Subject: Approve Release of Request for Qualifications for California Environmental Quality Act Consultant Support for the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy Update (Est. time: 0 minutes)

Consent
Prepared by: Kacey Lizon
Approved by: James Corless
Attachments: No

1. Issue:
Should SACOG issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) consultant support for the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) update?

2. Recommendation:
The Land Use & Natural Resources Committee recommends that: 1) the SACOG Board of Directors authorize the SACOG Chief Executive Officer to release an RFQ for CEQA consultant support for the 2020 MTP/SCS update; and 2) the SACOG Board of Directors authorize the SACOG Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute a contract with the selected contractor.

3. Background/Analysis:
Under state law, SACOG’s update of the MTP/SCS is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. To comply with this law, SACOG prepares a programmatic environmental impact report (PEIR). The purpose of the PEIR is to enable SACOG to examine and disclose the overall effects of the MTP/SCS. Under Senate Bill (SB) 375, the PEIR can also enable CEQA streamlining review for subsequent land development projects that are consistent with the MTP/SCS, if the SCS achieves its SB 375 GHG target. SACOG has enabled this SB 375 streamlining with the 2012 and 2016 MTP/SCS, and land use projects have used the streamlining enabled by both plans.

In past plan updates, much of the environmental analysis was done by SACOG staff, including production of the PEIR. SACOG hired consultants to advise and work on aspects of the PEIR for which SACOG does not have sufficient in-house staff resources or CEQA expertise. That consultant work has included advising on the scope and structure of the PEIR, peer review of specific sections, technical analysis, advice on CEQA streamlining.
measures, and preparation of related CEQA compliance documents.

4. Discussion/Analysis:
For the 2020 MTP/SCS update, staff seeks approval to release an RFQ for a CEQA compliance expert to support SACOG in developing the PEIR for the 2020 MTP/SCS Update. The purpose of this RFQ is to efficiently and effectively comply with CEQA, continue to activate CEQA streamlining as directed by MTP/SCS policies, and efficiently use staff resources.

The consultant selected will have deep experience with CEQA compliance and streamlining, deep knowledge of the metropolitan transportation plan/sustainable communities strategy planning process, and familiarity with growth and transportation issues in the SACOG region. The scope of services for the selected consultant will include some combination of the following:

**CEQA Compliance Advice:** Advise SACOG management and legal team on scope and schedule of the programmatic environmental analysis for the MTP/SCS. The EIR will provide the same SB 375 and SB 226 streamlining opportunities provided in the current 2016 MTP/SCS EIR (SCH # 2014062060) for land development projects consistent with the MTP/SCS. The consultant will advise on compliance with CEQA requirements and any pertinent CEQA streamlining opportunities.

**Draft Environmental Impact Analysis and Oversight:** Advise, provide oversight, or prepare the environmental assessment of the proposed project. This may involve advising on environmental settings that describes the existing conditions before project implementation, regulatory settings, appropriate thresholds of significance, impacts (including direct impacts, indirect/cumulative impacts), and useful and effective mitigation measure(s) for each identified impact. The consultant may also be asked to identify significant impacts that can be mitigated and their level of significance after mitigation as well as identify unavoidable significant impacts. The consultant may be asked to assess the impacts of the MTP/SCS in several subject areas specifically required by CEQA, including significant irreversible, growth inducing, and cumulative impacts.

**Final Environmental Impact Report Preparation and Oversight:** Consultant may be asked to prepare or provide oversight on written responses to agency and public comments made during the public review of the draft CEQA document (written comments and oral testimony). The consultant will recommend technical corrections and specific revisions to the draft environmental document. Consultant may be asked to prepare Findings of Fact, Statement of Overriding Consideration, and/or Mitigation Monitoring Program as part of the Final EIR certification.

**Quality Control and Technical Oversight:** Provide quality control and technical oversight of EIR sections drafted by SACOG staff or other technical consultants hired through separate contracts.

The final scope of work will be negotiated with the selected consultant.
5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:
This project activity is budgeted for up to $125,000 over two fiscal years: $69,000 has been allocated in SACOG’s adopted Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Overall Work Program (OWP) and Budget; the remaining $55,000 will be allocated in the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 OWP and Budget.

This staff report aligns with the following SACOG Work Plan Goals:
#1 - Advance Economic Prosperity