



Item #13-10-2 Information

Shared Services & New Initiatives Task Force

October 8, 2013

Best Practices Research

Issue: Staff seeking Task Force discussion on opportunities for best practices research and information sharing.

Discussion: At the August Shared Services & New Initiatives Task Force Meeting, SACOG staff shared opportunities to expand Board knowledge of best practices relative to metropolitan planning organizations and similar regional activities nationally in response to comments from the June Board meeting.

At the August meeting, the Task Force expressed interest in the areas of research provided by staff (Task Force Item Attachment A) and value for the opportunity to enhance Board members understanding of what SACOG does and could do. The Task Force also indicated high value for this research as a positive investment in the agency and included in their interest opportunities to participate in tours, field trips and retreats. Shared Services is one of the ways in which SACOG looks at new activities and initiatives of common interest and benefit to its member jurisdictions. Within that context, staff is returning to the Task Force for additional thoughts and interests associated with this potential new area of research.

Since the August meeting the CEO discussed the opportunity with Board Chair Griego, who identified a sub-committee of three Board members (Directors Rohan, Sander, and Saylor) to explore further. The subcommittee will meet on October 15 and attend the October 16 Task Force meeting. The intent is to return to the full Board for discussion at a future date.

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



Shared Services & New Initiatives Task Force

August 8, 2013

Best Practices Research

Issue: Staff seeking Task Force discussion on opportunities for best practices research and information sharing.

Discussion: SACOG staff heard interest in opportunities to expand Board knowledge of best practices relative to metropolitan planning organizations and similar regional activities nationally at the June Board meeting and in individual conversations with Board members. This research and information sharing provides opportunity for broader Board education, engagement and opportunity to inform SACOG's innovative work. As a Council of Governments, SACOG may take on new activities or research initiatives at the direction of the Board. As example, the Rural Urban Connections Strategy was initiated by the Board in 2009 and naturally expands on unique agency expertise and technical capacity related to transportation planning.

The Shared Services & New Initiatives Task Force was initiated in 2012 to look at opportunities for cost savings and enhanced services for member jurisdictions with SACOG acting as a convener or direct service provider. While Shared Services is but one aspect of the agency activities to be informed by further best practices research, staff is interested in learning more about areas of specific Task Force interest. To facilitate this discussion, the following table provides just a few ideas from prior discussions and staff thinking for the purpose of priming the pump for the Task Force discussion. This is by no means intended to be an exhaustive list or interpreted as a staff recommendation, i.e. intended as discussion starter not discussion stopper.

Topics of Interest	Regions of Interest	Mechanisms of Research
MTP Implementation	Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)	National Research Scan
Climate Adaptation	San Diego Association of Governments	Webinars and Skype meetings
Shared service activities	Southern California Association of Governments	Site Visits or Study Missions

Topics of Interest –

- What are other regions doing with performance metrics when selecting transportation projects for inclusion in their long-range plan and funding during programming cycle. Also, are there example of using performance metrics to drive decision-making on the OWP Work Scope and Budget?
- How do other regions keep other local elected officials not seated on the regional board informed and supportive of regional agency actions?
- How do they involve stakeholders in providing constructive input to regional Board decisions on an on-going basis?
- How do they involve themselves in tracking, reviewing, commenting on local land use actions?

- What suite of services do they offer their members and stakeholders? (i.e. Are there services beyond those in SACOG's main portfolio that are beneficially being provided in other regions? How did those originate? How well are they working?)

Potential organizations to research:

- Within California
 - o The San Diego Region (SANDAG) provides the most comprehensive suite of services, in part because of a state law that was passed about a decade ago. Their Executive Director is a former Caltrans District Executive and has close, innovative partnerships with Caltrans. Annually, they hold a 2.5 day retreat within their region for all local elected officials, i.e. not just their Board.
 - o In the Bay Area SACOG's functions are split between two agencies, the MPO (Metropolitan Transportation Commission) and the Council of Governments (Association of Bay Area Governments). MTC is known nationally for using performance metrics and made advances in this area in the RTP/SCS they adopted last month under SB375. ABAG has a much more diverse portfolio of services it offers its members than SACOG does through its Council of Governments (COG) function.
- Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), Kansas City metropolitan region. MARC has a very robust suite of services it offers through its COG function, including a number of economic development related functions. They recently have gotten serious about integrated land use-transportation funding through a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant. Their Executive Director is widely respected among his peers and his mother lives in Sacramento. MARC would be particularly high on SACOG staff's recommended regions to study.
- Denver Regional Council of Governments. For nearly a decade they have been implementing a "Mile High Compact", their version of a voluntary regional land use strategy. In some ways, it has been more formal than how we have implemented the Blueprint, and they explicitly link transportation funding decisions to the willingness of their members to implement the Compact. That region also has an active Mayor's Caucus, highlighted in the Metro Chamber's Study Mission last year. It might be useful to learn more about the value/function of that body vis-a-vis the regional planning agency.
- Puget Sound Regional Council of Governments. They are a well-respected organization that we have good staff contacts with, especially at the technical level. They recently completed a detailed study of how to focus their efforts to support transit-oriented development along with social equity concerns that may be useful to us in our next MTP update.
- Others: Boston Area COG very active of late on land use and housing issues; Connecticut MPO/COG very active in working to leverage transportation investments to promote economic development; Regional Planning Association in New York over 100 year old, highly respected, private (i.e. business based) planning organization that covers multi-state metropolitan area.

Mechanisms of Research – These ideas are not mutually exclusive, but among techniques we could use are:

- Topic – Focused: Board gives direction on which topics are of interest, SACOG staff does best practices research and recommends short list of agencies that may be worth more in depth exploration.
- Agency – Focused: Board selects short list of regions and we do a more comprehensive examination of all of the things they do, hoping to find some ideas/best practices that we might not uncover any other way.

- Need to discuss how much direct SACOG Board involvement. One option is to select a relatively small group of Board members (say 3 to 6) to work with staff on this.
- Should decide whether travel to some of the other regions is part of the program. And if we visit some other regions, we may want to invite some of them to come to Sacramento to present/interact with the entire SACOG Board.

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