



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 11, 2026

TO: Governing Board
San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority

FROM: Sara Haugen, Grant Program Coordinator
Linda Tong, Deputy Program Manager
San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority

SUBJECT: Yearly Update on Implementing the Equity Guidelines

Staff is providing this yearly update as part of ongoing efforts outlined in the Equity Guidelines, which were adopted on May 3, 2024 through [Resolution 122](#). Staff will report annually on progress on the 2025-2029 Equity Work Plan, which includes sets of tasks derived from the Equity Guidelines (Attachment 1) and [Tribal Engagement Recommendations](#).

Background

Measure AA states, “[t]he Authority shall give priority to projects that . . . [b]enefit economically disadvantaged communities[.]” or EDCs. The Governing Board and the Advisory Committee (AC) have both expressed a strong commitment to achieving this goal.

The AC’s development of equity recommendations is described in the staff memo, [Improving Equity and Community Engagement in the Measure AA Grant Program](#), presented at the Governing Board meeting of December 6, 2019. The AC approved the recommendations and presented them to the Governing Board, which passed [Resolution 70](#) and adopted short-term recommendations for implementing Measure AA to benefit EDCs and directed staff to report back annually on the Authority’s progress in implementing the recommendations. Most of these recommendations were intended to be accomplished within two years.

Recognizing the need for Equity Guidelines that would extend through the remainder of the Measure AA parcel tax period, staff collaborated with the AC and community-based organizations to develop them. The present memo details work completed in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 in the structure of the Equity Guidelines.

Authority’s Progress in Fiscal Year 2025-26

In FY 2025-26, the Authority implemented the Equity Guidelines (Attachment 1) in four main ways: 1) continuing the Community Grants Program; 2) adopting an updated Tribal Consultation Policy and conducting early outreach to California Native American tribes and tribal organizations, 3) creating an internship with Civicorps, and 4) improving reporting on the benefits provided to Economically Disadvantaged Communities through funded projects. Staff will also involve AC members in implementing equity actions by presenting this report at a

future AC meeting and asking them for feedback on future actions. The following narrative is supplemented by a detailed table below.

1) Community Grants Program. The Authority completed the sixth year of the Community Grants Program, which specifically funds Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in EDCs on a rolling basis. To date, the Authority has recommended eleven community grants, totaling approximately \$2,248,035. More details on proposed and funded Community Grants can be found in Attachment 2.

- **FY 2025-26 Budget and Projects Authorized to Date:** Building on the previous years of funded projects, the Authority allotted \$600,000 for the Community Grants Program for Fiscal Year 2025-26. Staff received three eligible grant proposals in FY 2024-25, and the Authority recommended one: Community Activation & Shoreline Restoration through Youth Storytelling by Mycelium Youth Network. A second proposal, Alviso & Belle Haven Community Habitat Initiative by Climate Resilient Communities, will be presented at the September 11, 2026 Board Meeting. One proposal did not score well enough to receive a recommendation due to the project's lack of strong alignment with Measure AA prioritization criteria and feasible connection to a shoreline restoration project.
- **Achievements and Challenges to Date:** Increasing the maximum award to \$300,000 (which was originally \$100,000) has allowed CBOs to expand the scope of their projects and leverage other funding sources. The challenges of this program chiefly relate to grantees' familiarity with the types of documents needed before starting Authority-funded project work, such as evidence of insurance and landowner agreements; and capacity to both carry out their project work and provide required invoicing documentation as part of grant management. Staff provide flexibility and technical assistance to grantees to help overcome these challenges.
- **Lessons Learned and Next Steps:** Past grantees have requested lenience on certain grant requirements that are barriers for lower-capacity organizations, such as insurance requirements, which staff will investigate as part of the Five-Year Work Plan. In the coming years, staff will continue to facilitate capacity building in the organizations that receive Community Grants Program funding by providing staff technical assistance and inviting Advisory Committee members to provide relevant guidance to applicants and grantees. Grantees with proactive fiscal sponsors often benefit from their bookkeeping services, documentation of grant expenses, and other expertise needed to manage an Authority grant successfully.

2) Tribal Consultation Policy, Outreach, and Trainings: The Authority staff completed several tasks related to the California Native American Tribal Engagement section of the Equity Work Plan in the last fiscal year. This includes:

- **Adoption of the updated Tribal Consultation Policy:** As of May of 2023, the Authority was operating under the [Interim Tribal Consultation Policy](#), which provided minimal guidance for conducting government-to-government consultations with tribes within the San Francisco Bay Area counties. The [Tribal Consultation Policy \(Resolution 142\)](#) was adopted by the Board on March 6, 2026. The policy references the Tribal Engagement Recommendations and provides guidance for

outreach to tribes, including creating contact lists, coordinating consultation meetings, and frequency of consultation for any significant changes to authorized projects.

