

**ITEM #12: REGIONAL CONNECTORS STUDY: STATUS UPDATE**  
***Staff of Michael Baker International, RCS Consultant***

The Regional Connectors Study (RCS) consultant team, led by Michael Baker International, is nearing completion of Phase 1 of the study which included:

- Developing an Engagement Program and Outreach Plan, which included:
  - Conducting Stakeholder Interviews with local governments, state and federal agencies, and other entities identified by the Working Group
  - Developing a Study Website
  - Conducting a Statistically-Valid Public Survey
- Evaluating the Regional Travel Demand Model
- Determining Scenario Planning Options
- Updating Existing Conditions Information
- Determining the Scope for Phase 2 of the Study

A joint meeting of the RCS Steering (Policy) Committee and Working Group was held on January 29, 2019 to brief members on the status of Phase 1, the draft scope of work for Phase 2, and the relationship between the 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the RCS. There have been concerns among members of the Working Group and Steering Committee that keeping the timelines of the RCS and the 2045 LRTP coupled may not provide sufficient time to complete the work envisioned for the RCS. The joint group agreed to review the draft scope for Phase 2 of the study and to consider whether the timelines of the RCS and the 2045 LRTP should be decoupled and to meet again on February 13, 2019 to determine a recommendation on those two items for the HRTPO Board.

During the meeting on February 13, 2019, the RCS Steering Committee voted unanimously to decouple the timelines for the RCS and the 2045 LRTP process. The Steering Committee and Working Group also agreed that more time was needed to consider technical comments received on the draft Phase 2 scope that was under review. In order to keep the RCS effort moving forward, it was agreed that a scaled-down version of the Phase 2 scope (along with revised schedule and cost estimate) would be prepared for consideration by the HRTPO Board on February 21, 2019 – the expectation being that the HRTPO Board could authorize the Executive Director to enter into a contract with the consultant team for the scaled-down scope, while providing additional time for the RCS Working Group and Steering Committee to work out the details of the remainder of the full scope that has been under review by those groups. The scaled-down scope allows work to continue on baseline study tasks that will not be affected by the fine-tuning of the larger scope to address the comments under consideration.

The scaled-down Phase 2 scope and revised schedule and cost estimate was provided to the RCS Working Group on February 14, 2019, and the Working Group was asked to submit comments on those documents by noon on Monday, February 18, 2019. The documents, revised to account for comments received, will be made available to the HRTPO Board by COB on Tuesday, February 19, 2019.

**Staff from Michael Baker International, RCS Consultant, will brief the Board on this item.**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

- A. Approve the recommendation from the RCS Steering Committee and Working Group to decouple the timelines for the RCS and the 2045 LRTP.
- B. Approve the Regional Connectors Study (scaled-down) Phase 2 Scope of Work, Schedule, and Cost and authorize the Executive Director to enter into a contract with the consultant.