

PLEASE NOTE: The Public Information Specialists do not use the Enterprise Project Management (Unifier) system. 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 letterhead**. If mailing any documents, use the main office's address on envelopes.

Section 11 – Public Communication Program

- 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 Chief Communication Officer (CCO) and HRSD's Public Information Specialist and, utilizing 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 CCO and Public Information Specialist.

- II. Engage with Locality Staff - HRSD representatives (staff and/or 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 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 include the following: contact information, full address (including both physical and mailing addresses, 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 the Unifier 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 its public communication guidelines. If the locality requires an informational open house, HRSD will request that the locality 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 CCO, in the Specialist's absence, will help draft a **Willingness to Hold** an Informational Open House for a project when a locality requests it. The Engineering Admin Assistant will advertise 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: Open House 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 event. Please refer to Open House Requirements/Guidelines (Attachment F) for virtual presentation requirements. For an example of a Virtual PowerPoint Presentation, ask the Public Information Specialist.

VII. Establish a Project Webpage – HRSD will create a dedicated webpage on its website for each project of specific public interest. The FIRM shall be responsible for compiling the information needed using the HRSD-provided templates. The information provided should 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 project being taken to the HRSD Commission for approval.**

- Attachment J: Website- Project Webpage – Template
- Attachment K: Website- Project FAQs – Template
- Attachment L: 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/Consultant who has projects that are currently on the website, along with the project schedule and the most recent project update for their revision. The PM/Consultant 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 Unifier – PR Notifications located under Reports.

- Attachment M: Stakeholders Notification Update-Template

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 Unifier - PR Notifications located under Reports.

- Attachment N: 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, and the contractor shall be responsible for procuring and installing the signage at the site(s) as defined by the locality prior to the start of construction.

- Attachment O: Project Sign-Template
- Attachment P: HRSD Project Site-Sign Specifications
- Attachment Q: 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 ten to 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 residents 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** and logged into Unifier – PR Notifications located under Reports. Coordination of this effort will take place with the Public Information Specialist and requires HRSD Communication Department approval.

- Attachment R: 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. The FIRM shall be responsible for drafting the notices, utilizing HRSD’s approved templates, and providing them to the Communications Department for review ten to fourteen days prior to 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 Unifier – PR Notifications located under Reports.

- Attachment S: Emergency Repair Work Notice-Template

- Attachment T: Emergency Work-Pump and Haul Notice-Template
- Attachment U: CCTV Inspection Notice-Template
- Attachment V: CCTV Notice with Cleaning and Inspection-Template
- Attachment W: Initial Smoke Testing Notice-Template
- Attachment X: Reminder Smoke Testing Notice-Door Hanger-Template
- Attachment Y: Survey Notice-Template
- Attachment Z: Survey Notices – Mailing and Tracking Log
- Attachment AA: Lateral Work Notice-Template
- Attachment BB: Boring Notice-Property Adjacent-Template
- Attachment CC: Boring Notice-Property Access-Template
- Attachment DD: Unplanned Power Interruption Notice-Template
- Attachment EE: Unplanned Water/Sewer Service Interruption Notice-Template
- Attachment FF: Project Closeout Notice-Template

XIV. Post Variable Message Boards (VMB) – VMB's 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 CCO or the Public Information Specialist, in the CCO'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. Larger detours will be distributed up to 7 days ahead. 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 GG: Media Release – Traffic Advisory Example

XVI. Response to Public and Media Inquiries – All media inquiries received shall be directed to contact HRSD's CCO or Public Information Specialist, in the CCO's absence. The FIRM shall address any public inquiry with courtesy and then forward

to the Public Information Specialist. HRSD and the FIRM will strive for same-day response during business hours and 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 Unifier – 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 before closing out the project.

Media guidance will be provided to the project team by the CCO 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. Attachments –

- Attachment A: Public Communication Program Checklist
- Attachment B: Stakeholder List-Template
- Attachment C: Willingness to Hold Advertisement-Example
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End of Section