- **Early Outreach to Tribes for Consultation and the Grant Round:** To satisfy objectives of both the Tribal Consultation Policy and Tribal Engagement Recommendations, staff emailed Bay Area tribes with information about projects that staff expected to recommend to the Board following the 2025-26 Grant Round and announced the timeline for the upcoming competitive grant round as well as a reminder of the rolling Community Grants Program. This resulted in technical assistance meetings and government-to-government consultations.
- **Training on Tribal Engagement:** Authority staff provided a presentation and training for the Board and Advisory Committee on protocols for tribal consultation and engagement, and on key topics relevant to tribes of the Bay Area. Both trainings spurred discussion on how the Authority can better serve tribes through the grant programs.
- **Staff Roles for Tribal Engagement:** Authority staff clarified internal roles and responsibilities related to Tribal Engagement between State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) Tribal and Environmental Equity Liaison (a position that was filled during the last fiscal year), the San Francisco Bay Tribal Liaison, and Authority project managers. Generally, the SCC Tribal Liaison weighs in on big picture tribal engagement topics and attends tribal consultations, when possible, to build relationships with Bay Area tribes. The San Francisco Bay Tribal Liaison coordinates mailing of consultation letters, schedules and facilitates consultation meetings, and provides follow-up communication afterwards. Authority project managers are responsible for providing project information to interested tribes during consultation meetings, ensuring that tribal engagement described in the project scope occurs over the course of the project, and collecting project deliverables related to tribal engagement.

- 3) **Internship with Civicorps:** In an effort to contribute to workforce development and improve representation of the Bay Area's population within Authority staff, the Authority worked with [CiviCorps](#), an East Bay conservation corps, to create an Authority-specific one-year internship. In their words, Civicorps works at the "intersection of racial, economic and environmental justice" to "create long-term, upwardly mobile career opportunities for young people underrepresented in the green economy and engage them in critical conservation projects." This goal alignment led the Authority and Civicorps to create a yearlong internship, interview candidates, and hire an intern near the end of June 2026. The intern will support various Authority functions, learn about habitat restoration in the San Francisco Bay, and be provided with multiple professional development opportunities over the course of the internship.
- 4) **Benefits to EDCs in Lessons Learned Report:** To track changes made to project design and implementation as a result of community and tribal engagement, Authority staff made updates to the Lessons Learned report template (Attachment 3).

- The report asks grantees whether their project provided benefits to an EDC, then asks if so, how the project advanced goals from the Authority’s Equity Guidelines. This way, grantees who claim to provide benefits to EDCs must describe how they accomplished that as part of the required documentation for completing their grant.
- As presented to the Advisory Committee in February of 2026, Authority staff also created an [Overview of Lessons Learned from Completed Authority Projects](#), which contains some guidance for future grantees about how to engage with partners and the public in a way that can benefit EDCs.

Details on Implementation of the Equity Guidelines

As described above, the Authority implemented the Equity Guidelines during FY 2025-26 in four main ways: 1) continuing the Community Grants Program; 2) adopting an updated Tribal Consultation Policy and conducting early outreach to California Native American tribes and tribal organizations, 3) creating an Authority internship with Civicorps, and 4) improving reporting for benefits provided to Economically Disadvantaged Communities through funded projects. In addition to these efforts, staff continued implementing actions under the Tribal Engagement Recommendations and six categories of the Equity Guidelines. A description of how the actions listed in the Guidelines were addressed during the last fiscal year is provided in the table below from the working draft of the Five-Year Equity Work Plan. Quantitative metrics are reported cumulatively unless specified as a “per year” metric. Progress markers that have changed since last year’s update are highlighted in orange.

Five-Year Equity Work Plan 2025-2029: Year 2 Progress

Progress markers that have changed since last year’s update are highlighted in orange.

California Native American Tribal Engagement	Not Started	In Progress	Done
Partner with California Native American tribes and tribal organizations to improve representation for Advisory Committee and Oversight Committee member addition process for 2025-2027 and 2027-2029 (2-year cycles). This includes native and nonnative representatives who are embedded in and trusted by the tribal community and can share the tribal perspectives with these bodies when tribal members themselves do not have the capacity to join committees. (Representation)		X	
Prioritize projects that include environmental workforce development, including job training and internships, for the California Native Americans. (Representation)		X	
Investigate fellowship and internship opportunities with external agencies that specifically work with California Native American participants. (Representation)	X		
Engage in increased, ongoing, and meaningful outreach to California Native American tribes in the Bay Area, including		X	

