



Strategic Planning Committee

December 20, 2012

Grant Funding Applications and Opportunities

Issue: Should SACOG accept grant funding and submit additional grant funding applications to support the work in the Overall Work Plan for fiscal year 2012/2013.

Recommendation: That the Strategic Planning Committee recommend that the SACOG Board of Directors authorize staff to proceed with model development work under a Specialty Crop Block Grant received in December 2012; to submit proposals for the 2013 Specialty Crop Block Grant program; to accept funding in the amount of \$300,000 from the Capital South East Connector Authority for the development of a Regional Open Space Inventory/Plan to benefit the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan; to submit a proposal to the Federal Highway Administration for Climate Vulnerability Assessment of transportation infrastructure; to submit a proposed scope of work for public health and economic opportunity funding from the Sierra Health Foundation and The California Endowment; and to explore funding for staff to provide technical assistance to other metropolitan regions relating to the implementation of SB 375 principles.

Discussion: The following grants or funding sources/opportunities have either been secured, or will be sought, for work that would be started and/or completed in 2013:

1. Specialty Crop Block Grant, 2012 – Urban Footprint Model Improvement

SACOG was awarded an \$85,000 grant by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to add RUCS functionality to the Urban Footprint model that is currently being developed for SACOG. The work would provide the same RUCS functionality currently available in the I-PLACE³S model. The work would be completed by June 2013. The proposal is included as Attachment A. Staff will bring an item in February seeking authorization to proceed with a sole source contract with Calthorpe Associates, the designer and builder of the Urban Footprint model.

2. Specialty Crop Block Grant, 2013 – Agriculture Multipliers and Re-use of Fairgrounds

SACOG has submitted concept proposals for two projects that would support the RUCS project and stakeholders in the region. Concept proposals for both projects are included as Attachments B and C. Staff is seeking authorization to proceed with full grant proposals if invited by CDFA in February. Proposals would be due by March 22, 2013.

The first proposal addresses a need for better information to describe the economic benefits from agricultural activity in a region. RUCS stakeholders have repeatedly noted that current reports do not capture the full impact of agriculture on local and regional economies. SACOG is proposing to estimate better economic multipliers that represent the full range of economic activity related to agriculture and to differentiate local and regional food systems from conventional food systems. Staff is seeking \$375,400 for a two-year project that would start in November 2013.

SACOG is also proposing a project that would develop strategies for the re-use of county fairgrounds to become part of the local/regional food system. Fairgrounds have underutilized facilities that can be upgraded to aggregate, process, store and distribute food. Some land may also be available for small-scale agriculture. Most fairgrounds are located in areas that provide ready access to underserved communities, so this project places particular attention on how these facilities can be used to provide food access for areas considered “food deserts.” Staff is seeking \$315,125 for a two-year project that would start in November 2013.

3. Capital South East Connector Authority – Development of a Regional Open Space Inventory/Plan

The Capital South East Connector Authority and the Environmental Council of Sacramento recently entered into an agreement to resolve a dispute over the Program Environmental Impact Report for the general alignment Capital South East Connector Project. The settlement agreement generally provides as follows: (1) the Connector Authority shall contribute \$300,000 to SACOG for the development of a Regional Open Space Inventory/Plan, with up to \$50,000 for the study of alternative funding sources for advance mitigation acquisition; (2) the funds shall be available and prorated over 3 fiscal years pursuant to an approved memorandum of understanding between SACOG and the Connector Authority; and (3) the expenditure plan for the funds is subject to the review of ECOS.

4. Federal Highway Administration – Climate Vulnerability Assessment

A Federal Highway Administration grant program will fund from 4 to 10 pilot projects to conduct climate vulnerability assessments of transportation infrastructure. The awards are expected to be between \$75,000 and \$300,000 each for an 18-month period. The program requires a 50/50 match, which can come from non-federal cash or in-kind contributions. Staff proposes to work with various regional stakeholders and partner agencies to develop a scope of work and identify matching funds. One source of these funds may be from existing funds dedicated to climate change projects that are currently in the OWP. The application is due on January 22, 2013, with awards expected by February 19, 2013. If approved, staff will bring a final project scope and funding plan to the March 2013 Board meeting.

5. Sierra Health/California Endowment – Public Health and Economic Opportunity Work

Our recently adopted MTP/SCS committed to conduct further research and develop policies related to the impacts of our land use and transportation actions on public health and economic opportunity. This work will encompass all segments of our society, but give particular focus on lower income and disadvantaged populations. Over the last few months, we have had exploratory discussions with the Sierra Health Foundation and The California Endowment about financial support for some of this work. They are supportive and have invited us to submit a proposed scope of work for approximately \$150,000 of activities. We likely will propose to segment the work, starting with a scoping phase that will allow us time to develop a broad-base of participation for the project (and possibly broaden the funding base to include business sector partners) and fully engage the Board in the effort. We anticipate bringing the proposed approach to the Board in February.

6. Technical Assistance to Other Metropolitan Regions

For the last few years, SACOG has had a revenue strategy of using our technical expertise to provide fee for service help on various contracts that relate directly to our work and to help build our expertise as well as cover staff costs. We provide some peer-to-peer assistance without charge, especially to other regions in-state, but for out-of-state work we usually charge a fee. We have received preliminary interest through a prominent national funder, the Rockefeller Foundation, about our willingness to provide technical assistance to three other metropolitan regions around the country to train them how to prepare plans based on the principles in SB375. The Foundation has an interest in encouraging others to follow California's lead. These discussions are very preliminary; if they gain momentum we would anticipate bringing details to the Board for approval sometime over the next six months.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Chief Executive Officer

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Attachments

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