

**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 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.