with EDCs where there are fewer (or no) projects that provide benefits, or where there are fewer types of benefits.** Target these areas for future grant rounds (particularly for community grants) through meaningful community outreach efforts and by working with CBOs already active in these areas. AC members are also encouraged to leverage their existing relationships in these areas to increase awareness of Measure AA funding opportunities.
2. **Continue working with the Wetland Regional Monitoring Program's (WRMP) People and Wetlands Working Group to determine how members of EDCs are perceiving benefits from Authority-funded projects.** Verify that the benefits that projects include in their descriptions are being realized in the communities they aim to serve, and survey communities to understand the types of benefits that are needed or wanted in the future.
3. **Partner with other funding entities (such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's San Francisco Bay Program Office) to cross-reference gaps** and identify areas where gaps are being covered by external grants, or areas where gaps overlap. While the Authority may have gaps in funding in the areas identified in this analysis, there are several other funding entities that may be providing needed funding, complementing the Authority's efforts.
4. **Conduct a similar analysis for outreach and engagement for California Native American tribes and tribal organizations.** While there are not yet enough projects with tribal engagement elements to analyze the Authority's incorporation of tribal outreach, engagement, and representation in its projects to date, this is an area of focus on the Five-Year Equity Workplan for 2025-2029 and should be a focus of future analyses.
5. **Continue to update and reflect on this analysis as part of implementing the Five-Year Equity Workplan.** This gap analysis is included in several tasks of the Workplan, including under sections 2) Outreach and Partnerships, 5) Project Benefits, and 6) Accountability and Transparency.

***Text in blue (below) are additional ideas from the Advisory Committee – staff will consider incorporating these ideas into ongoing work.**

6. **Update the EDC Layer to act as a “heat map,” showing the population density of EDCs and EJ communities.**
7. **Provide guidance to grant reviewers by sending them the updated map every year to inform decisions about project benefit and location priorities. Additionally, showcase examples of projects that benefit EDCs with various EDC Engagement benefits to assist with scoring and providing feedback to grant applications.**

8. Consider areas that may only provide habitat restoration benefits due to their geography, size, or proximity to EDCs.
9. Add more metrics or requirements for grant applicants when filling out the “Benefits to EDCs” section of the grant application (e.g., percentage of the community involved, level of community engagement, youth involvement).
10. Consider conducting further analysis on the potential tradeoffs of public access and wildlife protection.

Staff welcomes input from the Board on the staff’s proposed next steps and preliminary recommendations.

Appendix I

Link to online interactive map: [SFBRA Equity Gap Analysis \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

Appendix II

Full list of projects that benefit EDCs (through fiscal year 2023-2024) and categories of benefits.

Project	Habitat	Public Access	Clean Water	Flood Protection	Workforce	Youth	Community
Restoring Wetland-Upland Transition Zone Habitat in the North Bay with STRAW	X	X	X		X	X	
Deer Island Basin Tidal Wetlands Restoration Project	X	X	X	X			
South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration	X	X		X		X	
South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Project	X	X	X	X			
San Leandro Treatment Wetland	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Alameda Point - Encinal Dune Restoration and Shoreline Stabilization	X	X	X			X	
900 Innes Remediation Project	X		X				X
Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea Level Rise Adaptation Project	X	X		X		X	X
Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access Project	X	X	X			X	
Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project	X	X		X		X	
North Richmond Shoreline Living Levee Planning and Preliminary Design Project	X	X	X	X			X
San Pablo Baylands Collaborative Protection and Restoration (CPR) Project	X		X			X	
Suisun Marsh Essential Fish Screen Rehabilitation Project	X					X	
Heron's Head Park Shoreline Resilience Project	X	X				X	X
American Canyon Wetlands Restoration Plan	X	X	X	X			X
Oakland Shoreline Leadership Academy Project	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Long Beach Restoration Project Design	X	X		X	X		X
Hayward Marsh Restoration Design Project	X	X		X			X
Marin City Urban Wetland Community Visioning Project	X	X		X	X	X	X
Shoreline Park - Burlingame	X	X					X
Colma Creek Restoration and Adaptation Project	X	X	X	X		X	X
Candlestick Point Stewardship Project	X	X			X	X	
Evolving Shorelines Project at Bothin Marsh	X	X	X	X		X	X
Bay Restoration: Youth Engagement and Service Learning in East Oakland	X		X		X	X	
De-Pave Park	X	X		X	X	X	X
Baylands Habitat Restoration and Community Project in East Palo Alto	X	X	X		X	X	X
SAFER Bay	X	X	X	X		X	X
San Leandro (Lisjan) Creek Community Project	X		X		X	X	X
Sacred Spaces Planning Project	X	X	X				X
Storytelling Shoreline Futures	X	X	X		X	X	X