

## MEMORANDUM

February 13, 2018

**TO:** MEMBERS, PORT COMMISSION  
Hon. Kimberly Brandon, President  
Hon. Willie Adams, Vice President  
Hon. Leslie Katz  
Hon. Doreen Woo Ho

**FROM:** Elaine Forbes  
Executive Director

**SUBJECT:** Informational presentation on the strategic community engagement strategy for the San Francisco Seawall Earthquake Safety and Disaster Prevention Program (Seawall Earthquake Safety Program, or SESP)

**DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDATION:** Informational Only; No Action Required

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City, through the Port Commission, is endeavoring to make major improvements to the over 100-year-old San Francisco Seawall (Seawall) so the City can withstand the next major earthquake and can prepare for sea level rise. The Seawall underpins the Embarcadero Roadway and provides flood protection to over 500 acres of the City, including the Embarcadero MUNI tunnel. The Seawall, which stretches 3 miles from Fisherman's Wharf to Mission Creek, sits over unstable mud and is vulnerable to lateral spreading and settlement in a major earthquake, which could destroy or seriously damage utilities, light rail and buildings along The Embarcadero.

Major investment in the Embarcadero Seawall is required for The Embarcadero to function how it should after a major seismic event: as a place for people to exit downtown and to access ferries, for first responders to access downtown, for the delivery of supplies, and to remove debris. The Seawall is also subject to current flooding, with lane closures during King Tides, and current flood risk to the Muni tunnel along The Embarcadero.

One of the key challenges of the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program is that the Seawall is unseen infrastructure. Many San Francisco residents do not know about this

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workhorse infrastructure that unpins the Northern waterfront and protects vital public infrastructure. This staff report describes the Port's efforts to initiate a broad, Citywide public education campaign and to develop a program name and slogan to support that effort.

The presentation to the Port Commission on February 13, 2017 will summarize these efforts, and will also include a presentation by the Port's public opinion research firm FM3 Research summarizing the results of a January 11-21 poll of 955 likely San Francisco voters regarding the Seawall and how they would vote on a general obligation bond of up to \$500 million proposed for the November 2018 Citywide ballot.

## **BACKGROUND**

On January 10, 2017, the Port Commission authorized Port staff to issue a Request for Proposals ("RFP") to solicit public relations, communications, and media services for the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program.

On March 6, 2017, the RFP was issued with a not to exceed amount of \$1.7 million. After a competitive process, the Port Commission awarded the contract to the highest ranked respondent, Civic Edge Consulting. The contract was executed for an amount of \$1,695,000, with a four-year term and an option to extend for one year.

The goal of this contract is to develop and execute a comprehensive public relations campaign and strategic marketing program to engage and inform city residents about the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program. This will be an ongoing effort to effectively maintain communications with diverse stakeholders through community outreach, branding, advertising and design services. This informational items provides an update to the Port Commission and the public on work performed to date, agreed upon metrics for the contract, and planned upcoming efforts.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**

This contract will support the goals of the Port's Strategic Plan as follows:

### Engagement:

By regularly engaging in meaningful public participation and incorporate community feedback into Port initiatives, and by keeping the public informed of the financial responsibilities of the Port.

### Livability:

By increasing the proportion of funds spent by the Port with LBE and micro-LBEs.

### Resiliency:

By leading the City's efforts to address threats from earthquakes and flood risk through research and infrastructure improvements to the Seawall and Port property.

## **SEAWALL PROGRAM COMMUNICATIONS TEAM**

Civic Edge Consulting is a woman-owned, LBE, full service public relations firm founded in San Francisco in 2003. The Civic Edge Seawall team includes ten sub-consultants – the majority of which are local firms and LBE partners. Their team includes a Latina-owned local business InterEthnica that will provide translation and multicultural outreach, and two African American owned firms from the city's Bayview district for community outreach and strategic advising (RDJ Enterprises and JBR Partners). The team also includes Copymat, an Asian American owned LBE print team, Slow Clap and lowercase productions. Port staff is very proud that more than 75% of the work on this contract will be performed by LBE firms and the contract team reflects the diversity of our City.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

Port staff asked Civic Edge Consulting and their team of sub-consultants to draft a strategic community engagement strategy for the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program that supports three primary goals:

1. Increase public awareness and support for the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program and the Port of San Francisco across the City, particularly among communities of color and lower-income residents.
2. Create a citywide sense of urgency for the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program.
3. Establish the Port of San Francisco as a trusted steward of public funds via transparency around the public's concerns about cost, timing, and necessity.

The Community Engagement Plan (“Engagement Plan”) outlines strategies for carrying out thoughtful, effective, and ongoing public outreach to explain:

- the earthquake and flood risks to the Seawall,
- solutions being developed by the Port and its engineering experts,
- the Port's role in shepherding this vital public works effort through the first phase of the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program.

