

Section 11 – Public Communication Program

PLEASE NOTE: *The Public Information Specialists do not utilize Unifier. If Public Relations-related information is required to be entered into Unifier, please also email the information to the corresponding Public Information Specialist (Lisa Bolen for South Shore, Surry, and Eastern Shore; Shawn Maxfield for North Shore and Small Communities). When using any HRSD letterhead documents, **ensure you have the most up-to-date Commission letterhead**. If mailing any documents, use the main office's address on envelopes.*

- I. Introduction – HRSD's Public Communication Program is intended to develop public awareness of planned projects and define the roles of project partners in engaging the community. This program includes standards; however, parts of this program may not be implemented if the HRSD Communication Department's staff determines a project will have minor public impact.

The following forms/formats shall be used in the administration of the project. The Project Manager (PM) and FIRM will provide a detailed project briefing to HRSD's Director of Communications and HRSD's Public Information Specialist and, utilizing the aide of the **Public Communication Program Checklist**, will determine the extent of the program's implementation and customize the forms/formats for each project. The FIRM may be requested to assist with additional documentation or public outreach needs deemed appropriate for a project or locality.

- Attachment A: Public Communication Program Checklist
 - Please complete the first section in grey prior to meeting with the Director and Public Information Specialist.
- II. Engage with Locality Staff - HRSD representatives (staff and FIRM) shall meet with representatives of the locality in which a project will occur to discuss the project. The PM shall ensure appropriate information is forwarded to and received from a single point of contact throughout the project's life. This individual will be known as our locality partner (LP) or their designee. The FIRM shall attend these meetings throughout the design and construction phases.
- III. Alert Public Officials – HRSD's PM, or their designee, will be responsible for ensuring project information is provided to our assigned LP. The FIRM may be requested to provide additional information and or respond by phone or in person for this effort throughout the design and construction phases.
- IV. Identify project stakeholders – The FIRM shall compile a list of all parties or entities that may be affected by construction activities located along the project route requiring outreach/coordination during the project. This list shall include but is not limited to civic leagues, residents, businesses, schools, school bus routes,

churches, trash collection, road detours/closures, and mass transportation routes. The list shall contain the following: contact information, full address (physical and mailing, if different), project impact, and operating hours. This initial list shall be provided to the Public Information Specialist during the first design submittal (e.g. 30% design) for review and comment. The FIRM shall then log this list into HRSD's Unifier Enterprise Project Management System - Stakeholders List located under Reports.

- Attachment B: Stakeholder List-Template

V. Participate in Public Open House/Community Meetings – In a cooperative effort, HRSD will assist each locality in fulfilling their public communication guidelines. If an informational open house is required by a locality, HRSD will request the locality to establish a date and time and secure a location for the meeting. Utilizing the advertisement submission schedule, ensure the specific advertisement deadlines outlined in the submission schedule will be met allowing time for public response. HRSD's Public Information Specialist or the Director of Communications, in the Specialist's absence, will advertise a **Willingness to Hold** an Informational Open House for a project when a locality requests it. If an additional notification is to be mailed, at the request of the locality, the expectation will be that the locality will print and mail the open house notice provided by HRSD to the addresses identified by the locality and in the locality's records (as resident and property owner, if different). HRSD's staff and the FIRM will attend and present the project information in an Open House format. If needed, HRSD representatives (staff and/or FIRM) will also meet with civic leagues or business associations at their request to discuss the project.

- Attachment C: Willingness to Hold Advertisement-Example
- Attachment D: Informational Open House Advertisement-Example
- Attachment E: Open House Notice to the Public – Template
- Attachment F: Open House Requirements/Guidelines
- Attachment G: Open House Sign-In Sheet
- Attachment H: Open House Comment Card
- Attachment I: Advertisement Submission Schedule
- Project Display Board – ask Public Information Specialist for sample boards

VI. Virtual Presentation for Open House – The virtual presentation will be used in addition to an in-person Open House to allow the public to view the information and provide feedback if they cannot attend the in-person Open House. Please refer to Open House Requirements/Guidelines (Attachment F) for virtual presentation requirements.

