

# RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

## Board Memorandum

**BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**

**DATE: AUGUST 9, 2021**

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON OPERATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES AND SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES AND OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS**

**ISSUES:**

Receive the annual update on Office of Communications efforts on behalf of Riverside Public Utilities and review the updated Service Level Agreement.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Board of Public Utilities receive a report regarding the operations and accountability measures for the Service Level Agreement between Riverside Public Utilities and Office of Communications.

**BACKGROUND:**

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-2019, Office of Communications (Communications) streamlined most Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) communication efforts including moving five RPU full time equivalent (FTEs) positions to Communications to support the efforts. In return for the additional positions and responsibilities, Communications committed to providing RPU with a defined level of communications services, including but not limited to the following:

1. Communication Management & Coordination
  - a. Communications Plan – Focus on Customers
  - b. Review and Establish Customer Touchpoints
  - c. Consistency with City Communications Strategy
2. Regulatory Compliance
  - a. Required Notifications
  - b. Emergency Communications
3. Customer/Community Outreach
  - a. Utility Initiatives (e.g., RTRP, Rate Plan, Smart Meters)
  - b. Utility Programs (e.g., Energy/Water Efficiency, Low-income)
  - c. Utility Planning (e.g., IRP, UWMP)
  - d. Community Meeting Presentations
  - e. Media Releases

- f. Trade Publications (e.g., Innovation, Attracting Top-Tier Talent, Industry Leader)
- g. Local Messaging (e.g., Change View/Impression Utilities)

#### 4. Customer Communications Enhancement

- a. Bill & Paperless Messaging
- b. Project Communications
  - i. Increased Capital Improvement Project awareness to customers using Social Media, Email, Web, Video
  - ii. Standardized templates for CIP customer communication notifications (postcards, letters, maps, infographics for PPT presentations, etc.)
- c. Outage Communications
- d. Email
  - i. Newsletters
  - ii. Targeted Program Promotion, Outreach
- e. Video
  - i. How-To Videos
  - ii. Informational Videos
  - iii. Employees Spotlights
- f. Web
  - i. Transition to Drupal
  - ii. List of Current Projects on Site/Map
  - iii. Calendar/Events/Media Page
- g. Social Media
  - i. Growth of Audience, Engagement, Build Voice, Develop Graphics Bank
  - ii. Notification Guidelines
- h. Graphic Design
  - i. Develop Consistent Utility/City “Look”
  - ii. Regularly Published Collateral
  - iii. On-going Update of Materials
  - iv. Maintain Brand Standards

On April 23, 2018, the Board of Public Utilities received a report on the operational improvements and efficiencies that RPU evaluated. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) was developed to outline the level of services that will be provided by Communications to RPU. The SLA reinforced the accountability mechanisms to ensure return on ratepayer investment and listed the key performance indicators (KPIs) that would be used to measure successful delivery of services.

In FY 2018-2019, RPU identified two filled positions (Project Communications) that were transferred to Communications but vacated shortly thereafter. Only one position was replaced and filled during FY 2019-2020. In FY 2020-2021, RPU began to pay for 50% of one additional position (Administrative Analyst) from the second vacant Project Communications role. RPU currently funds 6.5 FTEs within Communications. There are no requests included in the FY 2021-2022 budget for additional RPU funded positions in the Communications team.

<b>POSITION*</b>	<b>FISCAL YEAR FILLED</b>	<b>% FUNDED BY RPU</b>
Web Designer	2018-2019	100%
Graphics Technician	2018-2019	100%
Communications Technician	2018-2019	100%
Social Media, Project Assistant	2018-2019	100%

Email, Project Assistant	2018-2019	100%
RPU Customer Communications Coordinator	2019-2020	100%
Administrative Analyst	2020-2021	50%

\*Please see attachment #1 for Office of Communications organization chart.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Accountability**

As part of the established SLA, Communications is required to meet quarterly with RPU Executive Management to provide updates on the status of KPIs, goals and objectives. The updates will also include a review of the established metrics to determine if modifications are needed, or if new goals should be established.

Communications and RPU Executive Management will provide a biannual update to the Board of Public Utilities on the status of KPIs, goals and objectives. The biannual update will include a summary of all efforts, measurable impacts and fiscal impact and are planned to be provided at midyear and after the close of each fiscal year. While Communications and RPU have striven to provide timely updates, the regularity of these to the executive team and board has been mixed on occasion. This can be attributed to workload and outside factors such as COVID-19 and the increased workload this has brought. Communications is committed to executing timely updates moving forward and will ensure compliance with this portion of the SLA, which will be supported with the additional Administrative Analyst post.