The Engagement Plan articulates the tools—from public meetings and newsletters to social media—which will be used to reach residents and the broader San Francisco community. It contains guidelines for how Port staff and the Civic Edge team will work with other City departments, community-based organizations, and neighborhood associations to provide information to the public.

The Engagement Plan will be a living document that guides the work, and as decisions are made and strategies evolve, Port staff will direct Civic Edge to update the document so that it reflects current work and best thinking.

## **SEAWALL NAMING, MESSAGING AND BRANDING**

Civic Edge led Port staff in a messaging and branding exercise for the San Francisco Seawall Program, including reviewing graphic design options and messaging concepts.

After examining other City capital programs including the Water System Improvement Program (WSIP), the Sewer System Improvement Program (SSIP) and the Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response (ESER) Bond, Port staff have developed a new name for this effort. The new name is informed by voter priorities, and reflects the fact that the Embarcadero Seawall effort is really a program that will be executed over several decades or more, requiring new investment and multiple phases, rather than being a single project.

Long title: San Francisco Seawall Earthquake Safety and Disaster Prevention Program

Short title: Seawall Earthquake Safety Program (SESP)

Shorthand: Seawall Program

The slogan for the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program is: “Protect Our City: Strengthen the Seawall.”

Key Seawall messages include:

1. San Francisco Faces Safety Risks.
2. The Port Has a Track Record of Success with Large-Scale Projects.
3. We Can't Afford **Not** to Take Action.
4. A Resilient Seawall is Part of SF's Vision for a Resilient City.

## **STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

Civic Edge is working closely with the CH2M team to ensure that education efforts are thoughtfully connected to the work happening on the engineering side of the project. CH2M, Kearns and West, and Civic Edge have been working closely over the last few months to develop a collaborative stakeholder engagement effort.

The overarching goal of all stakeholder involvement efforts is to ensure key San Francisco Seawall Program stakeholders understand the urgent need for the program, see the Port of San Francisco, under the leadership of the larger City, as a trusted fiscal steward of public funds, and feel comfortable amplifying our messages to their constituencies.

For the purposes of the San Francisco Seawall Program, every resident in San Francisco is a Seawall Stakeholder. For ease of planning and organization, we have separated all of the stakeholders into 11 draft stakeholder groups:

1. Partner Stakeholders
2. Policy Stakeholders
3. Regulatory Stakeholders
4. Funding Stakeholders
5. Political Stakeholders
6. Community Stakeholders
7. Established Working Group Stakeholders
8. Port Tenant Stakeholders
9. Merchant Stakeholders
10. Big Business Stakeholders
11. General Public Stakeholders

While stakeholder engagement and community outreach can often be interchangeable, for the purposes of our planning, stakeholder engagement is distinguished from community outreach in that we are facilitating two-way communication with a stakeholder or stakeholder group with a particular and vested interest in the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program (e.g. finance, design, community benefits, etc.).

Stakeholder involvement strategies such as group presentations and individual meetings will certainly offer an opportunity to teach stakeholders about the program, and we will be thoughtful in our approach to ensure they have an opportunity to share their feedback. We will look to create opportunities to enable stakeholders to weigh in on relevant and timely topics (even before project planning begins).

Current stakeholder involvement strategies underway include:

- Stakeholder assessment, including interviews and an online survey to guide further strategy development
- Creating a stakeholder database to support our work, track all engagements, and keep the entire Seawall team up-to-date in real-time
- Timely [sfseawall.com](http://sfseawall.com) updates in clear, easy to understand language for stakeholders seeking additional information
- Creation of a monthly Seawall stakeholder e-Newsletter
- Dissemination of Seawall information to stakeholders
- Door-to-door Port tenant engagement
- Community presentation “roadshow” to community based organizations and groups in San Francisco
- Seawall tours
- Big business engagement
- Project implementation-specific engagement activities, including:
  - Targeted stakeholder briefings
  - Engaging existing stakeholder working groups
  - Convening new stakeholder work groups
  - Public workshops and design charrettes

## **SEAWALL EARTHQUAKE SAFETY PROGRAM OUTREACH**

Civic Edge will aim to engage San Francisco residents in meaningful exchanges about the Seawall over the next year by sending a street team of Port Seawall ambassadors to meet with members of the public at civic and community events, such as concerts, Sunday Streets, farmer's markets, street festivals, and back-to-school events.

