

# Outreach Plan

September 8, 2015

The Outreach Plan for the Dog River and Garrow's Bend communities watershed management plan is organized by the following topics:

- A. Background
- B. General Approach
- C. Timing
- D. Roles

## A. Background

It is important to the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) that watershed management plans include solid science and the participation of the local community. This document outlines the engagement approach.

This watershed management plan includes the Upper Dog River Watershed, Lower Dog River Watershed, Halls Mill Watershed and Garrow's Bend Watershed. These areas combined encompass nearly 64,000 acres and discharges to the Western side of Mobile Bay. The majority of the watershed is within boundaries of the City of Mobile. In fact, they are nearly co-terminus. The northern portion of the watershed includes part of downtown Mobile and is highly urbanized.

## B. General Approach

Two rounds of engagement are anticipated. Round 1 will include targeted engagement with a series of small group meetings (by location and topic), door-to-door conversation in neighborhoods, and online opportunities. Round 2 will take the form of an open house that brings together anyone in the watershed to review recommendations.

A scan of public input from recent and/or relevant planning efforts in the watershed will be evaluated prior to launching Phase 1.

The engagement effort for **Round 1** includes three targeted components to collect insight from those who live, work or play in the planning area. This approach will consider the recent and/or relevant planning work in the planning area, including the City's new comprehensive plan known as Map for Mobile.

The three components include:

1. Geographic
2. Topic
3. Online

### 1. *Geographic*

Three locations will be determined based in part on the attention provided during the Map for Mobile workshops. (See attached map for proposed focus area boundaries.)

- Airport and Government boulevards: These corridors (in the vicinity of I-65) contain some of Mobile's major commercial areas. In a major public event for the City's comprehensive plan, the area was identified as "weak" in that it has the potential to be a better place in the future than it is today. In addition to traffic and economic challenges, the area is dominated by large expanses of

paved parking lots. The meeting in the vicinity of the commercial areas would focus on businesses and landowners.

- Neighborhood 1: This area would include the Harrison Family tract and nearby residential areas. This area straddles I-10 just northeast of the 193 interchange. It has significant undeveloped land as well as existing residential communities. Personal, door-to-door outreach would take place within the residential portions of this area.
- Neighborhood 2: This area is located southeast of the Mobile airport and is primarily residential. Personal, door-to-door outreach would take place within this area.

## 2. *Topic*

Three topical groups will be convened:

- Recreation Users: The steering committee has generated a list of organizations identified with recreational use of the river and waterways, as well general use of the land in the watershed.
- Builders/Developers/Architects: The steering committee has generated a list of organizations identified with private sector development and who operate in the watershed.
- Youth/Educators: High school, college students and educators would be convened.

## 3. *Online*

The project web site will allow for collecting input using critical questions. The questions will be similar to those posed in the face-to-face to work. The education material presented at the meetings will also be shared on the web.

The engagement effort for **Round 2** includes two components: an open house and online.

### 1. *Open House*

An open house held to showcase the plan's recommendations, to provide an opportunity to share ideas about implementation, and to celebrate the plan's near-completion.

### 2. *Online*

The physical presentation would be available online and there would be the opportunity to provide input.

## **C. Timing**

The Round 1 engagement is anticipated to be conducted in a concentrated period in mid- to late October. Round 2 is anticipated to take place in the first quarter of 2016.

## **D. Roles**

There are three entities critical to the execution of the outreach plan.

- Consultants
  - Design engagement approach.
  - Facilitate meetings.
  - Document the results of the stakeholder workshops.
  - Provide content for online opportunities.
  - Conduct personal, door-to-door outreach (subconsultant to be identified).

- Steering Committee
  - Assist with meeting invitations and logistics.
  - Serve as hosts at selected meetings.
  - Assist with small group discussions (training provided and materials provided).
  
- MBNEP
  - Assist with overall process and meeting design.
  - Assist with website maintenance of online engagement.