appendix b

Community Engagement Plan
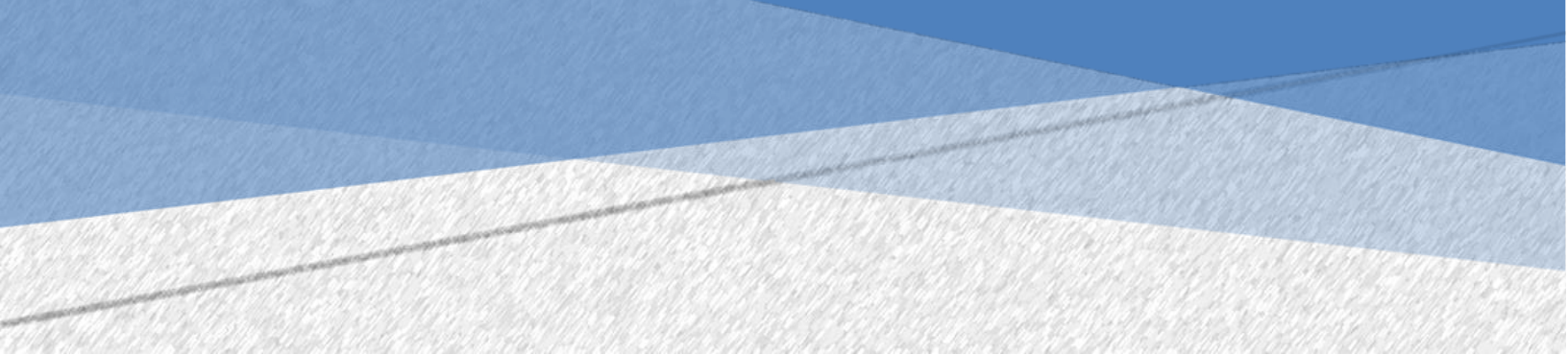
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Best Practices and Recommendations

Alameda County Environmental Justice Element

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Prepared by

Surlene G. Grant, Principal

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN BEST PRACTICES and RECOMMENDATIONS
January 2022 - March 2023

About the Environmental Justice Element (EJ Element)

The Environmental Justice (EJ) Element is one of many documents that comprise the General Plan for Alameda County. "Environmental Justice" is defined in California law as the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. (Cal. Gov. Code, § 65040.12, subd. (e). The EJ Element is being prepared with consideration of the County's Safety Element, Community Climate Action Plan, and Housing Element updates which are all being updated or created in 2022 and 2023.

The geographic focus for the all the aforementioned plans is the unincorporated areas of Alameda County. However, the EJ Element focuses specifically on the 16 low-income census tracts within the unincorporated area that meet the EJ Element screening criteria. The development of the EJ Element and the implementation of the community engagement is guided by SB 1000 (Levya, 2016.)

The key topic areas from SB 1000, commonly referred to as "EJ Pillars" are:
- Public Facilities
- Pollution and Air Quality
- Food Access
- Safe and Sanitary Homes
- Health and Physical Activity
- Civic Engagement

About the Community Engagement Plan (CEP)

Envirocom Communications Strategies, LLC (ECS) and Environmental Science Associates (ESA) worked together with the County's Community Development Agency (CDA) Planning Department and receiving input from Alameda County Public Health Department (PHD) staff, **to create and implement a community engagement plan to inform and involve the broad base of local stakeholders and community members in the preparation, adoption, and implementation of the Environmental Justice Element.** Envirocom partnered with Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center (TVHC), a well-known community-based organization (CBO) within the project area, to ensure greater success of reaching community members who might not otherwise participate in such planning and / or government endeavors, or who have been historically excluded.

This Community Engagement Plan (CEP) provides guidance for the EJ Element Project Team to ensure inclusive opportunities for local residents and others to be involved with the planning, development and implementation of the EJ Element. The CEP suggests public participation methods and strategies by which the EJ Element Project Team can receive input, coordinate engagement activities, and consult with the internal stakeholders and the public throughout the development and adoption process of EJ Element.

The strategies, methods and recommendations of this CEP incorporate the *spectrum of inclusive engagement* developed by International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), and additional public engagement models, along with the experiential success of the Public Engagement consultant to highlight best practices and techniques for the EJ Element and any other project serving the unincorporated areas.

Assess and generate ideas	Include, involve and inform	Consult and collaborate	Empower and share decisionmaking	Evaluate and Revise

The above chart is the Public Engagement Consultant's outline of the process to achieve authentic and collaborative community engagement for this plan.

Priority Communities

Stakeholder participation and community involvement are essential to developing specific goals, policies, actions, and implementation programs in the EJ Element and ensuring that such are responsive to and prioritize the needs of disadvantaged communities. The EJ Element and the Community Engagement Plan focus on the residents and neighborhoods in 16 low-income census tracts in the **unincorporated communities of Ashland, Cherryland, Hayward Acres, and parts of San Lorenzo and Castro Valley.** These neighborhoods comprise the "Priority Communities" for the EJ Element.

The community engagement activities are intended to involve the Priority Communities in planning and implementing an EJ Element that responds to and prioritizes their needs in the context of the aforementioned "EJ Pillars."

