DATE: July 26, 2023

TO: Waste Management Authority

FROM: Karen Kho, Principal Program Manager
Matt Zimbalist, Regional Economic Competitiveness Officer

SUBJECT: Bay Area Construction Innovation Cluster Update

SUMMARY

StopWaste and a coalition of partners are establishing a construction innovation ecosystem in the Bay Area with seed funding from the federal Build Back Better Regional Challenge (Regional Challenge). At the July 26 WMA Board meeting, staff will provide an update on the Bay Area Construction Innovation Cluster (BACIC), pursuit of federal Regional Technology and Innovation Hub (Tech Hub) designation, and current agency initiatives to advance circular building materials and waste prevention in the construction sector.

DISCUSSION

In December 2021, the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded StopWaste a $500,000 planning grant for BACIC. This grant funded the development of a Phase 2 proposal for the Regional Challenge and the hiring of a Regional Economic Competitiveness Officer to advance the formation of a construction innovation ecosystem in the Bay Area. Although our coalition did not receive Phase 2 funding, EDA has continued to support the Regional Challenge finalists through technical assistance and a Community of Practice.

BACIC is now pursuing Designation and a Strategy Development grant from the EDA Tech Hubs program, which was authorized by Congress last year. Like the Regional Challenge, this program consists of two phases with planning grants of up to $500,000 and implementation awards ranging from $50-75 million. Phase 1 proposals are due on August 15, 2023. BACIC is focusing on a core technology area of high-performance industrialized construction, including circular building materials. Industrialized construction adapts principles, processes, and technologies from the manufacturing industry to holistically improve building construction and performance. It commonly involves prefabrication, digitization, standardization, and integrated project management, which minimizes the generation of construction waste and optimizes the use of building materials on a project.

DISCUSSION

This item is for information only.