streamlined communications to tribes related to Authority programs, projects, or other developments that are identified by tribes as topics of interest with the help of the Tribal Liaison. (Outreach & Partnerships)			
Share annual Grant Round call for proposals directly with tribes to gauge interest and offer consultations for more information and technical assistance.		X	Done for 2026
Prepare plain language one-pager about grant programs to tribes. Provide clear guidance for tribes on what staff can provide as technical assistance.			X
Offer consultations specifically for tribes early in the grant cycle after preliminary list of projects has been released.		X	Done for 2026
Revise Interim Tribal Consultation Policy based on process improvement guidance expected from California Natural Resources Agency. (Outreach & Partnerships)			X
Allocate time and training resources for a designated Tribal Liaison and other staff to provide technical assistance to tribes. (Applications and Grants)		X	
Clarify internal roles around Tribal Engagement among SCC Tribal and Environmental Equity Liaison, Tribal Liaison, and project managers. (Applications and Grants)			X
Develop and implement a method for prioritization of tribally led projects and projects with strong tribal partnerships, such as through application review or percentage of funds provided. (Applications and Grants)	X		
Conduct internal training for the Board Chair, tribal liaisons, and staff on protocols for tribal consultation and engagement, and on key topics relevant to tribes of the Bay Area (for example, the history and ongoing impacts of colonialism, legislation, and policies related to tribal sovereignty and culturally sensitive and trauma-informed engagement). (Meaningful Engagement)			X
Provide orientation to tribal topics to new Board members as part of the onboarding process.			X
Ensure tribal liaisons and SFBRA staff have taken internal trainings on tribal engagement.		X	
Develop and implement a requirement for projects that work with tribes to report on tribal engagement metrics and outcomes. (Accountability and Transparency)	X		
Utilize findings from the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program social equity survey for Advisory Committee and Oversight Committee members as a way of measuring outcomes of increased diversity (i.e., feeling empowered to share perspectives, whether they feel their perspectives shape the grant program).		X	

Quantitative Metrics	0.09%
% of Advisory Committee identifying as a tribal representative	
% of the Oversight Committee identifying as a tribal representative	0%
# of interns from tribes	0/0
# of projects with workforce development for tribes	0
# of SFBRA Grant Program outreach events held by staff for tribes	1
# of technical assistance activities provided to tribal applicants (formal consultations, other application help, introductions to partners, invoicing workshop, etc.) and outcomes (not including government-to-government consultations)	2
# of grants distributed to tribes or fiscal sponsor of a tribe	0
# of trainings provided to SFBRA Governing Board and staff	1

The following six areas of work correspond to the [Equity Guidelines](#).

1. Representation	Not Started	In Progress	Done
Recruit diverse, equitable and inclusive representation for Advisory Committee and Oversight Committee member addition process for 2025-27 and 2027-29 (2-year cycles).		X	Done for 2025
Prioritize projects that include environmental workforce development to support increased diversity in the conservation field.		X	
Utilize findings from the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program social equity survey.		X	
Investigate fellowship and internship opportunities with external agencies that specifically work with participants from Environmental Justice communities. (Representation)			X
Quantitative Metrics	51%		
% of the Advisory Committee members from historically/systemically excluded communities (self-identified)			
% of the Oversight Committee members from historically/systemically excluded communities (self-identified)	0%		
# of projects with workforce development	18		
# of interns from EDCs or Environmental Justice Communities	1		

2. Outreach and Partnerships	Not Started	In Progress	Done
Conduct outreach to potential Authority project proponents and partners, with a focus on: 1) building capacity for projects that include meaningful community engagement and provide tangible		X	

benefits to EDCs, 2) support for engaging and working with tribes, and 3) support for increasing accessibility to Bay shoreline restoration projects for people with disabilities.			
Refine outreach based on results of gap analysis in #6 (below).		X	Done for 2025
Host 1-2 community outreach listening sessions to reach communities identified in the gap analysis or other identified purpose to advance the tasks of this work plan.	X		
Attend 1-2 community events per year to expand outreach and identify new project proponents and partners.		X	Done for 2026
Conduct outreach to agencies and organizations engaged in habitat restoration in or near EDCs to assist them in forming partnerships with local CBOs, tribes, and other local experts.		X	
Coordinate networking opportunities for CBOs with landowners, restoration practitioners, and other potential partners. Hold two onsite events per year with project tour and networking.		X	
Support CBO grantees to develop skills and capacities necessary to successfully manage government grant funding.		X	
Record a new grantee orientation webinar, provide live training if interest from 3+ new grantees.			X
Quantitative Metrics	0		
#community outreach listening sessions			
#community events attended by staff (last FY/cumulative)	2/3		
# of networking events in a year (last FY/cumulative)	1/2		
# of new grantee orientations	1		