- Attachment J: Virtual Presentation PowerPoint Example

VII. Establish a Project Webpage – HRSD will establish a page on its website for each project of specific public interest or impact. The FIRM shall be responsible for compiling the information needed using the HRSD provided templates. The information provided shall include an overview, schedule, the project team,

contact information, a list of roads affected and separately, a list of project-specific frequently asked questions and a project map. HRSD's Public Information Specialist and PM will review the information before it is uploaded to the website. **The FIRM shall submit these documents to the Public Information Specialist the month prior to, and no later than the month of, the construction phase of the project being taken to the HRSD Commission for approval.**

- Attachment K: Website- Project Webpage – Template
- Attachment L: Website- Project FAQs – Template
- Attachment M: Website Project Map - Template

VIII. Website Updates – Updates to the project webpage are expected at the end of each month once staging/construction has begun. **In the last week or two of the month (depending on holidays the Public Information Specialist will send an email to each Project Manager that has projects that are currently on the website, along with the project schedule and most recent project update for their revision. The PM will reply to the email with the updates to those projects for that month and include any updated project maps.**

IX. Stakeholder Updates – The website has a button allowing stakeholders to sign up to receive notifications when a project webpage is updated. Once the project page is added to the website, the FIRM shall send an email to the stakeholders notifying them of how to sign up to receive project update notifications. This activity should occur within two business days of being notified by HRSD staff that the project has been placed on the website. The FIRM shall log these email notifications using HRSD's Unifier Enterprise Project Management System – PR Notifications located under Reports.

- Attachment N: Stakeholders Notification Update

X. Distribute Project Introductory Notice to Neighbors – HRSD's Public Information Specialist, PM, and FIRM will work collectively to draft project notices to be distributed to businesses and residences affected by a project. The FIRM is responsible for the distribution of the HRSD Communication Department's approved notice a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to mobilization or any construction activities. Work shall not be permitted to begin prior to the 30-day notice. The FIRM shall log this distribution into HRSD's Unifier Enterprise Project Management System - PR Notifications located under Reports.

- Attachment O: Project Introductory Notice – Template

XI. Post Project Signs (If Applicable) – When working on City assets and when required by the locality, standard signs shall be placed at strategic locations in a neighborhood to notify the public that an HRSD project is underway and to provide contact information. The Public Information Specialist will approve the sign display order, and the contractor shall be responsible for procuring and installing the signage at the site(s) as defined by the Public Information Specialist

or the locality prior to the start of construction.

- Attachment P: Project Sign-Sample
- Attachment Q: HRSD Project Site-Sign Specifications
- Attachment R: HRSD Sign & Base Specifications-Product Sheet

XII. Construction Update Notices – Notices are developed by the FIRM, utilizing HRSD’s approved templates, and provided to the Communications Department for review fourteen days prior to any work commencing in the affected area. The FIRM shall ensure the distribution of notices by the contractor to all affected residences and businesses at least seven days prior to any work occurring in the affected work area. Work shall not be permitted to begin until the distribution of these notices has been confirmed by HRSD and logged into HRSD’s Unifier Enterprise Project Management System – PR Notifications located under Reports. Coordination of this effort will take place with the Public Information Specialist and requires HRSD Communication Department approval.

- Attachment S: Construction Update Notices – Template

XIII. Additional Notices – Notices advising affected properties of disruptive activities shall be distributed seven (7) days before the work begins by the FIRM. Additional notice may be required 24 hours prior, the morning of work, and once completed as directed by HRSD. The FIRM shall be responsible for drafting the notices, utilizing HRSD’s approved templates, and providing them to the Communications Department for review fourteen days prior to the work beginning.

The contractor will be responsible for distribution of the notices to the public. **The FIRM shall ensure work will not begin until these notices have been distributed**, confirmed by HRSD, and logged into HRSD’s Unifier Enterprise Project Management System – PR Notifications located under Reports. Coordination of this effort shall take place with the Public Information Specialist.

- Attachment T: Emergency Repair Work Notice-Template
- Attachment U: Emergency Work-Pump and Haul Notice-Template
- Attachment V: CCTV Inspection Notice
- Attachment W: CCTV Notice with cleaning and inspection
- Attachment X: Smoke Testing Notice
- Attachment Y: Smoke Testing Notice-Door Card Hanger
- Attachment Z: Survey Notice
- Attachment AA: Survey Notices – Mailing and Tracking Log
- Attachment BB: Lateral Work Notice
- Attachment CC: Reminder Notice to Neighbors-Day Before Work: cleaning, inspection, lateral, etc.
- Attachment DD: Completed Work Notice to Neighbors-Work Adjacent to Home: cleaning, inspection, lateral, etc.
- Attachment EE: Boring Notice-Property Adjacent