Goals

The goals of the EJ Element **Community Engagement Plan** are to:
- Establish best methods for public engagement and transparency in the Priority Communities.
- Create inclusive, familiar, and welcoming ways by which the public can actively engage in the public decision-making process.
- Inform stakeholders about the project, scope, schedule, and deliverables.
- Receive input on policy proposals, concerns, opportunities, and possible solutions from the people who live, work, or go to school in the Priority Communities.
- Consult with the Priority Communities throughout the process and empower them in the decision-making process.
- Coordinate and align community engagement efforts and receive input from internal County departments and affiliated organizations (Ashland Cherryland Healthy Communities Collaborative - ACHCC) to ensure efforts uplift and empower the Priority Communities.

Audience

The CEP is designed to engage and inform all members of the Priority Communities. There is an intentional focus on stakeholders in the project area who may not have engaged previously in such meetings or may have been excluded by the lack of inclusive strategies – such as language and geographic access.

Key categories of stakeholders include:

- The general public, including residents who live, work, and go to school in the Priority Communities.
- Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) who represent historically underrepresented groups.
- Community-based organizations (CBOs) representing neighborhood groups, advocacy groups, and non-profit agencies.
- Business organizations, housing and community development organizations, rental housing organizations representing individuals who have business interests in the viability and livability of the Priority Communities and adjacent areas.
- Stakeholders addressed in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) who primarily represent service providers and government-related organization.

ACHCC and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

The Ashland Cherryland Healthy Communities Collaborative (ACHCC) is a group made up of County staff, various non-County agencies and community-based organizations (CBOs) that provide direct services to many in the Priority Communities. The group consists of many subject matter experts (SMEs) and direct service providers, affording the Project Team direct contact with and an opportunity to collaborate and consult with "on-the-ground" service providers with professional expertise regarding the Priority Communities.

Meeting frequently through the years, including during the pandemic, the ACHCC incorporates a topical group structure whose work ties directly to the work of the EJ Element. These topical groups are referred to as "buckets". The members of the ACHCC Environmental Justice and Basic Needs "buckets" provide critical input, guidance, and expertise at key milestones as outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan as prepared by ESA.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan suggests the opportunities when the ACHCC EJ Bucket, the ACHCC Basic Needs Bucket and other community collaboratives, environmental groups or with local and state agencies such as the Bay Area Air Management Quality District and the California Air Resources Board AB 617 program should be engaged to help inform EJ Element development and ensure more inclusive voices.

SECTION I – Developing Engagement – Using Best Practices

The CEP document outlines key engagement activities for inclusive, equitable and accessible strategies. This document presents best practices and recommendations; highlights the lessons learned and the recommendations for future activities. The CEP summarizes community engagement strategies performed to date towards the development of the EJ Element. This document also identifies the roles of the Consultants, County staff and departments, CBOs and others for community engagement.

Establishing Equity and Inclusion

Equitable community engagement strategies must prioritize those segments of the community who are historically underrepresented in long-range planning processes. As a standard practice, equity-based public outreach and community engagement strategies should consider **language, geographic location, physical access, physical and spatial needs (such as equipment, meeting space), along with the income and racial diversity of the participants as a determinant of transportation, education, literacy and other resources available to the participants.**

In order to develop authentic and meaningful engagement recommendation and strategies, the Project Team examined the Priority Communities through various sets of data and observations to determine the discrepancies and inequities with community resources as opposed to those in other communities. Key findings show disparities in area income, community services, education attainment, language fluency transportation access and other resources are reflected in the Community Profile of the EJ Element. These disparities can greatly influence the outcomes of public participation. The CEP attempts to address obstacles to participation and engagement in the 16 census tract communities by ensuring equitable engagement and outreach with strategies that deliver inclusive and accessible public education, public awareness and public-input opportunities.

The following are some measures to establish a more equitable engagement plan.

Respond to Known Inequities
To engage in equitable planning, the Project Team should aim to:
- Build trust through regular engagement with front-line service organizations (e.g., by participating in groups like the ACHCC.)
- Secure the services of a trusted community-based organization to help with outreach and offer compensation for their help.
- Use the Community Profile and other data to identify inequities and define issues; then, proactively consult or collaborate with CBOs and others with existing expertise in the issue area. For example, if data shows that there is a food desert in a community, the Project Team may choose to work with organizations or consult on a community level with those groups that provide food distribution, or other solutions and engage the organizations in the discussions to identify solutions to include in the EJ Element.
- As the Project Team and consultant move on to other projects and priorities, work to ensure that the EJ Element policies are enacted, monitored, and revaluated over time. As a result of this community engagement, it is possible that an informed group of community members and stakeholders will stand out who will be able to provide institutional memory, historical and sustainable knowledge from this process so that participants can continue to track and build upon the plan into the future. These individuals could form a group that engages periodically with the County to ensure accountability and continuity of the community priorities identified in the EJ Element.

Language Access and Accommodation
- English and Spanish are the predominant languages spoken in the Priority Communities. Any written promotional materials, public information, and educational materials for the EJ Element or subsequent projects impacting the Priority Communities should be created in Spanish and English. The ideal approach is to create a single product that shares the same information in both

languages. Alternatively, two separate products with the same information can be developed. Alternatively, a tagline can reference where readers can get information in another language, but it is considered a more equitable practice to have the two predominant languages equally emphasized on the same document.