Communications continues to track all project hours and expenses related to RPU communications projects. Communications and RPU work collaboratively to ensure that Communications hours and expenses dedicated to RPU-specific projects will equal or exceed RPU's cost-allocation to Communications. Communications continues to work in conjunction with RPU's Customer Engagement group to implement this Service Level Agreement.

To calculate RPU project dollar value, the total number of hours spent on RPU projects is multiplied by the fully burdened cost of the employee to acquire a total project dollar value amount. This amount is compared to the actual funding that RPU has paid out for the identified positions; the percentage figures have been included for additional clarity. In the table below, the total project hours and project dollars have been outlined and compared to actual RPU funding.

<b>FISCAL YEAR</b>	<b>TOTAL HOURS ON RPU PROJECTS</b>	<b>TOTAL PROJECT DOLLARS</b>	<b>ACTUAL RPU FUNDING</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE (Goal &gt;100%)</b>
2018-2019	7.3K	\$399K	\$391K	102%
2019-2020	11.8K	\$557K	\$522K	106%
2020-2021*	9.6K*	\$518K*	\$501K*	103%

Some important notes: the transition of duties from RPU to Communications began in FY 2018-2019 and the total RPU Utilities project number and funding amount is significantly less due to the time it took to fill those new positions. In FY 2020-2021, there was a decline in total projects

due to a partial year vacancy and shifting needs to respond to changing priorities across RPU.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Initial KPIs were developed to focus on utilizing existing City metrics and applying them across RPU. The following measures were taken from July 1, 2020 to June 25, 2021.

#### KPI Performance

<b>Metric</b>	<b>FY 17-18</b>	<b>FY 18-19</b>	<b>Growth / Decline</b>	<b>FY 19-20</b>	<b>Growth / Decline</b>	<b>FY 20-21</b>	<b>Growth / Decline</b>	<b>SLA KPI Goal</b>
Video – Total Views on YouTube	250K	256K	+2%	420K	+64%	276K	-34%	10% Increase
Video – Annual Increase in Videos Developed	257	238	-7%	285	+20%	316	+11%	10% Increase
Social Media – Annual Increase in Following	11.7K	12.2K	+4%	13.0K	+7%	16.5K	+26%	10% Increase
Social Media – Annual Increase in Engagement	1.2K	9.9K	+70%	13.1K	+32%	25.3K	+92%	10% Increase
Email Capture – Annual Increase	N/A*	56K	+16%	65K	+5%	72.5k	+10%	10% Increase
Website – Annual Increase in Page Views	988K	1M	+5%	983K	-6%**	616K	-37%	1% Increase

\* RPU email program was established in FY 2018-2019

\*\*the significant decrease in web traffic in FY 2020-2021 is due to non-payment from customers (roughly 60% of web traffic stems from online bill payment).

### Updated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) & Revised SLA

As the demands of communications efforts have evolved for our customers and our City, it has become necessary to revise the Key Performance Indicators to provide updated information and accurate tracking and measurement. The following updates are reflected in the revised attached Service Level Agreement (Attachment #2). In addition, attached is the original 2018 SLA (Attachment #3) to easily identify the changes.

Current Metric: Increase in Social Media Following/Engagement by 10%

Updated Metric:

<b>Platform</b>	<b>Following</b>	<b>Reach/Impressions</b>	<b>Engagement</b>
Facebook	5% Increase	10% Increase	5% Increase
Instagram	8% Increase	7% Increase	3% Increase
Twitter	8% Increase	10% Increase	5% Increase

## Baseline:

<b>Metric by Platform*</b>	<b>FY 17-18</b>	<b>FY 18-19</b>	<b>Growth / Decline</b>	<b>FY 19-20</b>	<b>Growth / Decline *</b>	<b>FY 20-21</b>	<b>Growth / Decline</b>	<b>Revised SLA KPI Goal</b>
Facebook (Following)	10.1K	10.5K	+3.5%	11K	+5%	11.6K	+5%	5% Increase
Facebook (Reach)	42.1K	730.4 K	+94%	834.6 K	+12%	1.39M	+40%	10% Increase
Facebook (Engagement)	984	8,708	+89%	11.7K	+26%	13K	+11%	5% Increase
Instagram (Following)	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	2,598	N/A**	8% Increase
Instagram (Reach)	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	231.2K	N/A**	7% Increase
Instagram (Engagement)	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	10.3K	N/A**	3% Increase
Twitter (Following)	1,595	1,761	+10%	1,991	+13%	2,223	+12%	8% Increase
Twitter (Impressions)	168.4 K	343.9 K	+104%	440.6 K	+28%	472.2K	+7%	10% Increase
Twitter (Engagement)	271	1,276	+371%	1,464	+15%	2,035	+39%	5% Increase

\* Revised SLA KPI goals are primarily based on growth/decline data from FY 2019-2020 over FY 2018-2019. This year presented full time social media management and limited external influences (such as COVID-19).

