

# South Bay Cities Council of Governments

**January 13, 2014**

**TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee**

**FROM: Jacki Bacharach, Executive Director  
Steve Lantz, Transportation Consultant**

**SUBJECT: SBCCOG / METRO Strategic Growth Council Grant Opportunity**

## BACKGROUND

The State Department of Conservation (DOC) has issued Round 3 for the Strategic Growth Council Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentive Program. This round is making available approximately \$16 million of Proposition 84 funds. The funds awarded will support development, adoption, and implementation of sustainable community planning elements throughout the State. The grants awarded from this solicitation will cover up to a three-year project period and require a 10% match. Grant requests for amounts from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000 will be considered, as described in the RFP. Proposals are due February 28, 2014.

There are several categories to apply under and SBCCOG would not want to compete with our cities or other possible opportunities that we might have ourselves. However, there is an opportunity for SBCCOG to partner with Metro, which would be the lead agency under a category that would not be the same as our cities. Metro would also provide the local match.

## PROPOSAL

With the discussions about an additional sales tax, Metro staff has also been talking to COGs about creating sub-regional Mobility Matrices. Such a matrix is something that would assist the South Bay in establishing an integrated transportation program for our area beyond the Measure R Highway Program. With the grant funds, the South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) would develop a Sustainable South Bay Mobility Plan Guidebook. The SBCCOG staff believes that the Strategic Growth Council grant proposal would provide a unique funding and policy opportunity for the disparate South Bay projects, programs and strategies to be integrated into a model sustainable sub-regional mobility and land use strategic plan guidebook that local jurisdictions could reference in their transportation and land use planning studies.

The SBCCOG is in the position to prepare a very competitive grant proposal but lacks a funding source for the required local match. Since a grant proposal would be very synergistic with Metro's new Mobility Matrices and Metro's model countywide sustainable mobility and land use programs, SBCCOG is exploring with Metro staff that Metro be the lead agency for the Strategic Growth Council grant application in partnership with the SBCCOG. We are also asking the Metro Board to provide up to \$100,000 as the local match from their Mobility Matrix program funding sources. The SBCCOG and Metro have previously partnered to develop a dynamic highway program using the South Bay Measure R funds and have collaborated successfully to develop new countywide policy and planning strategies. This grant provides another beneficial partnership that would have local, sub-regional and regional benefits. Additionally, Metro is

considering funding the sub-regions a certain amount of funds for this effort and this grant could leverage them into something much more comprehensive and helpful to our cities.

Because the South Bay does not lend itself to traditional transit oriented development, the sub-region provides an ideal study area to focus on mobility and sustainability strategies in areas that are not focused on transit oriented development, but, instead, serve neighborhood oriented development. In addition, the SBCCOG is already engaged in development of sustainable transportation, land use and sustainability programs and projects.

The Strategic Growth Council grant would provide funding and a policy framework that would overcome several current limitations. Without the grant, local jurisdictions, the SBCCOG, Metro, and SCAG would continue to independently fund and implement transportation projects and land use planning that only peripherally address sustainable communities strategy. For example, the SBCCOG's Measure R South Bay Highway Plan projects are restricted to freeway and highway operational improvement projects that meet the narrow nexus requirements of Measure R. This narrow scope precludes use of these funds for a comprehensive Sustainable South Bay transportation planning process that includes alternate vehicle technology, active transportation, first/last mile passenger and urban freight strategies, and transportation demand management using new smart technologies and groundbreaking private sector business models.

The Strategic Growth Council grant would provide significant leverage for Metro funding of the South Bay Mobility Matrix. However, should the grant not be funded, SBCCOG would request that the \$100,000 Metro match be automatically re-directed back to the SBCCOG as part of the Metro funding for a more limited South Bay mobility matrix that would address other transportation modes but would not fund land use and non-transportation mobility elements.

Under discrete planning efforts, the SBCCOG has been developing strategies involving infrastructure needed to serve conversion from a gasoline-diesel fueled fleet to electric vehicles, neighborhood-oriented development, and car sharing. In addition, the SBCCOG has been assisting cities with their Climate Action Plans, but has yet to identify funding for the transportation and other elements of the CAPs such as renewable energy, water use and waste. The SBCCOG is also working with Metro to develop transportation project performance monitoring and project evaluation programs, and is participating in a statewide Caltrans study using the South Bay as one of two pilot study areas to develop appropriate performance measures related to sustainability-driven transportation and land use strategies.

Metro also is already involved in strategic transportation planning in several sub-regions and has been requested by other COGs to provide funding for development of transportation project lists and plans, known as Mobility Matrices. The need for the sub-regional plans arose when Metro requested that the COGs prepare a list of projects and programs that could be considered as a new countywide transportation sales tax measure is being developed. Although the SBCCOG submitted a comprehensive letter of policy concerns and candidate projects and programs, other COGs had no such list and requested funding to prepare a mobility matrix for their sub-region. However, there is neither countywide consistency in the scopes of the current and planned mobility plans nor countywide guidelines for undertaking such studies. And there are no "best practice" examples of how to integrate sustainability considerations into traditional transportation planning with land use planning processes. The proposal would include a task to share the draft Sustainable South Bay Mobility Plan Guidebook with the Gateway, Westside, and

other COGs should they be interested in incorporating sustainability planning into their Mobility Matrices.

