



San Francisco Bay Walkable Watershed Pilot *Frequently Asked Questions*

1. What is the timeline for the Walkable Watershed plan?

We are accepting applications until November 20, 2015 and expect to announce the selected pilot December 14, 2015. We will coordinate the start date (estimated in January 2016) with the selected applicant and the planning process is expected to take about nine months culminating in an action plan.

2. Can adjacent communities submit one application?

Yes. To date we have worked to develop plans at the neighborhood scale. If considering a larger scale, applicants should consider how to connect neighborhoods to a waterbody across a larger area. In some communities we have found that pairing a community organization from a more resourced neighborhood with an organization from a more disadvantaged neighborhood has been a successful model in building capacity.

3. How is the program funded? How many recipients will there be?

[Skeo Solutions](#) will be funding this first Bay Area Walkable Watershed pilot valued at approximately \$50,000 of in-kind services. We are only to fund one pilot at this time, but anticipate working with funders and organizations in the future to implement additional projects in the San Francisco Bay Area. To be alerted to these opportunities, please join our [listserv](#).

4. How can the process help with illegal dumping in the neighborhood and intense stormwater runoff that harms the creek?

The Walkable Watershed process integrates stewardship-building and engineering solutions into a plan for watershed revitalization. In the Bellemeade Walkable Watershed, we collaborated with a local faith-based community organization and the James River association to reach residents, welcome them into the process, listen to their goals, and build support for cleaning up and embracing their creek. We also facilitated a workshop with the fifth graders from the local school to identify priority walking paths to their school. Then based on community goals, we worked with city staff from both the stormwater and sidewalk programs to identify specific capital improvements to improve pedestrian safety and water flow. As the community begins to see the city and non-profits investing in their creek and neighborhood to achieve community goals, the community also begins to get involved to help maintain these investments.

More examples from communities we have worked with can be found here:

<http://www.walkablewatershed.com/communities/>

5. How does the process address decision-making mechanisms?

We start by forming a steering committee consisting of local government staff, environmental non-profits, and community groups. We work as a group to develop and agree upon shared goals and strategies for the Walkable Watershed plan. Doing so helps to increase the likelihood of community support and follow through on actions identified in the plan by a range of resource partners around the table. For instance, one of our community partners, Raleigh, North Carolina adopted the Walkable Watershed plan into the city process.

6. How do you get community members to participate in a neighborhood where people don't have time for or trust in public meetings?



Walkable Watershed

healthy waters : healthy communities

Lack of trust is a frequent challenge in our work with neighborhoods who may suffer from disparities in environmental impacts and basic amenities. Our approach is to work closely with trusted neighborhood leaders and start the discussion by listening to the goals and concerns of the residents. Trust can slowly be established by identifying strategies that simultaneously address community and watershed improvement goals, and then identifying some early wins to show commitment to progress.

7. We have many languages in the community I'm considering. How do you address these language and cultural differences?

Skeo Solutions has capacity for communicating and translating documents into Spanish. For other language, we would recommend partnering with a local organization who can help welcome non-English speakers into the process by providing translation.

8. Are there income requirements for communities to qualify as disadvantaged communities?

No, we are not focused solely on income, however, we are hoping this process will benefit communities that may be under-resourced, suffering from spot flooding or lack quality infrastructure such as intact sidewalks and street plantings. Our preference is for communities where these challenges exist, while also providing an opportunity for inclusion and access to disadvantaged communities.

9. If I am a non-profit organization, how do I approach a city or county representative? How can I work with representatives given their budgets and resources are stretched?

There are multiple avenues for finding a local government partner. Though stormwater and planning staff might be obvious choices, you could also contact neighborhood development or community involvement staff or even the city or county council members. We also encourage you to reach out to us (marcus.griswold@walkablewatershed.com) as we might know of a representative we have worked with previously or who has contacted us about this opportunity.

There are a number of reasons city/county staff might be interested in working with you. This work may leverage and build on existing policies and initiatives. For instance, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board now requires Green Infrastructure plans in the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit. Additionally, our funds can be used as a non-governmental in-kind match for existing work and could help municipalities get their foot in the door on additional funding. Lastly, this process might help meet requirements for community engagement, environmental justice, and/or fit into existing watershed planning efforts.

Application

To apply, please fill out the online application at <http://www.walkablewatershed.com/sanfranciscobay>

Applications due November 20th 5PM PST.

For more information, please contact:

Marcus Griswold at marcus.griswold@walkablewatershed.com or 415-814-0393 x 299

Since 2011, Skeo Solutions has supported a range of successful Walkable Watershed projects in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Building on lessons learned, we are looking forward to adapting this approach to the San Francisco Bay Area and supporting communities in improving neighborhood quality of life and the quality of the Bay.