



# Memorandum

**TO:** TRANSPORTATION &  
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**FROM:** John Stufflebean

**SUBJECT:** COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY  
FOR PLANT MASTER PLAN

**DATE:** 01-23-08

Approved

Date

1/25/08

## RECOMMENDATION

Accept this report on the communications strategy for implementing the Master Plan process for the San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant.

## OUTCOME

Approval of this robust communication strategy will establish a communication effort appropriate for the critical San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant (Plant) master planning effort and equivalent to similar efforts at other plants. Extraordinarily important decisions relative to both Plant infrastructure and technology improvements, and Plant bufferland and potentially adjacent land uses, will be made in the next few years that will have impacts on the South Bay as a whole and on the Plant “neighborhood” for generations to come. The communications strategy aims to facilitate public understanding of the need for the facility upgrades. It also enables a process for public and stakeholder input so that any new land use proposals reflect public values, address public concerns, and coordinate with existing land use efforts, such as the City’s General Plan, and regional collaboratives, such as the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project.

## BACKGROUND

On November 20, 2007, the Council awarded an agreement to Carollo Engineers to develop a Master Plan for the Plant. This will entail a three-year planning process scheduled for completion by fall 2010. Once developed, the Plan will involve a 30-year planning/implementation horizon.

Staff committed to presenting a separate communications strategy to the Transportation & Environment Committee in January 2008. A presentation separate from the consulting agreement was planned since Master Plan outreach and engagement activities will be led by ESD’s Communications Division, based on their experience with broad-based community outreach in recycling and other campaigns. ESD staff and the consultant are working closely on coordinating Master Plan and outreach activities.

## **ANALYSIS**

The Plant is owned jointly by the cities of San José and Santa Clara and provides wastewater treatment services to these two cities as well as to the tributary area. The tributary agencies include the City of Milpitas, West Valley Sanitary District (cities of Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno and Saratoga), Burbank Sanitary District, Cupertino Sanitary District (City of Cupertino), Sunol Sanitary District, and County Sanitation Districts #2 and #3.

The Plant thus stands as a regional facility serving 1.4 million residents and 16,000 businesses. It is located near several neighborhoods as well as sensitive South San Francisco Bay environments. Consequently, development of the Master Plan will involve many diverse stakeholders and be of broad public and media interest. The Master Plan will comprehensively address issues such as aging infrastructure, population growth, flood control, odor control, new regulations, habitat protection, land uses, and energy management. It will also prioritize future projects and provide an innovative, clear plan for necessary facility upgrades over the short-, medium- and long-term. The Master Plan aims to enhance the Plant's role as a community asset and to protect public health, the environment and the community's quality of life while maintaining the Plant's ability to operate sustainably.

### ***Communication Goals***

The proposed communications strategy will engage stakeholders and decision-makers on a tributary-wide basis. Communications will be ongoing, and the strategy will adapt over the three-year master planning timeframe based on input received from internal and external participants and decision-makers as described below. Specifically, the communications goals are to:

- Identify and meet the educational and informational needs of specific audiences;
- Enable stakeholder input into the Master Plan's vision, goals, objectives and alternatives;
- Communicate the principles of sustainability, watershed protection and environmental stewardship as part of the overall outreach approach; and
- Develop the stakeholder support that is essential to the successful implementation of the Master Plan.

### ***Stakeholders***

As shown in Attachment A, the audience for the Master Plan has been segmented into seven broad categories: Internal, Decision-Makers, Partners, Stakeholder Organizations, Residential (including multi-lingual), Commercial, and Commuters & Visitors. Communications and engagement opportunities will be tailored to meet the needs and interests of each of these broad categories. To date, staff have identified more than 160 specific stakeholder groups within these audience categories; a full listing is available upon request.

Staff anticipates that additions to the list will be made as the planning effort progresses and as staff works with each Council District office to further improve outreach. The communications

team also anticipates working closely with Council offices to make available material for emails and other outreach to constituents and associations as appropriate.

### *Strategy and Activities*

The communications strategy aims for a sustainable approach to outreach, seeking cost-effective, environmentally-friendly methods. A key objective is to take advantage of existing channels of communications, including non-English channels and audiences. Anticipated activities include:

#### **1. Collaborative Outreach (Non-personal costs included below)**

Staff is setting up a collaborative approach to outreach through the following:

- **Public Outreach Working Group.** Staff held a first meeting with community liaison representatives from the tributary cities and sanitation districts on December 13, 2007 to identify existing channels of communication (websites, newsletters, events, etc.) plus key community contacts. The intent is to better leverage outreach resources. This group will meet again in early 2008 and periodically throughout the process.
- **Stakeholder Organizations.** Staff will work with the officers of organizations to use existing e-lists and newsletters to transmit messages about the Master Plan process.
- **Speakers Bureau.** Presentations to existing standing meetings of key groups such as neighborhood associations, business associations, service organizations, and other stakeholders will be organized and coordinated as appropriate with Council offices.
- **Community Advisory Group.** To secure the perspective of residents on the management and outreach approach to the Master Plan, staff is working to form Community Advisory Group. Based on city population size, at least one and up to four residents from each tributary city will be selected by the Plant's Technical Advisory Committee. Selected residents should reflect the area's diversity, and should be a member of a stakeholder group, e.g., civic, business, environmental, education, etc. All meetings will be open to the public.

