



2025 Blueprint: Environmental Impact Report Request for Proposals

Action

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Attachments: Yes

Approved by: James Corless

Referring Committee: Policy and Innovation

Issue:

Approval of the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2025 Blueprint.

Recommendation:

The Policy and Innovation Committee recommends that the SACOG board authorize the following process: (1) release an RFP for professional services to assist SACOG with the development of the EIR for the 2025 Blueprint; (2) the board chair appoints two board members to participate in consultant interviews during the procurement process; and (3) authorize the Executive Director to select a vendor and negotiate and execute a contract with a not-to-exceed budget of \$800,000.

Background/Analysis:

SACOG is undertaking an update to the region's long-range transportation and land use plan, the 2025 Blueprint. We anticipate the board adopting the plan in late 2025. Ultimately, this plan must outline the transportation investment and land use strategies needed to achieve various federal, state, regional, and local policy objectives within real world constraints (e.g., financial, growth, regulatory). Last year, the board adopted a Policy Framework (see Attachment A) focused on the Triple Bottom Line goals of equity, economy, and environment that is being used to shape the analysis, board discussions, and recommendations throughout the development of 2025 Blueprint.

There are many requirements and regional goals that the 2025 Blueprint (MTP/SCS) needs to consider as part of centering the plan update on the Triple Bottom Line goals of advancing equity, economy, and the environment. Among these are achieving health standards for clean air under the federal Clean Air Act; identifying strategies for addressing ongoing shortages in the production of affordable or attainable housing, addressing statewide climate goals; keeping transportation infrastructure in a state of good repair; and quantifying, monitoring, and working to improve congestion and travel time reliability. Additionally, the 2025 Blueprint is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and SACOG must complete an EIR for the plan to inform the public and public agency decision-makers of significant environmental effects of the proposed plan, identify possible ways to minimize those effects, and describe a set of alternatives for achieving the plans objectives.

Discussion/Analysis:

This item was originally presented at the February 5, Policy and Innovation Committee and February 15, Board of Directors meetings with a staff request for authorization to release an RFP for EIR services and delegated authority for the executive director to negotiate and execute a contract with a not-to-exceed budget of \$800,000. The board directed staff to come back through the Policy and Innovation Committee with a fully developed RFP so that the board could directly review and approve the RFP.

To facilitate the development of the EIR that will accompany the 2025 Blueprint, staff is requesting that the committee recommend that the SACOG board authorize staff to release an RFP for professional services to assist SACOG with the development of the EIR for the 2025 Blueprint. The full RFP (Attachment B) is included as part of this staff report. The timing of this RFP request is based on the scope of work and amount of time required to develop a regional-scale programmatic EIR. In addition to a copy of the full RFP, the supplemental materials will include a detailed timeline with both the key milestones for the EIR and the Blueprint.

The proposed contract amount of not-to-exceed \$800,000 is consistent with the cost of similar EIRs developed by other metropolitan planning organizations and accounts for inflation since the development of the EIR for the last long-range plan update completed in 2019. Staff is also requesting that the board authorize the executive director to select a vendor and negotiate and execute a contract with a not-to-exceed budget of \$800,000, with an anticipated contract term of two years, and the option to extend for an additional year. At its February 15, meeting, the board expressed an interest in having additional oversight of the procurement process for the EIR. Staff have identified the following options for that oversight and seek direction from the committee on the options to recommend to the board:

- Option 1: The board approves the full RFP as written and delegates authority to the executive director for selection of a consultant. This option is different from last month in that the board has the opportunity to weigh in on the details of the RFP and understand more about the action being requested.
- Option 2: The board chair appoints two board members to participate in consultant interviews during the procurement process. This option would provide for a more direct role in the process, but may be difficult to coordinate schedules among board members to participate in this process.
- Option 3: The board chair and Policy & Innovation Committee chair review and approve staff's consultant recommendation and consultant contract. This option would allow for board leadership to have final review prior to selection of a consultant without requiring significant time from the board to be involved in the selection process.

Should the board approve the RFP at its March 21, meeting, staff will release the RFP to solicit proposals from qualified consultants or consultant teams with experience writing programmatic EIRs and providing other CEQA technical services necessary to assist with the preparation of the environmental compliance document for the 2025 Blueprint. Staff would then implement the requested board oversight of the procurement process. Once a vendor is selected through that process, the executive director would then negotiate and execute a contract with the selected vendor for an amount not-to-exceed \$800,000.

On Monday, March 11, the Policy and Innovation Committee was presented with the options provided above and is recommending to the board that Option 2 be implemented as part of the EIR RFP procurement process. Whichever option the board approves, releasing an RFP in March provides SACOG with the opportunity for maximum competition in responses to the RFP.

Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:

The costs for this project are included in the approved Overall Work Program and Budget.