

# South Bay Cities Council of Governments

April 12, 2021

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee

FROM: Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG Executive Director

RE: Special Assessment for SBCCOG Regional Planner

## Adherence to the Strategic Plan

*Goal A: Environment, Transportation and Economic Development.* Facilitate, implement and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay.

*Goal B: Regional Advocacy.* Advocate for the interests of the South Bay.

*Goal C: Member Networking and Communications.* Sustain and strengthen Board and member commitment to SBCCOG and its initiatives.

## Background

Over the last few months, SBCCOG staff has been discussing with the Community Development Directors and City Managers the idea of the SBCCOG hiring a planner who would work with cities on land use issues and monitor and interpret housing legislation as well as enhancing the SBCCOG's climate action work. See attached draft scope of work.

This discussion has been precipitated by the many issues that are coming to COG's dealing with land use. Not only the proliferation of state housing legislative proposals, but also SCAG relying on the COGs to administer and develop the Regional Early Action Program (REAP) for which we will be working on 4 projects with Community Development Directors for several years. In the last two years, Gateway COG has hired a planner for their region and they have found it very helpful.

This person would be a resource to address issues shared by all of the cities. It has become apparent that we do not have the capacity to do the work on housing policy as well as the studies that will be required for the REAP projects of which there are four.

The Community Development Directors, City Managers and Steering Committee have been supportive of the proposal knowing that it would need to be financed through a special assessment. A matrix is attached of the recommended special assessment scenario. The matrix is a breakdown of cities by size which is the same as the way we financed the development of the cities' climate actions plans. Since last month, the City Council of Rolling Hills voted to pay \$1000 for one year – on a trial basis.

It should be noted that several other cities have said that their commitment is only for one year. It is very possible that with that kind of commitment, we will not be able to hire an at will employee, but will have to hire a planning firm which will be more expensive but easier to recruit under these conditions.

It is the staff's intention to use funding from the REAP program as permissible to pay for part of this position and if the entire assessment is not needed, the excess would roll over into the following year reducing the assessment for that year.

Several cities have stated that they were not interested in participating which creates a "free rider" problem. The information that the planner will be working on is to the benefit of all South Bay Cities – impacts of legislative ideas on the South Bay, ADU best practices and status, SB 330 (permitting issues that inhibit housing development), etc. It will be almost impossible to leave the impact of and to those cities out of the analysis for a regional plan. Also, their planners participate in the Community Development Directors working group where the ideas and information from the planner's work will be discussed and direction will be provided.

The scope of work will be chosen from the attached list of tasks at the direction of the Community Development Directors.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve the hiring of a planner for the subregion who would work under the direction of the SBCCOG on priorities established by the City Community Development Directors and the SBCCOG. The position will be funded by an assessment based on the population categories in the attached matrix and the assessment will be sent out with the dues invoice.

## **Draft Scope of Work – South Bay COG Director of Regional Development\***

**\*Regional Planning might be more descriptive but some funds won't pay for planning**

The Director of Regional Development is responsible for conducting the agency's housing and development program as follows:

Always in consultation with the city Community Development Directors:

- Assist the COG and member jurisdictions in developing a coherent housing policy to ensure that state policy goals to accelerate housing production are met, while also meeting the local needs of communities in the SBCCOG region;
- Track state housing policy and legislation, recommend advocacy positions to be taken by the SBCCOG Board and support or participate in legislative advocacy on behalf of the SBCCOG as directed;
- Track and participate in the development of regional plans, particularly the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) periodically developed by SCAG; track and participate in related regional committee meetings (Technical Working Group, Regional Council, Policy Committees, etc.); and keep COG members informed of their implications;
- Track and participate in SCAG's RHNA process, including RHNA Subcommittee meetings for the distribution methodology, and keep COG members informed of the process and its implications;
- Oversee the implementation of the SCAG REAP programs that the SBCCOG has submitted on behalf of SBCCOG cities;
- Work with other COG and city program staff, including transportation planning, economic development, and homelessness to ensure that policy, planning, and project development efforts are coordinated;
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of what cities are doing throughout the state on complying with requirements, i.e. best practices, re: ADU's, public participation, etc.;
- Track member jurisdictions' compliance with state housing law and assure they receive technical assistance as needed;
- Be a resource to cities on request – conducting research, assisting with RFP's
- Further develop the agency's climate planning initiatives by ensuring member jurisdictions continue to use the Climate Action Planning Framework; update the CAP Framework and develop additional tools as needed;
- Recommend and develop additional innovative planning programs as needed, and monitor and share funding opportunities to help the South Bay Cities prosper economically, environmentally, and socially.

**Special Assessment Proposed for Regional Planner**

RECOMMENDED

OVER 75,000 population

Carson	9,000
Hawthorne	9,000
Inglewood	9,000
Los Angeles County	9,000
Los Angeles City	9,000
Torrance	9,000

30,000 TO 75,000 population

Gardena	6,500
Lawndale	6,500
Manhattan Beach	6,500
Rancho Palos Verdes	6,500
Redondo Beach	6,500

UNDER 30,000 population

El Segundo	4,000
Hermosa Beach	4,000
Lomita	4,000
Palos Verdes Estates	4,000
Rolling Hills	4,000
Rolling Hills Estates	4,000

AGREED TO PAY \$1000/ONE YEAR

TOTAL 110,500

Gateway COG has a budget of \$130,000 for this position. With their REAP funding, it is now closer to \$150,000.