- Spanish language interpretation should be standard for any public meetings (virtual, in-person, or hybrid) in the unincorporated communities. Custom has deemed the meetings to be in English with Spanish translation. But in some instances, when the majority of meeting participants have Spanish as their first language, the team should consider having the meeting in Spanish as the primary language and the interpretation in English.
- For future projects, the Project Team should evaluate current community conditions to determine need for language resources beyond Spanish and English.
- Any telephone information lines used for the project should have a Spanish-language option.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices:
- Build into the planning processes the inclusion of people with disabilities beyond American Disability Act (ADA) access.
- Build into the budget the services of subcontractors for language translation, ASL, and other accessibility measures to provide access to all.
- Establish early relationships with American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters who could attend meetings should the project receive a request for such services. Given services available in Alameda County, such as the School for the Deaf in Fremont, or Deaf Counseling Advocacy and Referral Agency (DCARA) in San Leandro, it would be prudent for team members to work with such organizations. (The County may also have resources available for contractors who provide ASL interpretation.) Similarly, establish early relationships with representatives of the visually impaired community so that they can be consulted with when designing meetings and materials.
- Provide *simultaneous* interpretation when possible. Simultaneous translation is done with earphones or other systems. In meetings # 1 and #2 translation was provided as *consecutive* interpretation – the English and Spanish done in tandem, one following the other -- because this is currently the only Zoom option that allows for callers using Zoom's 800 number to hear the information in Spanish. Consecutive translation takes more time in a public meeting whether on Zoom or in person. Simultaneous interpretation keeps everyone moving along at the same pace at the same time.
- Plan for engaging youth, seniors, people with disabilities, non-English speakers, and any other distinct groups with the same timing as the outreach to all other groups and individuals.
- Investigate and have prepared vendors to assist with accessibility especially for virtual meetings.
    - For the visually impaired, there are assistive devices such as screen readers built into Adobe Illustrator and Word that can read a pdf and WordDocs while on computer.
    - To be more inclusive of the visually impaired, the Project Team should ensure that material posted to the website is done with the accessibility features activated.
- Have a small number of hard copies of presentations and handouts available. While the general practice is to conserve paper, for in-person meetings it is good to have a few handouts available in large fonts for those individuals who may need materials in that format.

- o A disability advocate who participated in the EJ Element community meeting #2 shared with the team that Zoom is more accessible than other platforms and also shared that virtual meetings are more accessible and inclusive than in-person meetings.
- o Use the close captioned tools available on different platforms to be more inclusive of those with hearing challenges. There are artificial intelligence services that will provide the closed caption and transcribe in real time the meeting.
- o Include slides on how to access close caption tool should be part of the opening guideline or introductory segment of the meeting.
- o Assign a facilitator for breakout sessions to work with visually impaired participants when needed. This person can describe what is being shown on the screen during actual meetings and allow the participant to engage with the meeting and the material provided.

Location
- Physical meeting locations must be accessible to all users, including ADA accessibility to the building and accessible displays, interactive exercises, and presentations.
- Physical meeting locations should be a place familiar to the intended audience, such as a community center, local park, library, or church that people are familiar with.
- Physical meeting locations should be central to the community and accessible via public transit, car, bike, or by foot. An equitable approach in determining a physical location for a meeting is to consider which components of a meeting would make it easier or harder for a person perceived to have the least resources to attend. For example, if choosing between two similar locations, an equitable lens would suggest planning the meeting at a site that is accessible by public transportation. It is more likely that a person with a car would be able to attend a meeting regardless of the site location. Additional considerations should also be given to walkability and public safety perceptions when choosing a site.
- In response to COVID-19 public health concerns, public behavior has shifted with regard to public meetings. Currently, many meetings and gatherings are being planned for outdoor locations such as parks, end of the street cul-de-sacs, and building patios. Some more traditional indoor spaces, such as larger community rooms, can provide opportunities for gathering while maintaining recommended social distance between participants.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices:
- Consider social connotations and connections when selecting a location because it could influence attendance. It is important to consider the positive or negative associations the community may have with specific spaces that can impact their decision to attend. For example, meeting places affiliated with local government or law enforcement, such as the Board of Supervisors' meeting chambers in Oakland or the County hearing room in Hayward, may not be perceived by all potential participants as welcoming or convenient spaces for community meetings.

Addressing Public Health, COVID, and Virtual Public Participation

A community engagement strategy must consider the impacts of current social events and public health concerns. As the project continues, the community engagement planning process must continue to evolve in response to the COVID-19 public health status.

At the start of the EJ Element project in 2021, there was little opportunity for safe in-person interaction or outreach. All the Project Team meetings and public community meetings were designed to be virtual. In Spring 2022, with fewer social restrictions in place, there was some in-person outreach for outside meetings and activities, including tabling at community events and attending a local health fair. In March 2023, the Governor's Office mandated a return to in-person meetings for government agency meetings; consequently, the Project Team will adjust accordingly.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices:
- Virtual community meetings remained the norm throughout the development of the CEP and the community engagement for the EJ Element. Virtual platforms will continue to be used until the Governor or County Board of Supervisors mandates the return to in-person meetings for all County meetings.
- Given the reliance on smart phones and computers for the virtual meetings, community engagement must take into consideration the fact that some individuals do not have access to technological equipment, often called the "digital divide".
  - Computer access is a barrier for many residents of the Priority Communities, but many do have smart phones. Directions to join meetings must include how to join by phone for both smart phones and conventional telephones.
  - The conventional phone number should be local to the project area or an 800 number.
  - It is important to remember that Zoom is not currently capable of providing concurrent interpretation options for participants using the 800 number.
- Given both the "normalization" of virtual meetings, and the continuing concerns regarding public health precaution, a large number of participants may wish to only participate virtually. Therefore, a recommendation is to continue offering virtual or hybrid meetings.
- Consideration for *Hybrid* meetings:
  - To help address the digital divide, the Project Team should work with local CBOs to find time / place to accommodate people who don't have access to Zoom. A CBO could host a small gathering at their place with a shared big screen to facilitate participation. This is a strategy to employ with hybrid meetings or when some level of small group gatherings can be managed.
  - The Project Team (County leads) could seek nonprofits or community foundations for grants to support a lending library of tablets or other devices for participants to have access.
  - Additional facilitation support is needed during a hybrid meeting to monitor the activity on screen (in the "Zoom room") while the key facilitator manages the physical room and incorporates the virtual activity.
- Make polling and surveying inclusive by also having "paper" copies available so that people who may not be able to participate in the electronic polling can later submit or mail responses. Surveys can also be distributed by the community outreach partners, requiring additional planning to digitize the data upon collection.
  - The County's EJ Element Survey was created and conducted online using the Google Surveys platform. To facilitate survey participation, the Promotores conducted surveys on their individual smart phones while talking one-on-one with people during the outreach.
- Using a MURAL, MIRO, MENTI or other virtual interactive charting and documenting platforms. These virtual products mimic the use of poster sheets and illustration boards for individual prioritization, comments, dot exercises, etc. Because using the tool requires some skill with computers, individuals who are not familiar with the product may be hesitant to participate and