\*\*Earliest record of Instagram Analytics available via Hootsuite Analytics was July 2020. Analytics within Instagram App only date back 30 days

\*\*\*Increased growth from FY 2018-2019 to FY 2019-2020 was due to increased posts per platform and more focused social media approach with dedicated staff.

Social Media metrics are reported based on Hootsuite Analytics

*Reach on Facebook is defined as: The total number of people who have seen your posts in their newsfeed, or on your Page's Timeline.*

*Reach on Instagram is defined as: The total number of unique accounts that have seen your organic photo, video, or carousel post*

*Engagement on Facebook is defined as: The total number of interactions (reactions, comments, and shares) received by your Pages' posts as well as by other posts on Facebook that mention your Pages (that is, reactions to user check-ins, event responses, mentions, likes of your Pages, and more)*

*Engagement on Instagram is defined as: The total number of likes and comments received by your organic photo, video, or carousel posts published in the selected time frame*

*Engagement on Twitter is defined as: The total number of interactions (retweets, replies, and likes) received for the tweets published in the selected time frame.*

*Impressions on Twitter are defined as: total tally of all the times the Tweet has been seen. This includes not only the times it appears in a one of your followers' timeline but also the times it has appeared in search or as a result of someone liking the Tweet.*

**Current Metric:** Reduction in Graphic Design Turnaround Time (Goal: 15 Business Days)

**Updated Metric:** Increase in total number of Graphics Design Projects to 120 Annually

**Baseline:** 120 projects annually

Total Number of Projects	FY 17-18	FY 18-19	FY 19-20	FY 20-21	Average Total
	126	133	142	171	143

FY 2019/2020 and FY 2020/2021 presented a rapid increase in project requests with rapid turnaround. We anticipate this number falling back to roughly 120 projects annually.

**Current Metric:** Annual Increase in Total Views on YouTube (10%)/Annual Increase in Video Development

**Updated Metric:** Increase Total number of Videos Developed to 250 Annually

**Baseline:** Total videos annually – 250

Total Number of RPU Videos Produced	FY 17-18	FY 18-19	FY 19-20	FY 20-21	Average Total
	257	238	285	316	270

Videos Developed metric refers to ALL videos produced throughout the City, not specific to RPU related content. This is due to the limited tracking mechanisms for RPU specific video requests.

**Current Metric:** Annual Increase in Email Capture (10%)

**Updated Metric:** Annual Email Open and Click Rates to remain above industry average (Open

**Rate Goal:** >23%, Click Rate goal: >2%)

	FY 18-19	FY 19-20	FY 20-21	Average Total	NEW KPI
Open Rate	21%	*44%	*42%	36%	>23%
Click-Through Rate	2.9%	7.5%	4.7%	5%	>2%

\* During the unprecedented COVID times, email rates doubled. Based on data from pre-pandemic rates it is projected that this increase will not be sustained as there is a transition back to non-COVID related content. Communications recommendation is to use average data that are provided by the email service provider, which focuses on government agencies throughout the country with a similar profile, size and audience. Therefore, it is prudent to lower our targets by approximately half to account for anticipated performance and the changes expected as the pandemic diminishes.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

The Service Level Agreement between the Public Utilities Department and the Human Resources Department meets Strategic Priority 8 High Performing Government and Goal 5.3 to enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust and encourage shared decision-making.

This agreement aligns with the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. Community Trust – Communications provides transparent, timely communications for RPU programs, projects, and various areas of community engagement to educate and inform the community and build public trust.
2. Equity – Communications provides RPU's ratepayers with multiple outreach efforts to ensure information about RPU's programs and services is equally available to provide the highest public benefit.
3. Fiscal Responsibility – The service level agreement brings economies of scale to RPU thus minimizing operational costs to rate payers.
4. Innovation – The service level agreement has proven to be collaborative and adaptable by implementing creative solutions to best meet the needs of the Public Utilities Department.
5. Sustainability & Resiliency – Communications ensures that RPU can communicate and adapt communication methods as needed to continue providing long-lasting programs that meet the current and future needs of ratepayers.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with the receipt of this informational update.

Prepared by:	Stephanie Harvey, Marketing Officer
Approved by:	Todd M. Corbin, Utilities General Manager
Approved by:	Al Zelinka, FAICP, City Manager
Approved as to form:	Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney
Certifies availability of funds:	Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer

**Attachments:**

1. Office of Communications Organizational Chart
2. 2021 Service Level Agreement (Effective July 1, 2021)
3. 2018 Service Level Agreement
4. Presentation