



## Item #14-11-1B Information

### Innovations Task Force

November 6, 2014

#### Update on Technical Assistance to Local Governments via SGC3 Grant

**Issue:** SACOG is offering technical assistance to local jurisdictions and discussing potential projects with members.

**Recommendation:** This item is for information only.

**Discussion:** With a grant from the state's Strategic Growth Council (SGC) Planning Grant Program, SACOG received \$900,000 to help implement the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy in Centers, Corridors and Established Communities. Slightly more than half of those funds will be used to provide direct technical assistance to some of the 28 cities and counties in the region. The assistance will also allow jurisdictions within the region to share experiences and interact with one another on common challenges. The assistance will come in the form of professional services provided directly by SACOG staff and/or by Portland State University's Urban Sustainability Accelerator Program (USA).

The grant will not officially start until the state and SACOG have negotiated and agreed upon the scope of work, budget, and timeline, and then sign an agreement, which is anticipated in the coming weeks. Afterwards, SACOG and USA will begin to communicate on scope of work proposals with selected member jurisdictions. In preparation for the grant work, SACOG contacted each of the 28 cities and counties individually to discuss their interest in technical assistance and for what potential projects. In addition, SACOG and USA staff met with jurisdiction staff and conducted site visits for those potential projects that involve specific physical locations. About 20 jurisdictions have identified potential projects, which are categorized broadly as follows:

- Revitalization/Economic Development Support - The most common member request is for revitalization and/or economic development for a strategic parcel, corridor or district. Some of these areas are smaller, more rural downtowns, and some are suburban corridors with vacant properties and/or unfriendly pedestrian environments. Many of the project areas have one critical site that could be leveraged to spur economic development for its surrounding area.
- Expert Planning Assistance – Member jurisdictions have expressed interest in assistance with some corridors or districts that are more economically healthy, but need either resolution on conflicting design and planning guidelines or a better balance of land uses.
- Expert Plan Review - Some jurisdictions have requested an objective review of existing plans, guidelines, and other regulating document to see if they are consistent with what the community is trying to achieve.

The grant gives SACOG up to three years to expend the funds. However, to accelerate grant benefits of technical assistance in the region, SACOG and USA agree to keep the projects to within two years and to allocate resources by balancing jurisdiction project factors such as readiness, need, and potential impact.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever  
Chief Executive Officer

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Key Staff: Rebecca Sloan, Director of External Affairs and Member Services, (916) 340-6224  
Kacey Lizon, Planning Manager, (916) 340-6265  
Greg Chew, Senior Planner, (916) 340-6227