may become frustrated. Use by individual participants may have mixed results, but the tool can be easier for some participants to engage with when the interaction is guided by a team facilitator.

Specific to Meetings on the Zoom Platform

- The Project Team has used Zoom for public meetings throughout the EJ Element outreach process. Many participants are already familiar with the platform and it is easy to download and use by computer, smart phone, or standard telephone. There are a variety of packages and service levels that can accommodate varying sizes of audiences, allowing for hundreds to be on the platform if needed. At this time, the drawback with Zoom is that not all features are interchangeable or available with each the level of service. For example, the webinar level does not allow for breakouts; and the meetings do not allow for translation channel access for people using standard phone lines. In designing the meetings, the Project Team must think through all aspects of a meeting to make sure needs are covered and must check with Zoom for any new enhancements between uses.
- The County Team opted for consecutive language translation in its 2022 Zoom community workshops because participants who join via the 800 number cannot access Zoom translation channels for simultaneous translation. An alternative to consider if there is time and budget would be to have multiple meetings of the same subject matter (one in Spanish, one in English) to avoid missing phone participants.
- The facilitators and presenters must allow for time with a pause when working with consecutive translation format, so that the interpreter can translate for the group.
- As a standard during Zoom community meetings, "spotlight" speakers and interpreters throughout a presentation so that attendees can easily find and view them in the gallery.
- Assigning and dividing facilitation roles ahead of time helps a virtual meeting run more smoothly. Roles to consider include monitoring chat; admitting people from the waiting room; monitoring the microphone, camera, and chat for hate speech or other disruptive content; managing screen sharing; recording the meeting; providing chat tech support; uplifting participant comments from the chat, and running the poll.
- In a bilingual Zoom meeting, it is important to assign a team member to manage and monitor the Spanish Language chat.
- Playing music during the initial moments that a virtual meeting is open and people are assembling and viewing the title slides is welcoming and will help set the tone of the meeting.
- If "door prizes" are offered, consider including a "must be present to win" rule and announcing winners at the end to encourage people to stay for the full meeting.
- If utilizing a poll on Zoom, the Zoom manager should download the poll results before signing off. Poll results are not saved with the meeting.
    - Polling and other interaction throughout the meeting provides for good engagement.
    - If there's time, allowing for commentary after the results are tallied might be helpful because it demonstrates validation of the poll and the individual's involvement.

Promoting and Publicizing Public Participation Opportunities

The most successful community engagement happens when community members and other stakeholders are directly involved in designing the community engagement strategies. The first step is to collect information from community through interviews, assessments, and surveys. For the initial outreach, this early assessment was completed by meeting with members of the ACHCC and through initial community surveys. The information gleaned resulted in a set of recommendations for equitable community

engagement activities, listed below. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, these recommendations take into consideration remote engagement best practices and public health adaptations.

Promotional and Meeting Materials
- Use inclusive, relevant messaging.
- Identify audiences and share information about why community members should be involved. Make the information relevant and communicate what's in it for the participant: why they should care and why they should participate.
- Create easy-to-understand and user-friendly outreach materials (e.g., meeting announcements, fact sheets, and PowerPoint presentations).
- Create materials in Spanish and English as a standard practice (see Language Access and Accommodation recommendations).
- Translate all promotional materials – electronic and hard copy – into Spanish.
- Send a "Save the Date" and other announcements at least 3 -4 weeks ahead of the meeting.
- Allow time for staff to review and provide input on all EJ Element materials before release.
- Distribute meeting notices and announcements electronically and in paper format. Paper flyers can be distributed at corner markets, small businesses, the library, etc.
- Follow up with the ACHCC member and other community partners who are helping with distribution and posting to remind them to do so by a certain time/date.
- Develop outreach strategies that are appropriate for different audiences. For example, develop strategies to connect with youth, youth service providers, after-school, and sports programs to share announcements and drop off materials. For seniors, work with local senior centers and homebound meal distribution programs.
- Consider using SMS text outreach to distribute information directly to individual's phones. A San Lorenzo School District partner shared that text outreach is more effective than other outreach methods (like the Peach Jar newsletter) in that district.
- Develop a social media toolkit to make it easier for partners to cross-promote materials.
- Additional publicity and promotion tools that have been used by team members but to date have not been used for this project are:
    - Public info kit
    - FAQ and Fact Sheets
    - Kiosk / Graphic boards that can be used remotely to receive input.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices:
- Specifically with this project, messaging should include how this process will be different than other community planning processes because the community is frustrated with some of the previous County efforts, specifically around the pandemic recovery in the Priority Communities. In addition to the community pulse of the moment, the messaging is necessary to build credibility and trust, and demonstrates transparency.
- The County should be as transparent as possible about what is and what is not in scope of this and other projects and what residents can reasonably expect as outcomes.
- Connect the various pillars of EJ to real issues that the community experiences (such as concerns about employment or health, safety, asthma and air quality and timelines). Talking points that explicitly make these connections can help outreach workers, such as the Promotores, be more successful with involving hard-to-reach participants.