Additionally, street intercept outreach will be conducted throughout the neighborhoods that would be most impacted by a Seawall failure and the neighborhoods that are traditionally harder to reach through community events. The following strategies ensure that we are connecting with a broad range of residents, accounting for geographic, linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity:

### 1. Low-Income Residents and Communities of Concern

Port staff and Civic Edge will continue to engage low-income residents and communities of concern by meeting people in their own neighborhoods or at their most-frequented destinations. Over the next year, we will target neighborhood-focused events, intercept residents at key community locations, and engage with community based organizations. Each month, we will develop a calendar of outreach events or opportunities for approval by Port staff. These events will likely include:

- Tabling at neighborhood farmers' markets, such as the Mission Community Market or the new Bayview Farmers Market
- Intercept outside neighborhood library branches
- Intercept at community recreation centers, Beacon centers, or YMCAs
- Intercept at major transit stations
- Intercept at large parks, such as Crocker Amazon Playground or Balboa Park
- Tabling at neighborhood specific events

### 2. Residents Along the Southeastern Waterfront

The Civic Edge team will work closely with RDJ Enterprise to develop a targeted outreach plan for the Southeast waterfront. InterEthnica will review the Southeast Waterfront Plan to ensure that it accounts for the linguistic and cultural needs of the many non-English speaking communities who reside in the neighborhoods along the Southeastern waterfront. Outreach implementation of our robust Southeast waterfront plan will be supported by the expert teams at JBR Partners and Caribou Public Relations.

### 3. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Residents

Forty-four percent of San Franciscans speak a language other than English at home. Civic Edge is working closely with InterEthnica, a team with extensive experience working with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and low-income communities, and the community based leaders that serve San Francisco's LEP population to make sure they are included in the conversation about the Seawall.

Civic Edge and Port staff have begun conducting outreach across the city on the Seawall project, creating informational materials to support this outreach, and creating fun "swag" to entice residents to participate in our outreach activities.

## **INNOVATIVE OUTREACH**

The primary goal of our innovative Seawall outreach strategies is to engage a multi-generational, cross-section of residents who are less likely to connect through traditional channels. These strategies will support and develop residents' understanding of the urgency of the Seawall Project, as well as their knowledge of the Port of San Francisco as the steward of the San Francisco waterfront. The following strategies are included in the Community Engagement Plan:

1. Innovative social media campaigns
2. "Makers" and "Mapping" Partnerships
3. Art Installations along the Seawall

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE**

Civic Edge and Port staff have successfully completed planning and community engagement preparation work, including:

- Three drafts of the Community Engagement Plan
- Multiple graphic design packets
- Outreach calendars
- Social media calendar of posts
- More detailed work plans for guiding work including:
  - Southeast Waterfront Community Engagement Work Plan
  - Waterfront Photo Contest Work Plan
  - "Makers" and "Mapping" Partnerships Work Plan
  - Marketing and Advertising Work Plan
  - Market Research Work Plan
  - Big Business Work Plan
  - Seawall Stakeholder Tours Work Plan
  - Community Presentations "Roadshow" Work Plan

Civic Edge and Port staff have produced a number of other deliverables, including:

- King Tides photography
- Fun waterfront photography
- Draft media one-pagers
- Website updates
- Southeast San Francisco Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Internal Seawall FAQ
- Seawall PowerPoint presentation
- Palm Cards to support outreach
- Palm Cards to support stakeholder survey outreach
- "Swag," including fidget spinners and Seawall legos

Port leadership made the decision that Port staff should directly engage San Francisco residents. Civic Edge supported this through staff training. The Port now has a speakers bureau that includes the Executive Director, senior staff and representation

from every Port division. Civic Edge team has supported Port staff in a variety of successful outreach and public engagement projects since September 2017:

- Conducted outreach at 15 large events across San Francisco
- Collected 1,050 emails for continued Seawall engagement
- Distributed 4,500 pieces of Seawall collateral to residents via this engagement
- Reached 65,000 people via Facebook
- Reached 42,100 via Instagram
- Added nearly 1,000 new Port followers on these platforms
- Engaged more than 2,000 residents via likes, comments, or other online engagement
- Secured “Mapping” partnerships with Strava, who created the “Seawall Segments” on their platform
- Secured a “Makers” partnership with a handful of breweries and Ritual Coffee, who plans to create a Seawall espresso in summer 2018
- Began community presentations at community organizations across San Francisco

The Community Engagement Plan articulates three metrics for completion by December 2017:

1. Project messaging and branding complete
2. Community engagement plan complete and implementation started across all strategies
3. Seawall communications begin across San Francisco

Civic Edge and Port staff have successfully achieved all three metrics. The Community Engagement Plan articulates three metrics for completion by March 2018:

1. 25k residents engaged
2. 2,500 online engagements via social media
3. 1,500 residents opt in via email
4. 150 community groups engaged
5. 30 community presentations
6. 50 media hits

Port staff will return to the Port Commission in the summer of 2018 for the next update on public relations, communications, media services, and related professional services for the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program.

Prepared by: Renée Dunn Martin, Communications Director