



Staff Report

TO: City Council
FROM: Mike Lara, City Council Member
DATE: July 21, 2020
SUBJECT: Discussion and Direction Regarding Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) Proposed Programs for Fiscal Year 2021

Background and Analysis:

On July 8, 2020, the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) Administration and Finance Committee (Committee) held a regular meeting. The agenda included a look forward for Fiscal Year 2021 and a presentation of three potential initiatives. These initiatives were:

1. Formation of an Economic Development Corporation (EDC),
2. Provision of GIS/Modeling Services to Members/Others, and
3. Formation of a Sub-Regional Housing Trust.

Attached to this memorandum is a copy of the July 8, 2020, meeting presentation that provides an overview for each of these initiatives.

Economic Development Corporation (EDC)

WRCOG proposes the formation of a new EDC that would operate as a non-profit entity. The mission of this entity would be to promote economic development within the WRCOG. It would focus on business attraction, business retention, and business expansion.

It is contemplated that an EDC would be developed through a three-step process. First, a steering committee would be formed which consists of internal and external stakeholders to provide guidance for the formation of a sub-regional EDC. Second, an organizational structure would be developed that best reflects the needs and objectives of all members and stakeholders. Finally, the EDC would be operationalized to include establishing a sustained source of funding and providing other needed resourcing. It is contemplated that membership would consist of public and private sector entities.

EDC information is provided on Slides 13 to 21 of the attached presentation.

Housing Trust

WRCOG also proposes the creation of a public/private partnership to develop a funding mechanism to develop and preserve affordable housing. The types of housing activities that could be implemented would be:

1. New construction of affordable housing;
2. Preservation/rehabilitation of existing, affordable housing;
3. Provision of services to the unhoused; and
4. Down payment assistance for developers or first-time home buyers.

This trust was presented as a tool to help address the region's shortage of affordable housing by mitigating high land costs and rising construction costs. These objectives would be achieved through the formation of a joint powers authority (JPA) that creates a non-profit entity that can raise funds that would be applied toward qualified housing projects. The disbursement of the funds would be overseen by a board of directors which would be composed of jurisdictional representatives, elected officials, and other stakeholders.

Ultimately, WRCOG envisions the formation of a regionally based solution through a public/private partnership that dedicated to solving issues of housing attainability and homelessness. With its ability to access public and private capital, it is seen as a long-term solution.

Housing trust information is provided on Slides 22 to 27 of the attached presentation.

GIS/Modeling Service Bureau

WRCOG's final initiative is the creation of a service to provide GIS and transportation modeling services to member agencies. This service would be modeled after a similar program created in the San Diego region which is known as SANDAG. WRCOG stated that the provision of GIS/modeling services to member agencies would:

1. Enhance the existing GIS/modeling and transportation planning efforts of member agencies; and
2. Provide quick, inexpensive services to members.

Furthermore, WRCOG envisions that this program would be capable of providing a broad range of services. These services would include general plan amendments, traffic volume maps, traffic model scenarios for proposed developments/redevelopments, and project specific mapping needs.

Member agencies would have access to this service through subscription fees and/or project-specific fees and charges. WRCOG proposes to utilize existing GIS/modeling staff and resources to provide these services and states that no additional staffing would be needed.

GIS/Modeling Service Bureau information is provided on Slides 28 to 33 of the attached presentation.

City Council Discussion/Action

WRCOG is proposing three major programming initiatives that have far reaching implications from both a monetary and policy perspective. Formal direction from the City Council is requested in order to ensure that Beaumont's interests and positions are accurately represented before the Committee.

Fiscal Impact:

City estimates that preparation of this report cost approximately \$175.

Recommended Action:

It is recommended that the City Council provide direction with regard each of WRCOG's proposed programs for Fiscal Year 2021 – Economic Development Committee, Housing Trust and GIS/Modeling Service Bureau – and direct Beaumont's representative to submit said direction to the Administration and Finance Committee.

Attachments:

- A. Presentation – WRCOG Administration and Finance Committee, July 8, 2020