- Increase awareness and outreach with presentations, updates and workshops with established and existing County and government groups and committees such as Unincorporated Services Committee, Planning Commission, Municipal Advisory Councils, etc. These can be made more inclusive by sending meeting announcements and reminders to those stakeholders who are interested in the particular item – as opposed to having them have to track it. For example, when the EJ Element goes before one of these formal bodies, the Project Team can send an announcement to their GovDelivery EJ Project listserv. Likewise, if there is going to be a special hearing, consider the timing of the item to the extent possible – 1) the timing as in the placement on the agenda so that there is not a lengthy wait time while the board goes through "routine" items before the key topic is discussed; or 2) the timing of the meeting, as in the time of day, evenings generally being better than weekday mornings.

Collaborating with a Community Partner as a "Bridge Builder"

Engaging a community partner in local government outreach is an increasingly common strategy for inclusive engagement. A community partner is an organization that is familiar to, and works with, the focus audience and/or marginalized communities and has established community trust. Most often, the relationship is one of a community network provider, connector or ambassador for the project. For the EJ Element outreach, Envirocom partnered with Tiburicio Vasquez Health Center (TVHC) and their team of "Promotores", or community-based health educators. The Promotores assist in establishing rapport with community members by meeting one-on-one with residents to bring new voices to the table. TVHC's role not only provides local, on-the-ground- knowledge to the Project Team but bridges the Project Team with the community. The services of TVHC as a partner on the project are compensated. The standard practice is to compensate community partners for the knowledge and added value they bring to the project outreach.

Activities specifically of TVHC as the Community Partner with the EJ Element:
- Assist the Project Team with coordination and planning of outreach efforts to drive attendance at community meetings.
- Advise the County regarding cultural competency and appropriateness of an approach based on timing, community culture, and other factors unique to the Priority Communities.
- Assist with the development of some collateral material by reviewing for appropriateness and readability.
- Assist the Project Team with identifying locations and community activities to conduct community outreach for the project such as food drives, health fairs, or other gatherings.
- Assist the Project Team with coordination, planning and supporting of small group or local community meetings in the project area.
- Mobilize outreach workers including Spanish language speakers (Promotores) to share information with residents and stakeholders, and to translate and interpret (informally) materials through individual contacts and networks. Using door-to-door, community meeting places, etc.) or distributing information.

- It is important for the Project Team to properly train and provide project background information to the Promotores or other outreach / ambassador workers to make sure that they understand the project and can represent it.
- Talking Points are a useful tool for anyone promoting a project, including the Project Team, Promotores, or community members.
- It is a best practice and a type of community benefit for the project to compensate or incentivize the work of outreach workers and partner organizations through a subcontract, grant funding, stipend, or gift cards.
- The Promotores established a method of conducting surveys on each of their smart phones. When they engaged with an individual, the Promotores collected the name and contact information of the individual, allowing TVHC to follow up with the person to remind and encourage the individual to attend the community meetings. Similar outreach strategies can be employed with "person-on-the-street" outreach and survey forms, or other electronic surveys.
- Providing the Promotores with TVHC gear (with caps, jackets and lanyards) brought credibility to their work and made them familiar to many, but we learned that at times such identifiers can cause concern. In the case of TVHC as the community partner, the organization manages a federally-backed health clinic. When the Promotores showed up to promote a community meeting at a health fair hosted at a physical site that is served by another clinic, the Promotores had to cover or remove all TVHC identifiers and clarify that they were not representing the TVHC Clinic but working on behalf of the County.
- Neither the TVHC staff nor the Promotores served in an official interpreter / translator role. Because of the technical nature of the subject matter, they declined that role and the Project Team brought in certified Spanish language translators.

Encouraging Participation and Connecting with Hard-to-Reach Participants

Outreach and Promotion

- Contact and work with faith-based organizations to inform members of their congregations and service area of the EJ Element project and the need for community involvement. Many churches provide direct community services and support, and some also engage in social justice activities.
- Collaborate with service providers organizations and faith-based organizations to "invite" or otherwise encourage participation of their constituents and patrons through direct contact, or participation in establish meetings and programs.
- Establish relationships with credible messengers (trusted individuals) from local organizations to serve as liaisons, ambassadors, or other types of connectors to encourage participation from desired audience.
- Collaborate with local organizations and request time on their agenda of one of their existing meetings.
- Request the local organization to help with the distribution of the information.
- Engage in "pop-up" and other activities that "meet people where they are" such as open houses, farmers' markets, tabling, and participation in community festivals and events.
- Co-host outreach events with schools or merchant and business organizations.

