



Innovation Task Force

Item #14-8-1A Information

August 14, 2014

SACOG Information Resources Center Updated Website

Issue: Staff has developed improvements to the portion of the SACOG website that provides information used in SACOG's planning and forecasting programs.

Discussion: SACOG was awarded funds from the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) Round #II under the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) Implementation Grant in November 2012, to add improvements to our website following the adoption of the region's first Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS). As one of six tasks outlined in the grant over a three-year period, the creation of a SCS Information Center will provide SACOG members, as well as the public, broader access to data and information created for MTP/SCS updates. The site also provides the most frequently requested items for member and partner agencies to support local grant applications. Through the SGC grant work, SACOG was able to create an umbrella website providing access to multiple SACOG data products as well as frequently requested Federal and State information.

SACOG has operated a Regional Census State Data Center (SDC) to provide data and assistance to member jurisdictions and the public since 1974. The legislatively-mandated national SDC program is one of the U.S. Census Bureau's longest and most successful partnerships providing access and education on Census Bureau data and products as well as other statistical resources to data users across the country. In California, the California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit (DOF/DRU) is the lead agency and official liaison that designates SDCs within each of the four largest Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Under the terms of our Joint Statistical Agreement, the SACOG SDC fills hundreds of data and mapping requests annually, provides popular Census and other data workshops, and works directly with the U.S. Census Bureau to implement Census Geographic Programs specific to the SACOG region. In return, the U.S. Census SDC program provides free training, data consultation, technical assistance and support, and reference materials. The SDC network also includes regular webinars, ListServ announcements, and training materials.

The website update process used two internal focus groups consisting primarily of member agency staff and two external focus groups consisting primarily of local government staff to provide feedback on the structure and desired content of the site. This feedback enabled SACOG staff to refine the website structure, advance development of SACOG's beginning interactive mapping platform, and build a new information hub for multiple SACOG data products, including a data library and map gallery, training materials, and announcements. Focus group interest and requests were broader than the capabilities of this grant project. To respond to these requests, staff is seeking additional funding through a TIGER grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation to build a regional open data portal that would combine access to local open data portals into a regional open data resource and planning center.

Approved by:

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