



Innovation Task Force

August 19, 2014

Item #14-8-2B Information

Opportunities for Information Technology Collaboration and Data Sharing

Issue: Staff is beginning research on Task Force Initiatives for Information Technology (IT).

Discussion: IT collaboration and web support were two of the topics identified in the survey of the region's managers that guided the start-up of the Innovation Task Force. Staff delayed research on these topics in order to respond to a request by member agency Geographic Information System (GIS) managers to procure new high-resolution aerial imagery. Staff is planning to survey chief information officers, IT managers, and/or other applicable member agency staff to identify opportunities for collaboration and joint project development for the region's IT and management information systems (MIS). The survey results will be presented at a workshop of the region's IT staff.

With the results of the survey, staff hopes to build the first regional database of the software used in asset management, emergency response, customer service, and other local MIS. The survey also will collect plans for new system development to provide a foundation for sharing best practices and collaborating on new initiatives. Results from the survey will provide background to develop any work plans to facilitate pooled purchases, joint project development, and/or new information sharing groups.

As part of this effort, staff also will explore whether, and how, this initiative on IT and MIS can also facilitate data sharing between SACOG and its members, and among members. One example is SACOG's employment monitoring program. Every four years, staff purchases a licensed database on local businesses from an information provider to Google maps. SACOG's purchase includes detailed information on the type of business, sales volumes, and the number of employees. Because all local business information comes with a number of errors, staff spends approximately one staff full-time equivalent to reconcile and business information to more accurate local and statewide databases with better public sector employment information. For the information purchase in 2015, staff is including access to this information for all member agencies. This and other similar information may support local economic development efforts (a separate shared service topic).

Origin of the Idea

For the last 10 years, staff has worked with our member agencies to coordinate GIS information through county level working groups and two formal cooperatives. The survey results from the region's managers provided a new opportunity to look for similar project development and MIS practices across the region. Recent discussions with Code for Sacramento and Hacker Labs also indicate that there may be non-profit and general public interest in helping local governments develop new MIS practices.

Geographic/Scalability

The project is applicable to all local governments and many special districts in the region. Staff will work with a set of key advisors from member agencies to develop this project's stakeholders and survey content.

Governance Options

Pursuant to the Board's direction, staff will explore governance options as part of the feasibility analysis and business plan for any shared service opportunities that come out of this initiative.

SACOG is funding this initiative as a part of our work plan for shared services. SACOG's Performance Monitoring Team has included additional costs in its employment monitoring project to provide licenses for member agencies to use proprietary data in the employment database that is developed for each update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. If the database is found to be useful, staff will explore shared funding to provide more frequent updates to the data.


Issues to resolve include whether the region's IT and planning staffs will benefit from collaborative project development, whether SACOG's employment monitoring information can replace locally purchased employment data, what the cost would be for members if more frequent employment data is requested, and how to govern any collaborative projects.

Approved by:



Mike McKeever
Chief Executive Officer

MM:JC:gg

Key Staff: Kirk Trost, Chief Operating Officer/General Counsel, (916) 340-6210
Rebecca Sloan, Director of External Affairs and Member Services, (916) 340-6224 
Joe Concannon, Data Services Manager, (916) 340-6234 