Because the Metro Board will need to be asked to support the application before the SBCCOG Board meets on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, SBCCOG staff is seeking Steering Committee approval to proceed with the grant application on the condition that Metro agrees to be the lead agency, provide the match, uses its governmental affairs resources in support of grant approval, and authorizes re-programming the match as part of the Metro-funded South Bay Mobility Matrix should the grant not be awarded.

#### RECOMMENDATION

The SBCCOG Steering Committee approves seeking Metro Board approval to submit an application in the Round 3 Strategic Growth Council solicitation with the following conditions: Metro agrees to:

1. act as the lead agency for the Strategic Growth Council grant application in partnership with the SBCCOG;
2. provide up to \$100,000 as the local match;
3. use Metro's legislative staff to urge that this funding be granted once it has been submitted; and,
4. Should the Strategic Growth Council grant not be awarded, the \$100,000 Metro match funding would be re-directed by Metro to the SBCCOG as part of some additional Metro funding for a more limited South Bay Mobility Matrix that addresses elements beyond the Measure R South Bay Highway Program. The total amount for funding a more limited South Bay Mobility Matrix would be determined when the results of the grant solicitation are known.

**Motion by Directors O'Connor, Knabe, & Dubois**

**Subject:** Strategic Growth Council Grant Opportunity Motion

The Department of Conservation (DOC), Division of Land Resource Protection (DLRP), Planning Grant and Incentives Program staff has released the Request for Proposals (RFP) for Round 3 of the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentive Program.

This Program is funded through the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84). DOC has allocated approximately \$16 million of Proposition 84 funds for Round 3. The funds awarded will support development, adoption, and implementation of sustainable community planning elements throughout the State. The grants awarded from this solicitation will cover up to a three-year project period and require a 10% match. Grant requests for amounts from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000 will be considered, as described in the RFP. The proposal is due Feb. 28, 2014.

The South Bay Cities COG (SBCCOG) is in the position to prepare a very competitive grant proposal but lacks a funding source for the required local match. Such a grant proposal would be very synergistic with Metro *Mobility Matrices* goals.

**We are proposing** that Metro be the lead agency for the Strategic Growth Council grant application in partnership with the SBCCOG. We are asking the Metro Board to provide up to \$100,000 as the local match and would be willing to explore whether the Gateway and Westside COGs would be interested in coordinating their sustainability efforts as part of the grant.

**The Strategic Growth Council Grant Opportunity and Relationship to Mobility Matrices**

Metro is involved in strategic transportation planning in several Sub Regions and has been requested by other COGs and subregions to provide study funding for development of transportation project lists and plans, known as Mobility Matrices. However, there is no countywide consistency in the scopes of the plans, the guidelines for undertaking such studies, and there are no "best practice" examples of how to integrate sustainability considerations into traditional transportation planning with land use planning processes.

The Strategic Growth Council grant offers the opportunity to provide Metro a pilot study that would improve the integration of transportation and land use plans with new Metro, state and federal sustainability initiatives. Because of this the proposal would include a task to share the draft Sustainable South Bay Mobility Plan Guidebook with the Gateway, Westside, and other COGs should they be interested in incorporating sustainability planning into their Mobility Matrices.

Although the SBCCOG is involved in a wide range of neighborhood-serving smart mobility and land use initiatives, there is a pressing need to for the disparate projects, programs and strategies to be integrated into a complete sub-regional Sustainable Mobility and Land Use Strategic Plan. Additionally, this sub-regional planning needs to be coordinated across adjacent sub-regional boundaries so that Neighborhood, Subregional, Countywide, and Regional plans will be consistent. In addition to providing a Mobility Matrix model, this bottoms-up Sustainable South Bay Strategic Plan approach could help inform the next update of the Metro Long Range Transportation Plan, the SCAG RTP/SCS and a potential new countywide sales tax measure.

Because the South Bay does not lend itself to traditional transit oriented development, the subregion provides an ideal study area to focus on mobility and sustainability options in areas that are not focused on transit oriented development, but, instead, need to address mobility and sustainability strategies and projects that serve neighborhood oriented development.

A Strategic Growth Council grant would overcome several current planning limitations. For example, The SBCCOG's South Bay Highway Plan has been restricted to freeway and highway operational improvement projects that meet the narrow nexus requirements of Measure R. This narrow scope precludes use of these funds for a comprehensive Sustainable South Bay planning process. Under separate planning efforts, the SBCCOG has been developing initial analytical and development phases for several sustainable transportation and land use strategies involving infrastructure needed to serve conversion from a gasoline-diesel fueled fleet to electric vehicles, neighborhood-oriented development, and car sharing. SBCCOG has been working with Metro to develop transportation project performance monitoring and project evaluation programs, and also is participating in a statewide study using the South Bay as one of two pilot study areas to develop appropriate performance measures related to sustainability-driven transportation and land use strategies.

Despite an array of commendable initiatives, the sustainable mobility and land use programs and projects desperately call for a unifying Strategic Plan for a sustainable South Bay that would provide a countywide model for Metro-sponsored mobility matrices. The (SBCCOG) model could help integrate traditional infrastructure improvements with emerging sustainable mobility alternatives; such as: active transportation, urban freight, and first/last mile passenger and freight strategies and longer term land use options.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Metro Board instruct the CEO and Metro staff

- A. To act as the lead agency for the Strategic Growth Council grant application in partnership with the SBCCOG; and
- B. To provide up to \$100,000 as the local match;
- C. Utilize Metro's legislative advocacy staff to urge that this funding be granted once the Grant Proposal has been submitted.