#### **2. Plant Tours/Workshops & Community Meetings \$137,000**

Attracting significant numbers of residents to community meetings can be challenging, particularly for a long-term planning process. In contrast, weekend bus tours of the Plant have successfully drawn hundreds of residents since they were re-started in fall 2007. Accordingly, we will continue the weekend tours, but add a one-hour workshop to review the Master Plan process. This format was introduced last fall during the Plant's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary open house, which also introduced the upcoming master planning process to the community. It provides participants an opportunity to observe first-hand the Plant's setting and operations before providing input on the Master Plan. Weekday tours/workshops will be conducted for the business community, regulatory agencies, and other audiences that prefer weekdays. Additional community meetings at central locations are also planned. The estimated budget is based on rental of sufficient 35-passenger buses for the tours (\$80,000) and meeting facilitation at the follow-up workshops and the additional community meetings (\$57,000).

**3. Public Opinion Survey** **\$37,000**

A random-sample telephone survey is planned to assess public awareness of wastewater treatment/infrastructure and to gain a preliminary indication of community priorities, preferred channels of communication, and reaction to potential message architecture. Surveys will also be built into the above-described workshops to enable evaluation of the Master Plan input process and related communication methods.

**4. News Media** **(Non-personal costs included in #8)**

To ensure that the broader community is kept apprised of important milestones, a proactive news media campaign will be undertaken, including ethnic media.

**5. Website Development & Collateral Design** **\$70,000**

Due to security concerns following 9-11, much of the Plant's former website was taken down. The Master Plan rekindles the need to reestablish this valuable community resource for use during the planning process and beyond. Staff plans to work with a design consultant with both website and collateral design capabilities. Design of materials includes flyers, newsletters, posters, and a tributary-wide mailer. Research of other public engagement processes on similar projects shows that all outreach tactics, direct mail continues to elicit the highest response rate. Staff will work with design consultants on best practices to minimize resource usage/impacts in direct mail. The website will include a virtual Plant tour and enable community input and online newsletter subscription. This budget also includes website maintenance for the first year.

**6. Plant Video** **\$50,000**

Ten years have passed since the last Plant video was produced. There is a need to include new features such as the acquisition of former salt pond A-18 as well as updated interviews with Plant staff, the proposed switch to alternative forms of disinfection, the aggressive campaign to further increase the Plant's ability to meet its own energy needs, and other activities.

**7. Translation, Printing and Postage** **\$361,000**

There will be translation, printing, distribution and postage costs associated with the collateral design described in item #5. Materials need to be produced in quantities sufficient to reach the populations of eight cities (1.4 million residents, collectively).

**8. Print Ads and Miscellaneous** **\$45,000**

Print ads will be placed in community and ethnic media to help publicize the tours and meetings, and there will be costs for producing displays and signage.

**Summary of Estimated Costs**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>EST. COST</b>
Collaborative Outreach	N/A
Plant Tours & Community Meetings	\$137,000
Public Opinion Survey	37,000
Media Plan	N/A
Website Development & Collateral Design	70,000
Plant Video	50,000
Translation, Printing & Postage	361,000
Print Ads and Miscellaneous	45,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>* \$700,000</b>

*\* Of the total, City of San José cost is approximately \$470,000.*

***Timeline***

The timeline for Plant Master Plan outreach is as follows:

<b>OUTREACH TASKS</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Public Outreach Working Group	Dec. 13, 2007 and ongoing through process
Development of printed materials/collateral	January – April 2008
Website development & collateral design	January – March 2008
Stakeholder outreach	January 2008 and ongoing through process
Public tours of Plant with workshops	Feb-June 2008 and ongoing through process
Media tours of Plant	Feb/Mar 2008 and at key milestones
Plant Video update	Summer 2008 completion

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

The communications strategy incorporates a number of performance measures including numerical targets for tour/workshop attendance for each targeted audience; survey percentages indicating satisfaction with the participation process; and tracking of emails and phone calls related to proposed increases in sewer rates to fund the five-year Capital Improvement Program.