For meeting preparation and participation
- Define the various audience / stakeholder interest groups and the best way to address.
- Design the meeting to address audience needs.
- Gather community input in phases – space the involvement over time (don't attempt to do too much in one meeting)
- CBOs may have staff who can serve as co-facilitators for the breakouts during the workshops. This allows for the CBO representatives to bring their local knowledge to bear in reviewing and co-developing materials.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices:
- For this project, we did not employ focus groups but designed segments of the community meetings to have breakouts to serve in that function and allow for individual responses to questions, concerns and expression of vision.
- Focus groups could be used in early assessments to test planning concepts and recommendations. Depending on desired input, the Focus Groups could consist of a mix of stakeholders, such as business operators *and* residents. Or a focus group could be held for just youth, residents, etc. Working with the ACHCC also served a focus group function.
- School outreach and food distribution sites are good contacts to distribute hard copy meeting announcements.
- Host individual meetings and focus groups.
  - With internal stakeholders
  - With community organization and individuals
- Make sure attendees know how the findings from the community meetings will be incorporated into the EJ Element.
- Canvass "door-to-door." The Promotores canvassed their neighborhoods as part of their outreach efforts to encourage participation in EJ Element community meetings.
- Host public meetings in a town hall or community workshop format.
- Make arrangements for childcare and food for in-person meetings.
  - For evening and weekend meetings, it is a best practice to provide childcare. Childcare providers can be from other city or county departments who provide for childcare as their service, or from a CBO. There are also professional childcare services that staff public meetings and workshops. Project budgets should allow for the cost.
  - For on-site meetings, the physical space should accommodate childcare – in the same meeting location – such as the back of a large hall or an adjacent visible / audible room.
- "Door prizes" such as gift cards to local stores and vendors, tours of local facilities or coffee with local elected officials, ride on a Fire Truck or other items can be offered as incentives for participation.
  - In working with the Project Team, clarify the incentives and who will secure them.
  - Provide stipends and/or incentives to ensure equitable participation of frontline community members otherwise unable to volunteer their time, to generate robust and diverse community engagement.
  - Make sure the incentives and "door prizes" are not a gift of public funds.
  - Do not market door prizes as a "raffle" because of legal definitions of raffles.
  - Randomize the selection process.
  - Use local caterers or providers for catered food.
  - Use local CBO childcare providers (compensated)

Public Participation as a Community Benefit

Community benefits can result from authentic public participation and civic engagement. The benefits emerge and evolve through the involvement of community partners and the use of services from local vendors. As discussed, Best Practices call for the local expertise of community members and / or organizations. Depending on the level of their involvement, these entities can be considered as bringing a level of valuable expertise and knowledge to the Project Team that should be compensated through stipends, subcontracts, grants, continuing education hours or other methods to demonstrate value or their participation and contribution.

In addition, when possible, local vendors or organizations should be used for catering and refreshment, childcare, and translation of documents.

SECTION II – Implementation of the Plan Within the Scope of the EJ Element

Section I described the best practices and recommendations for public engagement for the EJ Element and Lessons Learned. Section II discusses the implementation of those activities within the context of the project Scope of Work and Schedule.

Community Meetings and Community Events

Community Meetings are key milestones for the EJ Element Community Engagement Plan. The Project Scope of Work calls for three Community Meetings leading to the adoption of the EJ Element. The initial meetings were designed using the assessment steps discussed earlier. As the meetings were held and community involvement evaluated, changes were made to enhance the strategies and activities to make the subsequent meeting more beneficial.

Community Meeting Objectives
1. Educate Priority Community residents about Environmental Justice. Demonstrate how EJ solutions can have profound benefits for social equity. Share baseline data on challenges and inequities in the Priority Communities.
2. Educate residents about the Environmental Justice Element and the opportunity to advance Environmental Justice solutions.
3. Enable residents to provide meaningful input into the creation of equitable solutions. Provide the opportunity to receive direct community input on the development of the EJ Element.
4. Discover community-preferred EJ actions, including those with the greatest local benefits for Priority Communities:
    a. (i) address priority community needs and
    b. (ii) build on community assets.
5. Share valuable EJ resources participants and their neighbors can access now.

Community Meetings Schedule	
May 19, 2022	**Project Introduction** **Meeting 1** – Virtual Meeting Format. Engagement Level: Public Information and Involvement. Attendance: Approximately 60 This meeting introduced the EJ Element development process to the public and provided an opportunity for the Project Team to hear the initial reactions. Project team members introduced the Priority Communities and shared data about current conditions within the key EJ Element Topic Areas (EJ Pillars). The public provided input regarding their experiences living and working in the project area.
August 25, 2022	**Presentation on EJ Conditions and Recommendations** **Meeting 2** – Virtual Meeting Format. Engagement Level: Public Information, Collaboration, Community Consultation. Attendance: Approximately 80 This meeting was designed as an interactive workshop with breakouts. The Project Team presented concepts in for the "EJ Pillars". This meeting provided an opportunity for the public to weigh on the initial draft concepts and the opportunity to validate whether the team had captured the ideas and desires previously shared by the community. The desire was for community members to see their ideas, opinions and other contributions reflected in the development of the draft EJ Element. Through the breakouts, the meeting provided an opportunity for participants to ask questions and share comments in a friendly small group environment.
May 25, 2023	**Presentation on Final Plan Implementation Framework** **Meeting 3** – *Anticipated for May 25, 2023.* Virtual Meeting Format. Engagement Level: Consultation and Review. Attendance: *open to the general public* This meeting will be designed to present the "Public Draft" of the EJ Element. There will be a review of key findings, policies and recommendations for each of the "EJ Pillars." This will be an opportunity for community members to determine if the plan identifies the right actions and matches their vision for the Priority Communities. Following this meeting, the EJ Element will go through a series of public hearings and a formal adoption process with the Board of Supervisors.
May 2023 – September 2023	**Formal Adoption Process** Following the completion of the series of Community Meetings, the Project Team will submit the Final Draft of the EJ Element for formal approval and adoption to the County. The approval process requires several public information meetings and public hearings with County committees and the Board of Supervisors. *The anticipated boards and commission to hold meetings are:* ▪ Community Associations ▪ Unincorporated Services Committee ▪ Eden and Castro Valley Municipal Area Committees ▪ Board Transportation and Planning Committee ▪ Planning Commission ▪ Board of Supervisors

Outreach Tools and Purpose

This section discusses tools used to encourage public participation in the EJ Element process.