3. Applications and Grants	Not Started	In Progress	Done
Improve application and grant processes to reduce barriers to participation and highlight equity and community engagement in grant program materials.		X	
Simplify RFP scoring section, shorten summary, and include a slideshow with the RFP to summarize eligibility and requirements.		X	
Investigate easing insurance requirements for projects with less liability and required term of landowner agreements for implementation projects.	X		
Improve the Authority website to ensure accessibility.		X	
Provide grantees with guidelines to compensate tribes for	X		

their participation and knowledge.			
Coordinate GB and AC tours of current and potential shoreline restoration sites, including visits to EDCs along the bay shoreline, as networking opportunities for CBOs with landowners, restoration practitioners, and other potential partners.	(See overlapping task under #2)		
Improve technical assistance, such as workshops and/or individual consultations, in areas such as defining project scope, meeting grant requirements, and preparing invoicing documentation for CBOs in EDCs and tribes to support them in developing eligible projects and applying for grants.	(See overlapping task under #4)		
Quantitative Metrics # of technical assistance activities provided to applicants (consultations, other application help, introductions to partners, invoicing workshop, etc.) and outcomes (last FY/cumulative) <i>Other metrics will be captured under #4</i>	6/11		

4. Meaningful Engagement	Not Started	In Progress	Done
Increase Authority staff interactions with CBOs and tribes to learn more about their interests, needs, and community engagement methods.		X	
Host second Community Grants Cohort within 5-year period.	X		
Recruit a tribal organization to join Cohort, if interested.	X		
Seek ways for Authority funds to support work the community is already doing or interested in doing, e.g., meet with community leaders to identify how Measure AA funding can support their current and planned work.	X		
Identify community-based groups with the administrative capabilities to partner with smaller and/or grassroots organizations to apply for and manage a government restoration grant.	X		
Track changes made to project design and implementation as a result of community and tribal engagement in Project Lessons Learned document.			X
Provide grantees with guidance on how to track this.			X
Quantitative Metrics # of new projects that are community-led	3		

5. Project Benefits	Not Started	In Progress	Done
Track benefits per project that are being provided to communities with social equity metrics to be developed by the Wetlands		X	

Regional Monitoring Program's People & Wetlands Workgroup. For examples of benefits, see Section 5 of the Equity Guidelines.			
Report on these benefits in the annual Equity Update.	X		
Using data from gap analysis in #6 (below), identify organizations, geographies, and programs for EDCs that have not received as many benefits from the Authority to target outreach effort.			X
Quantitative Metrics Benefits to EDCs are tracked in the Annual Report's Performance Measures Table by Project Type, Restoration metrics, Levee miles constructed, and Public Access metrics.	In progress, currently by program area benefits.		

6. Accountability and Transparency	Not Started	In Progress	Done
Report annually on progress toward achieving tasks in this work plan and performance measures.		X	
Add additional equity metrics to the Authority's performance measures.	X		
Collect and analyze data on types of organizations, geographies, and programs where the Authority has made investments in order to identify potential gaps. Use of this gap analysis is outlined in #2 and #5.			X
Evaluate progress of equity work following the tenth year of the Authority's grant rounds (2027) and consider what else should be measured.	X		
Quantitative Metrics # of Annual Equity Updates to Governing Board and Advisory Committee from this work plan.	2 (as of 2026)		

Next Steps and Preview of FY 2026-2027 Equity Work

In the coming year, staff will continue to implement the Equity Guidelines and further involve the Advisory Committee in helping implement equity actions and evaluate progress and effectiveness. The Five-Year Equity Work Plan will serve as a roadmap of actions recommended in the Equity Guidelines and Tribal Engagement Recommendations.

Staff will continue to visit EDCs located along the bay shoreline with the Governing Board and AC to better understand issues and potential opportunities through project tours. Staff has focused on in-person networking at public board tours to provide meaningful opportunities to connect. To continue building relationships with tribes, staff will continue to offer technical assistance and attend events hosted by tribes when possible and appropriate. Staff will refer to the Equity Gap Analysis grant round reviews to demonstrate whether proposed projects would address gap areas and benefit EDCs compared with our previous funding.

In the Fall of 2026, staff will recruit Advisory Committee members, as eleven of the current members have terms expiring. Returning members may reapply for another term, and staff will otherwise assess new candidates to fill vacancies who represent the Bay Area and bring relevant experience to the AC.

Staff appreciates the Governing Board's interest in improving equity in the Authority's programs and processes and welcomes feedback and direction.