Authorize Trails Plan Implementation Request for Proposals

Consent
Prepared by: Victoria Cacciatore
Attachments: Yes

Approved by: James Corless
Referring Committee: Not Applicable

1. Issue:

The SACOG Board of Directors unanimously adopted the Sacramento Regional Trail Network in 2022. To continue progress on equitably implementing the network, the agency has identified the need for a consultant to help answer and evaluate questions about governance alternatives, program management, and funding alternatives.

2. Recommendation:

That the Board of Directors authorize the release of the Trails Plan Implementation request for proposals (RFP) with a maximum budget of $200,000, and delegate authority to the Executive Director to select a vendor, and negotiate and execute a contract with the selected consultant. With the upcoming board recess and desire to continue the momentum of the regional trail network, this item is being referred directly to the June SACOG Board of Directors meeting for approval.

3. Background/Analysis:

SACOG initiated the development of the Sacramento Region Parks and Trails Strategic Development Plan in 2019. Through this effort, the regional trail network was collaboratively identified in partnership with local agencies, special districts, public health professionals, and community-focused organizations to further the goals of environmental justice, all ages and abilities, economic vitality, health, safety, and recreation. The final trail network (attachment), which included over 1,000 miles of trails, focused on equitably creating regional trail connectivity and increasing access to the destinations that support the vitality and livability of the region.

Most identified connections (over 250 miles of existing trails and more than 800 miles of planned trails) were selected from local plans for their potential to make connections across boundaries in the region. Over 300 miles of trail study corridors— connections identified for further study in future planning documents, planned connections with known implementation challenges, and high-concept connections— were also identified for their potential to connect via trails or trail-like facilities across the region, including 50 miles of on-road separated bikeways.

Concurrent with the approval of the trail network, the board approved a prioritization framework to focus regional coordination efforts. The framework was designed to elevate trail connections that demonstrate regional potential through different combinations of performance outcomes. Recommendations for projects were then grouped based on each project's readiness to move forward so the recommended actions would

build on locally driven efforts. Using this framework, trails included in the final adopted network plan were prioritized into three different tiers (Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3).

4. Discussion/Analysis:
SACOG identified a key next step in advancing the network was to develop a clear strategy to guide implementation of the prioritized network. The board authorized the release of the Trails Plan Implementation request for proposals (RFP) to outline a strategy to accelerate the development, funding, and construction of the trail network. In spring, SACOG released an RFP outlining the envisioned implementation components for funding alternatives, monitoring framework, and governance alternatives.

The Trails Plan Implementation RFP closed in May but did not receive sufficient proposals to be competitive, leading staff to revisit the scope to identify areas for improvement and clarification. The revised scope emphasizes the needed outcome of the plan—the identification of next steps and associated actions, required partners and stakeholders, timelines, and potential funding components to implement the trail network. The budget assumptions are also updated to match the expected effort needed for the revised scope. The agency seeks to release an RFP to select a consultant that will, in collaboration with SACOG and key partners, address the following scope areas:

1. **Governance Alternatives:** The regional trail network spans the entire six-county region, and includes trails that traverse multiple jurisdictions, including areas of cultural significance to tribes within the region. For the implementation plan to be successful, elected officials, partner agency leadership, and key collaborators must buy into a solid governance approach that reflects the vision of the network.
2. **Program Development:** Implementation of the regional trail network will manifest differently under different governance structures; considerations within program development will include needed resources for the network, partnership requirements, and concerns related to legal issues, risks, funding mechanisms, and levels of responsibility, among others.
3. **Funding Alternatives:** While additional grant funding has become available through both new state and federal active transportation programs, funding remains a key challenge when looking to support the development and maintenance of a large-scale trail network across the region. The goal will be to develop a list of potential funding sources, revenue mechanisms, and models for funding to build and maintain the regional trail network.

Staff anticipates the revised approach will yield a competitive RFP that achieves the desired outcomes of a clear strategy and structure, agency roles, and key steps required to initiate and implement the regional trails program and governance strategy. To keep the project close to the original timeline and avoid delays from summer recess, this item is being referred directly to the board for authorization.

Attachment
Sacramento Regional Trail Network Map

5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:
SACOG identified an initial budget of $100,000 within the adopted Overall Work Program (OWP) and would augment with Carbon Reduction funds for a total budget of $200,000.