Tool	Purpose / Use	Lead	Timing / Schedule
Survey(s)	*To receive initial input from community about health and wellness issues that impact them to help guide the development of the EJ Element.* Survey questions also used as polling questions for first community meeting.	ESA – Design of survey. Tabulation of results County – Electronic distribution TVHC – grassroots distribution	Project start through Community meeting #2 – August 25
County Website	*To serve as a repository of project information and to provide a consistent source of information and transparency about the development EJ Element.* Frequent posting of updates and announcements, meeting information, agendas, etc.	County CDA collaborated with County webmaster. Information provided by County, ESA and Envirocom.	Duration of the project
Social media and Media Toolkit	*To standardize the look and style of outreach information for use by the Project Team, Community Partner, community activists, etc.* Templates for partners to share on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, email). Press release or background sheet suitable for reuse in neighborhood newsletter and calendar announcement.	County to circulate through Gov Delivery and partner agencies, and post on County website. Envirocom to distribute and make available by request.	Start 4-6 weeks before a community meeting and post updates frequently.
Community Events *Example: health fairs, festivals and food distribution programs*	*To reach people directly in the project area who are likely to have firsthand knowledge of conditions and needs.* Person-to-Person opportunity for surveys, distribution of promotional materials, etc.	TVHC to be the "person on the street" for specific events the Promotores can attend. ESA, County and Envirocom to provide materials	Duration of the project. 4 – 6 weeks prior to a community meeting
Poster / Flyer	*To promote the Community meeting(s).* Made available through the	ESA or Envirocom to design. County to approve and to print.	4 – 6 weeks prior to a community meeting

Tool	Purpose / Use	Lead	Timing / Schedule
	website, social media tool kit or via request. A tangible product to be distributed to libraries, community centers, etc. To be posted in key places like announcement and community boards.	Circulate by mail or drop-off.	
Fact Sheet / info Sheet **Talking Points**	*To provide background information on the EJ Element, subjects covered, schedule, meetings, etc.* A tangible paper copy to be left at libraries and other community gathering places that people can take as a reminder or to have more information. Also, to be used by Promotores as talking points and distributed by the Promotores	ESA and Envirocom to design County to print Promotores to distribute	4-6 weeks prior to a meeting
Government / Community Events-Meetings: ▪ Eden Area and Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Councils (MAC) ▪ Planning Commission ▪ Unincorporated Services Committee ▪ Board of Supervisors	*To bring the EJ Element draft to the various community and elected leaders for comment and eventual approval.* • Opportunity for further engagement to hear from community members and for the Project Team to clearly present the plan, and to inform decision-makers about the project. Receive comments and recommendations from the public and from decision makers.	County sets meeting dates and requests space on agendas. ESA and/or Envirocom to participate as outlined in contract.	Final phase of the project. Takes place after Community Meeting #3

Summary of Implementation to Date for Public Information and Engagement

To generate public interest in the project and to encourage public participation and attendance, the Project Team performed or implemented the following for publicity, promotion and outreach for Community Meetings 1 and 2. These activities will be reviewed and enhanced or modified for Community Meeting 3 based on feedback to earlier outreach and lessons learned.

Category	Task	Responsibility
invitations/ reminders	• Design graphic suitable for invite, poster announcements and flyers and other materials • Virtual invites • Emails to individuals and CBO/s • Distribution at key sites and gathering places. • Create and manage a meeting registration link. • Social Media Posting	Envirocom and ESA for flyers/ invitations for community meetings. ESA for zoom link and manage registration process.

Promotion and Publicity	• Use materials created for the Tool kit.
	• Distribution of Press Release and Calendar announcements and emails through the various outlets and products listed below:
	  • Local Community newspapers (CV Forum, East Bay Times, Tri-Valley Voice, South County POST)
	  • Social media requests to partners (Planning does not have its own social media accounts)
	    • Facebook
	    • Instagram
	    • Twitter
	    • Next Door
	• County Website (Planning)
	• Post a link back to the County or share information on CBO partner sites.
	• Residents/Neighborhood Groups /HOA
	• Include images / copies of flyers with registration link.
	• Info on Websites and Newsletters
	  • Community Partners: example, Reach ASHLAND, My Eden Voice, Tiburcio Vasquez, etc.
	  • Local libraries (Castro Valley, San Lorenzo)
	  • GovDelivery
		Envirocom with County Staff approvals and coordination
		
		Press releases provide project details and meeting information. Calendar announcements are brief with date, time, and brief description of event to be used in a publication community calendar or on-line media list of upcoming events.
		
		Social media kit includes photo or graphic with heading, all relevant links, and a shareable/ post able blurb about whatever action item the post relates to, e.g., promoting the survey, a meeting or other action.
		
		Envirocom post to social media accounts.
		
		County Staff will work with County Website and ACHCC community partners.
		
