



**Strategic Planning Committee**  
**Meeting Date:** 8/6/2018  
**Agenda Item No.:** 2018-August-2.

**Subject:** SACOG's Role in Advancing Economic Prosperity (Est. time: 45 minutes)

**Information**

**Prepared by:** James Corless

**Approved by:** James Corless

**Attachments:** No

**1. Issue:**

How can SACOG help the region advance economic prosperity?

**2. Recommendation:**

None; this item is for information and discussion only.

**3. Background/Analysis:**

Advancing economic prosperity is the first goal of SACOG's 2018 Work Plan. Historically, regional planning agencies have tended to focus on planning for the sake of planning and allowed their work to proceed in a silo that is separate from the priorities of other private sector partners. More recently, stronger partnerships between COGs and business groups have emerged in regions across the country similar to ours. They have learned that aligning the funding and technical capacity of COGs with strategic initiatives led by the private sector creates a powerful synergy for advancing economic competitiveness and prosperity.

Over the past year, the SACOG board has engaged in ongoing discussions focused on how we can make strengthening the regional economy a more fundamental part of our work.

We have been a major partner in the recent Brookings Institution report that took a critical look at our region's economy. We made economic prosperity the focus of our April 30th Regional Futures Forum. And we are devoting a lot of staff work to developing our upcoming MTP/SCS in a way that can support economic prosperity through a focus on access to jobs and investments in infrastructure that can grow the most important tradeable economic sectors for our six county region. We are doing all of this in close partnership with some of our key regional economic partners who will be attending the August 6th Strategic Planning Committee meeting.

**4. Discussion/Analysis:**

While the SACOG Board has shown strong support for a focus on economic prosperity, there are still important questions that need to be answered in terms of how we truly

integrate it into our work. For example, how can we best evaluate proposed transportation investments based on how well they support a regional economic prosperity strategy?

How can we use our transportation planning and capital grants to partner with organizations like GSEC and the Metro Chamber to support specific business expansion and recruitment efforts in the six county region? How can we help ensure that our regional investments connect low-income residents to economic opportunity?

Representatives from the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Valley Vision, Region Business, and the Greater Sacramento Economic Council have been invited to attend the meeting and contribute to the discussion.

Attached is a letter from Region Business, Valley Vision, Greater Sacramento Economic Council, and the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, asking that we strengthen and formalize our role in the emerging partnership with our regional business and civic organizations.

## **5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:**

There is no fiscal impact at this time.

## **6. This staff report aligns with the following SACOG Work Plan Goals:**

1. Advance Economic Prosperity

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Description

Letter from Economic Partners



May 14, 2018

The Honorable Jay Schenirer, Chairman  
The Honorable David Sander, Vice Chairman  
Sacramento Area Council of Governments  
1415 L Street, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairman Schenirer and Vice Chairman Sander:

On behalf of Valley Vision, the Greater Sacramento Economic Council, the Sacramento Metro Chamber and Sacramento Region Business Association, we write to urge you and the SACOG Board to take formal action to allocate resources and agency staff to activities that support economic prosperity and inclusion.

It is our view that SACOG has been involved in activities that contribute to prosperity and inclusion for decades, though not always labeled this way. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), the Rural Urban Connections Strategy, and the Sacramento Blueprint for Transportation and Land Use. Each have influenced private sector investment decisions, contributed to business formation, retention, expansion, and recruitment, and shaped housing, office, and industrial land use decisions that directly bear on the economic wellbeing of the region's current and future residents.

Recently SACOG's Board has made regional prosperity a guiding consideration in the actions you undertake as an agency, and in the past six-months SACOG has played an indispensable support role in the Brookings Institution project that has evaluated our short term and long-term economic risks and opportunities. As you know, the work of Brookings is meant to inform baseline considerations within the forthcoming MTP/SCS as well as a regional business plan containing economic growth and workforce preparedness strategies our organizations are committed to deliver with many others. We appreciate SACOG's leadership in organizing and hosting the Regional Futures Forum April 30<sup>th</sup> where the results of our joint work was shared to a VIP audience, and favorably received.

Taking this step to formalize this economic activity area within SACOG will enable its elected leadership and staff to signal to the rest of our region and to those beyond these six counties the seriousness and depth of your commitment to building an inclusive economy, using the tools and resources available to SACOG to achieve that end. SACOG would stand in great company with other Councils of Government across the country that have helped shoulder responsibility with private sector business and civic groups to organize coordinated public-private action that improves the lives of those whom they represent.

In sum, in order for this region to achieve the result of a truly inclusive economy that serves everyone, it will take all of our region's major public and the private organizations working together in a sustained and aligned effort, with dedicated budget and staff expertise. SACOG has proven itself as a trusted regional

convener; spacial and quantitative and qualitative research, plan and technical assistance provider; and strong and value-added partner that local governments and private sector organizations like ours can rely upon. We urge you to:

- Continue to provide leadership in the region by actively participating in ongoing work with our organizations;
- Align investments in the upcoming MTP/SCS to support the economic prosperity strategy and act on findings from the Brookings report; and
- Make what has been informal, formal, by allocating budget and staff time to activities that build an inclusive economy for all.

Working closely with SACOG and its leadership these past few months gives our group confidence we are on the right path, together. We are grateful for the agency's leadership to date and the promise of future results derived from a tighter focus on prosperity and inclusion and the added service capacity SACOG will bring to the immediate and long-term needs of our entire region, urban, suburban, and rural.

We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



**Bill Mueller**  
Valley Vision



**Barry Broome**  
Greater Sacramento



**Amanda Blackwood**  
Sacramento Metro Chamber



**Josh Wood**  
Region Builders

CC: SACOG Board members  
To file