This staff report provides the Committee with proposed outreach activities to be undertaken during the remainder of Fiscal Year 2007-08. As stated in the Council memo of November 20, 2007, staff will provide regular Master Plan updates to the Executive Group (the Development Cabinet) and annual updates to the Transportation and Environment Committee. Staff will return to Council prior to July 2008 to report on Master Plan progress. Implementation of the communication strategy will be incorporated within each of the progress reports.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST**

This communications strategy has been developed by City staff with input from the Master Plan Steering Committee and the Plant's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). It was presented at a meeting with community liaison representatives from the Tributary Agencies on December 13, 2007. The strategy and proposed funding appropriation was presented to the Master Plan Executive Group (Development Cabinet) on January 3, 2008, and will likewise be discussed with TAC and the Treatment Plant Advisory Committee in February prior to Council review and funding allocations, slated in March.

### **COORDINATION**

This project and memorandum have been coordinated with the City Manager's Budget Office and the City Attorney's Office. This item was discussed with the Plant's Technical Advisory Committee on December 10, 2007 to gather additional input and begin coordination with communication staff from all tributary agencies.

### **FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT**

This Council item is consistent with Council approved Budget Strategy Memo General Principle #2, "We must focus on protecting our vital core City services."

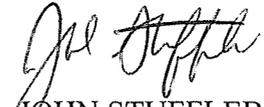
### **COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS**

Communications strategy costs are projected to be \$700,000 for FY 2007-08 (approximately \$470,000 is from the City of San José). Staff proposes obtaining funding by reallocating a portion of fund savings in the Treatment Plant Operating Fund 513. This funding proposal will be presented to the Treatment Plant Advisory Committee and the City Council in February.

During the three-year period from FY 2008-09 through 2010-11, costs are projected to be \$400,000 annually in tributary-wide funding (approximately \$270,000 from the City of San José) and are proposed to be funded from the Plant Capital Fund 512. These proposals will be considered during the regular annual budget process. This cost estimate reflects a continuation of certain elements of the communications strategy including media relations, tours/workshops, targeted stakeholder outreach supported by printed materials (but no additional mass mailings), and periodic public opinion surveys, which also measure outreach goals. If approved, these annual costs plus the \$700,000 estimated for FY 2007-08 would amount to a total cost of \$1.9 million for outreach and community engagement (approximately \$1.28 million for the City of San José).

This budget is roughly comparable to the costs for outreach during the 1993, 2002 and 2007 Recycle Plus Transitions, although those were 18-month rather than 36- to 42-month campaigns. On a similar current wastewater capital improvement project, The City of San Francisco budgeted \$1.5 million for outreach to 850,000 residents.

Given that this Master Plan will have a financial impact to residents of eight cities through sewage rate increases; includes potential significant land use changes to the 2,000-acre bufferlands surrounding the Plant; and leads to one of the most vital and largest public works projects in the South Bay's history, staff considers the outreach and engagement supported by this communications budget as essential to a successful planning and implementation process. A May 2007 Infrastructure Condition Assessment estimated the needed public investment in the Plant at about \$1 billion. The total estimated \$1.9 million budget to inform and engage the public is less than 0.2 % of this investment.



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For questions, please contact Lindsey Wolf, Communications Manager, Environmental Services, at 408-535-8554.

Attachment

## ATTACHMENT A

### Plant Master Plan Communications Strategy - Audience Segmentation

#### A. INTERNAL AUDIENCE (CITY OF SAN JOSÉ)

1. City Manager's Office
2. Environmental Services
3. Other City Departments
4. San José Redevelopment Agency

#### B. DECISION-MAKERS

1. San José City Council/Committees (Plant co-owner)
2. Santa Clara City Council (Plant co-owner)
3. Tributary Agencies, Treatment Plant Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee
4. Community Advisory Group
5. Technical Advisory Group

#### C. PARTNERS

1. Regulatory Agencies
2. Adjacent Landowner Partners (with fiduciary agreements, e.g. Santa Clara Valley Water District)
3. Collaborative Partners (e.g., Watershed Management Initiative and other South Bay water pollution control plants)

#### D. STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS

1. Civic (e.g., PACT and others identified by tributary cities)
2. Commercial (e.g., Silicon Valley Leadership Group, chambers of commerce)
3. Environmental (e.g., Committee for Green Foothills)
4. Educational Institutions (local community colleges and universities)

#### E. RESIDENTIAL

1. Plant service area residents (general public)
2. Adjacent neighborhoods
3. Neighboring property owners/leaseholders (Cilker, Arzino Horse Ranch, Cisco Systems)
4. Key Individuals

#### F. COMMERCIAL

1. Permitted Industrial Users/Dischargers (350)
2. Nonpermitted businesses (15,500)
3. Trades/Special Interest (e.g., Santa Clara County Farm Bureau)

#### G. COMMUTERS & VISITORS

1. Highway 237 commuters (Plant adjacency)
2. Tour participants