



Date: October 19, 2009

To: Governing Board

From: Judy Kelly, Director, San Francisco Estuary Partnership
Maira McEnespy, Deputy Program Manager, State Coastal Conservancy,
San Francisco Bay Area Program

Subject: **Expenditure of San Francisco Foundation Grant Funds to Support Public Opinion Polling/Research**

Summary

At its July 29, 2009 meeting, the Governing Board voted to accept Save The Bay's *Funding Options Report* (SCI Consulting Group for Save The Bay, July 2009), including its recommendation that the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (Authority) undertake public opinion research, and accept San Francisco Foundation (SFF) grant funds to implement the report's recommendations. It was noted that because the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) provides the Authority with administrative support, the Authority will follow ABAG's procurement procedures for selecting a contractor subject to final authorization by the Authority.

Funding Options Report Recommendations

The *Funding Options Report* highly recommends undertaking a public opinion survey and feasibility analysis, regardless of the Authority's ultimate choice of ballot funding measure (i.e., regional or smaller area). The report recommends that the Authority undertake this research in two phases:

- **Phase I:** Baseline survey to determine the public's level of support for Bay restoration and to determine what projects garner the most voter support. Phase I would build on research already conducted by Save The Bay.¹
- **Phase II:** More comprehensive survey to refine the ballot measure language and to develop specific themes for public information and outreach; would occur after the Authority has determined the timing, funding mechanism and scope of the projects it will fund.

¹ A 2006 Save The Bay/EMC poll documented support above 80% among San Francisco Bay Area residents for a \$10 annual tax or fee to fund what was described as a 50-year, \$2 billion restoration of San Francisco Bay.

More specifically, Phase I work would develop an overall strategy and timeline for moving forward with a measure, and be designed to address the following issues:

- Quantify current voter concern with Bay quality and Bay restoration compared with other local issues;
- Test voter reaction to a proposed parcel tax to fund Bay restoration projects;
- Determine the dollar level of support that is likely to garner in excess of 2/3 support from likely voters and the corresponding total annual revenues that could be generated;
- Evaluate voter reaction to potential components of a measure, including language and tax amount.

In addition, Phase I work would help determine what type of measure might meet with voter approval at the 2/3 level, recommend an election timeline to improve the likelihood of success, and provide information about how much of a privately funded campaign effort may be required.

Estimated Costs and Funding Mechanism

The *Funding Options Report* estimates the following costs for Phases I and II:

- Phase I: \$20,000 to \$50,000. A baseline telephone survey (approximately 12 minutes) will range from \$20,000 (600 interviews) to \$50,000 (up to 1,200 total interviews, to allow for interpretation of county-by-county results).
- Phase II: \$18,000 to \$40,000. An additional telephone survey (approximately 18 minutes) to refine the language of a measure and develop specific themes for public information and outreach will range from \$18,000 (400 interviews) to \$40,000 (600 interviews).

The Authority has now received a grant in the amount of \$75,000 from the San Francisco Foundation to conduct this work. Staff recommends allocating up to \$50,000 to begin Phase I now. Staff anticipates requesting an extension of SFF grant funds to begin Phase II later in 2010, and will continue to fundraise for Phase II work (to supplement the remaining SFF grant funds) while Phase I work is underway.

Proposed Workplan

- Task 1: Retain a consultant to conduct Phase I work (November 2009 to January 2010).
 - Staff will prepare an RFP for Committee review to conduct Phase I work as described above in this memo and in the *Funding Options Report*. Staff will specify in the RFP scope of work times/tasks in which input will be received by the Governing Board and/or its Advisory Committee on survey questions and on the draft findings.
 - Committee will review and approve the draft RFP.
 - ABAG will implement its contractor/consultant selection process.
 - Committee will approve the contractor selection.
 - ABAG will execute contract.

Expenditure of San Francisco Foundation Grant Funds

October 19, 2009

3

- Task 2: Implement Phase I work (January 2010 to June 2010).
 - Governing Board will submit input on survey questions at its January 2010 meeting.
 - Contractor/consultant will conduct the surveys and analysis.
 - Contractor/consultant will prepare draft report.
 - Governing Board will provide input on the draft report to Contractor/consultant and staff at its April 2010 meeting.
 - Contractor/consultant will submit final report.

- Task 3: Prepare for Phase II work (begin June 2010).
 - Once Phase I work is complete and recommendations are in-hand, staff will await Governing Board direction regarding implementation of Phase II work (possible discussion of Phase I recommendations at the Governing Board's July 2010 meeting). Staff will revise this workplan to include Phase II work when appropriate, and will request an extension on expenditure of the remaining SFF grant funds.

Recommendations

(1) Establish a Committee of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority consisting of the Governing Board Chair and two other members to work with staff to implement the Proposed Workplan contained in this memo; and

(2) Review, modify as desired, and approve the Proposed Workplan regarding expenditure of San Francisco Foundation grant funds in the amount of \$75,000 to support public opinion polling/research.