- Attachment FF: Boring Notice-Property Access
- Attachment GG: Unplanned Power Interruption Notice
- Attachment HH: Unplanned Water/Sewer Service Interruption Notice
- Attachment II: Project Closeout Notice

XIV. Post Variable Message Boards (VMB) – VMBs shall be utilized in areas with high traffic counts, main thoroughfares, cut-throughs, or when deemed necessary to reach a larger audience. The VMBs shall be set up one to two weeks before any work and located in a manner that will advise affected traffic in all directions. In most cases, an accepted three-screen message would detail: [1] the type of work to begin (e.g., road work, utility work, overnight work, milling and paving), [2] the expected date range of the work, and [3] additional information if identified (e.g., flaggers, lane shift, lane closed). The use of, timing, and messaging of VMBs will be coordinated with the Public Information Specialist and PM.

XV. Traffic Advisories/Media Releases – HRSD’s Director of Communications, or the Public Information Specialist in the Director’s absence, will draft media releases and traffic advisories when needed. These will be coordinated with and forwarded to the locality’s media contact or designee for their internal distribution and use. Traffic advisories must be distributed 24 hours ahead of any detours occurring. Please ensure the Public Information Specialist has the date range of the detour and the approved traffic control map to aid in the creation of the traffic advisory. **Allow five business days for creation and review of the advisory prior to distribution.** If the planned detours are delayed, the PM or FIRM must inform the Communications Department of any date changes ahead of the advisory distribution.

- Attachment JJ: Media Release – Traffic Advisory Example

XVI. Response to Public and Media Inquiries – All media inquiries received shall be directed to HRSD’s Director of Communications, or Public Information Specialist in the Director’s absence. The FIRM shall address any public inquiry with courtesy and then forward to the Public Information Specialist for additional assistance, if needed. HRSD and the FIRM will strive for same-day response during business hours and to reply no later than the next business day to after-hours inquiries. The FIRM will be requested to provide information and/or respond to the inquiring party and to track and log these inquiries using HRSD’s Unifier Enterprise Project Management System – Citizen Inquiry Log located under Reports. The FIRM shall verify that all inquiries or concerns have been resolved, recorded, and marked as closed in Unifier Enterprise Project Management System before closing out the project.

Media guidance will be provided to the project team by the Director of Communications at the beginning of each project or as requested by the project team. HRSD wallet-size media/project inquiry cards can be provided for the field staff to carry and provide to the media or any public inquiry beyond their expertise.

XVII. Social Media Mini Updates may be requested throughout a project during sensitive and highly visible work, upon reaching large milestones, or at completion. Coordinate with the Public Information Specialist and HRSD's PM for the need for these updates. When requested by HRSD, these updates shall consist of several photos of the relevant work at the job site, corresponding captions, and a brief (100 words or less), non-technical, simplified explanation of the activity taking place within the photos. This is a non-technical **update intended for the general public to keep them informed of the project and shall be worded so the activity can easily be understood by the public.**

XVIII. Attachments:

- A. Public Communication Program
- B. Stakeholder List Template
- C. Sample - Willingness to Hold
- D. Sample - Open House Advertisement
- E. Open House Notice template
- F. Open House Requirement & Guidelines
- G. Open House Sign in Sheet
- H. Open House Comment Card
- I. Advertisement Submission Schedule
- J. Sample - Virtual Presentation PowerPoint
- K. Website – Project Webpage Template
- L. Website – Project FAQ Template
- M. Website – Project Map Template
- N. Stakeholders Notification Update
- O. Project Introductory Notice Template
- P. Project Signs Sample
- Q. HRSD Project Site Sign Specifications
- R. Sign & Base Specs – Universal Rubber Base System
- S. Construction Update Notices Template

- T. Emergency Repair Work Notice
- U. Emergency Work Pump and Haul Template
- V. CCTV inspection Notice
- W. CCTV Notice with Cleaning & Inspection
- X. Smoke Testing Notice Template
- Y. Smoke Testing Door Card Hangar Template
- Z. Survey Notice
- AA. Survey Notices Mailing and Tracking Template
- BB. Lateral Work Notice
- CC. Reminder Notice to Neighbors – Day of Work Reminder
- DD. Completed Work Notice – Adjacent to Home
- EE. Boring Notice – Property Adjacent
- FF. Borings Notice – Property Access
- GG. Unplanned Power Interruption Notice
- HH. Unplanned Service Interruption Notice
- II. Project Closeout Notice Template
- JJ. Media Release – Traffic Advisory Sample

End of Section