I. Build Internal Communications Structure

A. Audiences:
   1. Communications liaisons
   2. Alliance staff

B. Goals:
   1. To have a process for regions to follow for communications opportunities.
   2. To keep the Communications Manager up to date on opportunities throughout the organization that may need communications support.

C. Strategies:
   1. Create internal communications team.
   2. Provide communications trainings for liaisons and staff.
   3. Produce communications standard operating procedures for liaisons and staff.

D. Action Steps:
   1. Designate communications liaisons and hold weekly meetings for communications updates across regions/programs.
   2. Hold quarterly communications retreats for information sharing, training opportunities, and larger conversations about the liaison responsibilities.
   3. Create a place for communications resources, training notes, SOPs, and other materials that communications teams may need to share between regions.
   4. Utilize a messaging system for an internal communication between liaisons.
   5. Train liaisons to update events, blog posts, and program pages on the Alliance website, create defined web responsibilities, and create a set of best practices for website maintenance.

E. Measuring Success:
   1. One designated communications liaisons for each region/programmatic office.
   2. Hold four communications retreats with training opportunities for communications liaisons by December.
   3. Create standard operating procedures for liaisons and staff, and a place to house all of the resources and content by August 31, 2019.
   4. Poll communications liaisons and staff members to learn how the internal communications process has improved, and what ways it could still be improved (by January 31, 2020).
II. Improve Branding & Consistency of Messaging Across the Regions in Alignment with Strategic Vision

A. Audiences:
1. Alliance Staff and Board Members
2. Current social media followers and interested public

B. Goals:
1. To improve the branding and consistency of messaging across each of our regional and programmatic offices in alignment with Alliance’s strategic vision.
2. To give Staff and Board members the training they require to be able to successfully communicate the Alliance’s mission, vision, programs, values, and work.

C. Strategies:
1. Work with Due East Partners to clarify our mission, vision, programs, and values.
2. Build consensus among Board, Staff, and major stakeholders around our mission, vision, programs, and values.
3. Provide training to Board and Staff about communicating our mission, vision, programs, and values.

D. Action Steps:
1. Complete internal and external stakeholder surveys to uncover findings about perceptions about the Alliance’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and values (completed and presented February 2019).
2. Conduct strategic alignment at March and May Board Meetings and staff retreat in May.
3. Train Board and Staff on how to communicate the Alliance’s mission, vision, values, and work by December 31st, 2019.
4. Update our website based on the findings from the surveys, strategic alignment, and trainings by December 31st, 2019.

E. Measuring Success:
2. Create a refreshed mission and vision by July 31st, 2019.
3. Hold a training for Board and Staff members about communicating our mission and vision by November 31st, 2019.
III. Expand Alliance Visibility & Recognition to New Audiences, and Move Existing Supporters through the Donor Timeline

| A. Audiences: | 1. Emailing/mailing list recipients and social media followers  
|             | 2. Annapolis, Lancaster, Richmond, and DC residents  
|             | 3. Interested residents, businesses, local government, and NGO partners of the watershed  |
| B. Goals: | 1. To grow the visibility and recognition of the Alliance to new audiences that are not currently receiving regular communication, so that we can continue to grow our base of support.  
|           | 2. To grow the visibility and recognition of the Alliance to the subscribers on our listservs so that supporters can immediately recognize the Alliance and our work.  
|           | 3. Target visibility and recognition efforts to the cities our offices are located in, using emails, direct mailings, and events.  |
| C. Strategies: | 1. Continue regular communications to our listservs through email and print.  
|              | 2. Utilize Facebook to boost events and advertise our work to targeted regions, audiences, and interests.  
|              | 3. Target campaigns to certain geographic locations and demographics.  |
| D. Action Steps: | 1. Email our listserv at least one time per month in addition to our monthly newsletter; direct mail to our mailing list at least six times per year, including mid-year and year end appeals.  
|               | 2. Boost Facebook posts and use Facebook advertisements at least six times per year to gain more followers (outside of special event promotion).  
|               | 3. Create SOPs for Mailchimp in order to streamline lists and processes, and manage them efficiently, with the goal to send more geographically targeted communications.  
|               | 4. Create a monthly editorial calendar, and designate a number of social media posts, newsletter stories, and blogs that each region/program is responsible for creating.  |
| E. Measuring Success: | 1. Send one email per month in addition to monthly newsletter.  
|                 | 2. Send six hard mailings to our mailing list by December.  
|                 | 3. Develop an editorial calendar for each month of the year, beginning in March.  
|                 | 4. Create Mailchimp SOPs for list creation and management.  
|                 | 5. Gain 2,500 followers on Facebook, 1,000 followers on Instagram, and 1,000 followers on Twitter by December 31, 2019.  |
IV. Utilize Storytelling for Fundraising

A. **Audiences:**
   1. Our funders/donors and prospective funders/donors
   2. Emailing/mailing list recipients and social media followers
   3. Annapolis, Lancaster, Richmond, and DC residents

B. **Goals:**
   1. To tell more stories about the Alliance’s work, staff, Board, volunteers, and donors.
   2. To communicate our mission and work effectively in order to gain more supporters and donors for our organization.
   3. Teach Board and Staff members how to tell stories with the goal of increasing the Alliance’s fundraising efforts.

C. **Strategies:**
   1. Make the connection clear to Board and Staff between storytelling and fundraising.
   2. Train the Staff and Board on how to tell engaging stories about the Alliance and our work.
   3. Create a kit of ready-made stories and content to be used throughout the year.
   4. Begin brainstorming “storytelling” opportunities around the Alliance’s 50 year anniversary.

D. **Action Steps:**
   1. Hold storytelling for fundraising training at staff retreat in May.
   2. Hold basic and ongoing fundraising training for Board members at all Board meetings.
   3. Highlight one donor per quarter for our online communications.

E. **Measuring Success:**
   1. Create four donor stories by December 31st, 2019, one per quarter.
   2. Hold a training at the staff retreat in May on storytelling for fundraising.
   3. Hold a Fundraising 101 training for all Board members by December 31st, 2019.