



# Water Forward Community Engagement Strategy Update

1/12/2021





# Water Forward 2018 Community Engagement Strategy

## Austin Integrated Water Resource Plan Public Outreach Framework

### Goals

#### Community Values

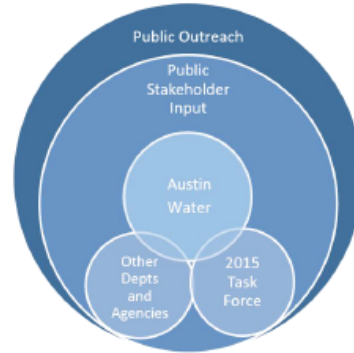
Identify community values that should be reflected in the IWRP

#### Diverse Stakeholder Input

Seek input from stakeholders which reflect the diversity of Austin's population and customers.

#### Public Education

Inform and educate the community throughout the plan development process



Public outreach and education efforts for the Integrated Water Resources Plan will gather meaningful stakeholder input to develop a plan that is representative of Austin community values.

### Potential Audiences

- Austin Water customers
- Diverse stakeholder groups
  - Underrepresented groups
  - Groups with high-interest
- Community groups
- Regional agencies and stakeholders
- Policymakers

### Potential Strategies Toolbox

#### Existing Initiatives & Outlets

- Imagine Austin and CodeNext: Sustainably Manage our Water Resources and Green Infrastructure Programs
- Water use report software (DropCounter)
- City of Austin Community Registry
- Coordination with other department and agencies

#### Public Events & Opportunities

- Public stakeholder workshops
- Focus groups
- Conversation Corps
- Neighborhood meetings
- Community events
- Presentations
- Education panels
- Festivals

#### Social Media

- Twitter (inc. Q and A's)
- Facebook
- Hashtag
- Flickr
- Videos (ATXN, YouTube, Vine)
- Pinterest
- NextDoor
- BloomFire

#### Print and Digital Media

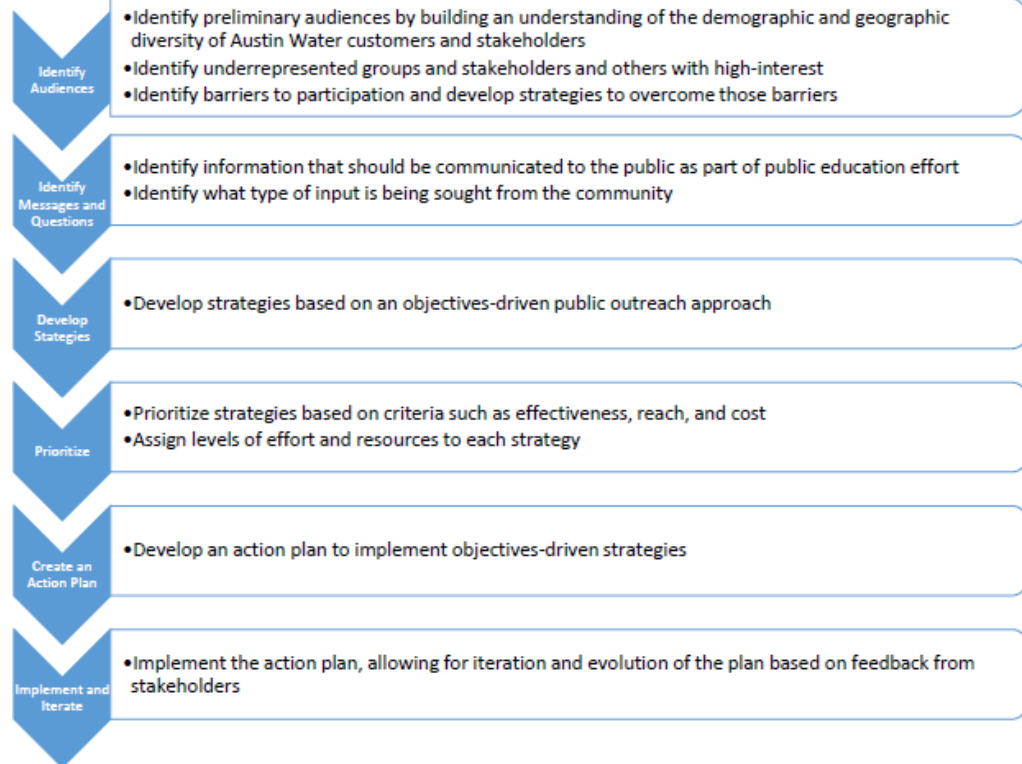
- Flyers
- Bill inserts
- Reports and fact sheets
- Advertising
- Community association newsletters
- Mailing lists
- Austin Water eNewsletters
- Austin Water website
- Austin Energy Power Plus
- COA Environmental Portal Banner
- ATXN Slideshow
- Surveys
- Neighborhood lists

## An Objectives-Driven Approach

- Objectives provide specific, achievable targets that the utility can use to solicit input in multiple formats across diverse groups
- Participants understand what input is needed and how it will be used
- Objectives provide common ground for reporting results back to stakeholders

An objectives-driven approach is, “public participation with a purpose,” designed to achieve meaningful outcomes for stakeholders and the utility.

## Creating a Public Outreach Plan



# Equality and Equity

- Equality – giving the same to everyone regardless of context
- Equity – giving people what they need to reach a just outcome



EQUALITY



EQUITY

# Strengthening Equitable Community Engagement

- ◆ City of Austin Equity Office defines equity with a focus on racial equity, in recognition that race is the most consistent predictor across all quality of life outcomes
- ◆ Intersections exist within other oppressions such as gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, class, immigrant status, and veteran status, but outcomes within these identities still most negatively impact people of color



# 6 Steps for Building Racial Equity-Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)

- ♦ **Proposal:** What is the policy, program, practice, or budget decision under consideration? What are the desired results and outcomes?
- ♦ **Data:** What's the data? What do the data tell us?
- ★ **Community engagement:** How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?
- ♦ **Analysis and strategies:** Who will benefit from or be burdened by your proposal? What are your strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?
- ♦ **Implementation:** What is your plan for implementation?
- ♦ **Accountability and communication:** How will you ensure accountability, communicate, and evaluate results?



# Strengthening Equitable Community Engagement

- Austin Water staff beginning process to update Water Forward community engagement strategy to continue WF2018 best practices:
  - Collecting disaggregated demographic information
  - Ensuring geographic representation from neighborhoods across the City
  - Identifying key decision points and ensuring opportunities for community input
  - Creating multiple opportunities for input through various mediums
  - Maintaining targeted stakeholder lists
  - Going where the people are
- And strengthen equitable community engagement strategies



# Proposed Community Advisory Group

- Made up community leaders/members who will
  - Make recommendations related to individual Water Forward strategies, as it pertains to implementation and community engagement
  - Provide input into Water Forward plan updates
  - Provide additional transparency and accessible information about water planning to communities historically underrepresented in water planning processes
- Staff exploring potential for incentive options for participation
- Plan to meet on a monthly basis initially to provide grounding in water issues and planning prior to start of WF 2023 plan update process
- Similar example: Climate Equity Plan – Community Climate Ambassadors Program



# Next Steps

- Today - Respond to Task Force questions and receive input
- March 2021 - Staff to present 1) Progress on overall Water Forward Community Engagement Strategy update and 2) Details on Community Advisory Group and application process
- Summer 2021 – Complete Water Forward Community Engagement Strategy Update and kick-off Community Advisory Group
- Fall 2021 – Plan to begin Water Forward 2023 Plan Update process







# QUESTIONS