		County to send out Gov Delivery info and maintain the list

Preparation / Materials (for an on-site, person to person meeting)	• PowerPoint presentation • Agenda • Sign in sheets (attendance / more info.) • Poster Boards, Maps, other materials • Flyers • Surveys	ESA and Envirocom County Staff to Review
Preparation / Materials (for virtual	• Attempt to track RSVPs through registration.	Envirocom

Category	Task	Responsibility
platform meeting)	• Use appropriate platform for access and desired outcomes (Zoom, Web, Google Hangout, Skype, GoToMeeting, etc. for group. Mentimeter, PollEverywhere, etc. for participation tools. Various benefits to different ones). • Develop surveys and agenda to be posted during the meeting. • PowerPoint presentation • Agenda • Survey and Polling question and plan ahead for when / how they will be integrated into the meeting.	County and ESA
Community Outreach/ Speaking Engagement	Individual Community Leaders, "Connectors" and Promotores to go door-to-door or to various HOA and organizational meetings to share information. Some of this outreach is random "man-on-the street", some will be invitation to various meetings. • CBOs • Residents / Homeowners Associations • TVHC	Envirocom in collaborations with TVHC, County Coordination with ACHCC
Follow-up after each meeting	Send an update to all program participants. Send a "thank you" email with next steps	County to send using GovDelivery system. Use registration list for County Staff to send email (with input from Envirocom/ ESA on content and next steps)

Evaluation

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to identifying effective community engagement methods. The strategies and activities must be tailored to the community. Following each community meeting and other key activity, the Project Team and the Public Engagement consultant should evaluate the success of the strategies and tools used and prepare for any changes. The activities will be refined as needed to engage, inform, consult and receive input from the public. Some evaluative questions to determine the success follow:

Measures of Success
- Did the activity meet the objectives and goals? Did activities yield the expected outcomes or present something different?
- Were the tools and strategies appropriate? Do the tools and strategies need to be changed?
- How did equity apply to and / or appear in the process?

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- What tools and metrics can be used to track and ensure progress and success? Are the outcomes specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely (SMART)?
- Were partnerships formed with affinity and affiliation groups from the individual community members or from community groups that represent various ethnic groups, youth, seniors, etc. within the project area, or who serve in the project area?

Evaluation Metrics
- Number of stakeholders reached via outreach
- Number of stakeholders who attended meetings.
- Number of social posts and engagement (example - hashtag "Eden Area" or "EJ Element")
- Number of materials distributed.
- Number of visits to website
- Number of survey participants
- Indication of # of residents not usually involved becoming involve?
- Who responded to the survey? Who attended the meetings?

Stakeholder Resources

The following are some of the resources and organizations that were contacted or considered in order to implement the outreach effort.

Meeting and Assembly Locations - familiar to residents, easy to access via public transit.

- Castro Valley Public Library, 3600 Norbridge Ave, Castro Valley
- Cherryland Community Center, 278 Hampton Rd, Hayward
- REACH Ashland Youth Center, 16335 E 14th St, San Leandro
- San Lorenzo Public Library, 395 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo
- San Lorenzo Village Community Hall (Village Homes Association), 377 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo
- Eden United Church of Christ / Padres Unidos, 21455 Birch St, Hayward
- Edendale Middle School, 16160 Ashland Ave, San Lorenzo

County Partners, Community Organizations, Associations and Groups

- 4C's of Alameda County
- Alameda County Community Food Bank
- Alameda County Deputy Sheriffs' Activities League
- Ashland Community Association (Hayward Acres)
- Ashland Market Place
- Castro Valley / Eden Area Rotary Club
- Cherryland Community Association
- CV Chabot Parents Club
- Eden Youth & Family Center
- Hayward Area Recreational District (HARD)
- Hope 4 the Heart
- Kiwanis Club of Hayward-Castro Valley
- La Familia
- My Eden Voice
- Our Safehaven
- Padres Unidos – Castro Valley High School
- Padres Unidos – Cherryland

- CV Sanitary Zero Waste Committee
- Castro Valley Soccer Club
- Deaf Counseling Advocacy and Referral Agency (DCARA)
- Eden Area Chamber of Commerce
- Eden Area COVID-19 Vaccine/Testing Sites
- Eden Area Food Distribution Sites
- Eden Area Village
- Eden I&R (Information and Referral)
- REACH Ashland Youth Center
- San Leandro Village Association
- San Lorenzo Little League
- San Lorenzo High School PTSA
- San Lorenzo Unified School District
- Spectrum Community Services
- Tiburicio Vasquez Health Clinic
- Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association of Chanh Hoa
- Village Connect
- YMCA East Bay

Schools

- Arroyo High School
- Brenkwitz Continuation High School
- East Bay Arts High School
- Edendale Middle School
- Castro Valley High School
- KEY Academy Charter School
- KIPP King Collegiate

- Redwood Christian Middle School / High School
- San Leandro High School (Social Justice Academy)
- San Lorenzo High School
- Silver Oak High School

Faith-based Organizations

- Alameda Interfaith Climate Action Network **(**East Bay Working Group - Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers, St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish, San Lorenzo Community Church**)**
- 3-Crosses Church
- Eden United Church of Christ
- First Presbyterian Hayward
- Heart of the Bay Christian Center
- New Life Christian Fellowship
- New Life Christian Church

EXAMPLE of MATERIALS

Copies of all documents and publicity materials can be found at the project website:

https://www.acgov.org/cda/planning/generalplans/engagement.htm