Connect SoCal 2024 Sustainable Communities Program
Active Transportation & Safety
Draft Program Guidelines

Contents

Sustainable Communities Program Overview

The Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) is a grant program that provides technical assistance to support implementation of Connect SoCal, the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The SCP strengthens partnerships with local agencies and strategic partners who are responsible for land use and transportation decisions to help the region achieve its unified goals. The SCP provides local jurisdictions with multiple opportunities to seek funding and resources to meet the needs of their communities. SCAG is committed to working in partnership with others to close the gap of racial injustice and better serve historically disinvested communities. On July 2, 2020, the SCAG Regional Council adopted Resolution 20-623-2, affirming its commitment to advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout Southern California and subsequently adopted the Racial Equity Early Action Plan in May 2021 to guide SCAG's work in advancing equity. As part of these commitments, the SCP aims to prioritize resources where there is a demonstrated need.

Program Goals

The SCP aims to:

- Provide needed resources for local jurisdictions to advance the goals outlined in Connect SoCal 2024 in the areas of mobility, communities, environment, and economy.
- Promote racial equity that is grounded in the recognition of the past and current harms of systemic racism and one that advances restorative justice.
- Integrate the region's development pattern and transportation network to improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enable more sustainable use of energy and water.
- Prioritize the most vulnerable populations and communities subject to climate hazards to help the people, places and infrastructure that are most at risk for climate change impacts. In doing so, recognize that disadvantaged communities are often overburdened.
- Increase the region's competitiveness for federal and state funds, including, but not limited to the California Active Transportation Program and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds.

2024 Active Transportation & Safety Call for Applications

I.   Overview

Connect SoCal 2024 is defined by the mobility goal to build and maintain an integrated multimodal transportation network (see page 12 in Connect SoCal 2024 Chapter 1). To achieve this goal, Connect SoCal 2024 identifies mobility policies organized into eight categories: System Preservation and Resilience, Complete Streets, Transit and Multimodal Integration, Transportation System Management, Transportation Demand Management, Technology Integration, Safety, and Funding the System/User Pricing (see pages 88-89 and 114-116 in Connect SoCal 2024 Chapter 3).

The Connect SoCal 2024 SCP Active Transportation & Safety (SCP-ATS) Call for Applications represents one of multiple funding Calls through the Connect SoCal 2024 SCP. The SCP-ATS funds projects that primarily help advance the Connect SoCal 2024 mobility policies under Complete Streets, Transit and Multimodal Integration, and Safety. Selected projects will improve mobility across the region, increasing rates of walking and biking, advancing traffic safety, expanding opportunities for multimodal transportation options, and competitively positioning local jurisdictions for implementation/grant funds. The SCP-ATS Call solicits the follow project types:

- Develop a Community/Areawide Plan
- Develop and implement a Quick-Build Project

Applicants are encouraged to review Connect SoCal 2024 strategies to align project applications with regional planning priorities and concepts (see pages 124-128 in Connect SoCal 2024 Chapter 3 and Appendix 4: Connect SoCal 2024 Mobility Strategies of the Connect SoCal 2024 Mobility Technical Report). Competitive applications will advance multiple mobility goals and strategies, reflect understanding of context-based needs, utilize innovative and equity-centered planning practices, and result in planning products or programs that clearly tie community need with implementation. Collaborative public participation and engagement efforts that involve communities historically excluded from land use and transportation discussions and planning is required.

In the next four years, Southern California is expected to host several large-scale events that will impact the region's transportation system: the World Cup in 2026, the Super Bowl in 2027, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2028. These events will be impactful for the entire Southern California region and particularly for the region's transportation networks. Thousands of athletes and spectators will visit the region in compressed periods of time, needing to travel to and from a variety of venues. People from across the region may be traveling to these events themselves, either to glimpse the events as spectators or to work them, and goods will have to be delivered to the venues. Everyone else will still need to carry on with their lives while the events are occurring. A great deal of preparation will be needed.

A) SCP-ATS GOALS

The SCP-ATS aims to:

- Improve mobility across the region, especially for children and older adults, and people walking, biking, riding transit/rail, and using other forms of active transportation;
- Strategically invest in communities most harmed by traffic injuries and fatalities, which include the historically disinvested communities that comprise the majority of the Regional High Injury Network;
- Support a more resilient transportation network, especially in anticipation of the large-scale events hosted by the region; and
- Support local efforts to increase competitiveness for state and federal funding.

B) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INTEGRATION

SCAG's *Go Human* program, an active transportation safety and engagement program, provides a suite of community engagement resources, tools, and strategies. To score competitively applicants must select and identify one or both of the following elements to integrate in their project to facilitate meaningful community engagement. A small percent of the project budget shall be allocated to *Go Human*.

GO HUMAN KIT OF PARTS – The *Go Human* Kit of Parts (Kit) is a community engagement resource that creates opportunities for community members, jurisdiction staff and consultant teams to experience improved traffic safety designs directly on the street. The Kit includes a set of durable, lightweight materials that, once assembled, demonstrate complete streets infrastructure components. The Kit also includes signage and evaluation tools that allow the applicant or their consultant to facilitate community feedback as part of an inclusive planning process. The applicant or its consultant will be responsible for transportation of materials, preparation of a site and installation plan, subject to approval by SCAG. The applicant or its consultant will also be responsible for the set-up, break-down, and oversight of the *Go Human* Kit of Parts as part of the demonstration. SCAG staff will be available to provide feedback and

guidance on planning for a successful demonstration or event and direction on appropriate utilization of the Kit of Parts.

TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN – Co-branded *Go Human* print and digital advertisements are available at no cost to cities or other local government agencies to implement a traffic safety awareness campaign, alongside project or plan outreach, in an effort to improve traffic safety for people walking and biking. Available materials include, but are not limited to, lawn signs, banners, postcards, billboard ads (with donated placement), bus shelter or bench ads (with donated placement), and social media graphics.

II.   Eligible Applicants

The following entities, within the six-county SCAG region, are eligible to apply for SCP-ATS funds:

- **Local or Regional Agency**: Examples include cities, counties, councils of governments, Regional Transportation Planning Agency and County Public Health Departments.
- **Transit Agencies**: Any agency responsible for public transportation that is eligible for funds under the Federal Transit Administration.
- **Natural Resources or Public Land Agencies**: Federal, Tribal, State, or local agency responsible for natural resources or public land administration.
- **Public schools or school districts**
- **Tribal Governments**: Federally recognized Native American Tribes.
- **Private nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations that are responsible for the management of public lands**: These organizations may only apply for projects eligible for Recreational Trails Program funds. Eligible project types include recreational trails and trailheads, park projects that facilitate trail linkages or connectivity to nonmotorized corridors, and conversion of abandoned railroad corridors to trails. Projects must benefit the general public, not only a private entity.

III.   SCP-ATS Eligible Project Types

As described above, the 2024 SCP-ATS solicits two project types: community/area wide plans and quick-build projects. Applicants may apply for more than one project type and may submit multiple applications (and shall indicate priority of applications). SCAG staff is available to support applicants in determining the most appropriate project type for their needs and goals.

A) PROJECT TYPE: COMMUNITY/AREAWIDE PLANS

The 2024 SCP-ATS will fund community/areawide planning projects that benefit disadvantaged communities. For a project to qualify as benefitting a disadvantaged community, the project must fulfill one of the following conditions:
- Be located within, or be within reasonable proximity to, the disadvantaged community served by the project.
- Have a direct connection to the disadvantaged community.
- Be an extension or a segment of a larger project that connects to or is directly adjacent to the disadvantaged community.

Connect SoCal 2024 defines a disadvantaged community as a Priority Equity Community (PEC): census tracts in the SCAG region that have a greater concentration of populations that have been historically

marginalized and are susceptible to inequitable outcomes based on a combination of the socioeconomic factors listed below. See the Connect SoCal 2024 Equity Analysis Technical Report and a map of PECs in the SCAG region for additional details and to identify PECs. Factors include:

- People of color
- Low-income households
- Limited vehicle and transit access
- Vulnerable ages
- Single parent households
- People without a high school diploma
- People with disabilities
- Housing cost burdened households
- People with limited English proficiency

In addition to the PEC definition, the following criteria are eligible definitions for disadvantaged communities. See Attachment A, the ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines (Section 17.A), for details about each of the disadvantaged community definitions.

- Median Household Income
- CalEnviroScreen
- National School Lunch Program
- Healthy Places Index
- Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool
- USDOT Equitable Transportation Community Explorer
- Native American Tribal Lands

The maximum award for Community/Areawide Plan projects is $500,000. There is no required minimum funding request. Awards for Community/Areawide Plans shall take the form of technical assistance, with a consultant leading the project development and seeking reimbursement directly from SCAG. See Section IV.b (Funding Allocation for Award Recipients) for more information.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Examples of eligible community/areawide plans include, but are not limited to:

- Active Transportation Plan
- Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Master Plan
- First/Last Mile Plan (focused on active transportation)
- Safe Routes Plan (e.g., to school, for seniors, etc.)
- Transportation Safety-Focused Plan (e.g., Local Road Safety Plan or Safe System Plan with a focus on active transportation)

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED PLAN COMPONENTS

The final deliverable for all plans must include the required components for a future ATP application, including technical analysis, community engagement, project prioritization, conceptual renderings, and cost estimates. See Attachment A, the ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines (Appendix A) for the full list of required components. The following components are strongly encouraged, especially for transportation safety-focused plans:

- Framework to systematically analyze, identify, and prioritize traffic safety issues and corresponding recommendations, including proven roadway safety countermeasures. The framework should also identify roadway safety risks to support a jurisdiction's ability to proactively address crash risks.

- Multi-faceted community engagement, such as:
  - Walk or bike audits
  - Media/Advertisement campaigns (e.g., Go Human Co-Branded Awareness Campaign)
  - Temporary demonstration projects (e.g., Kit of Parts)

C) PROJECT TYPE: QUICK-BUILD PROJECTS

A quick-build is an interim capital improvement project that requires minor construction activity (e.g. does not require excavation) and uses durable, low- to medium-cost materials to pilot and iterate through project designs with community feedback. Quick-build projects are identified through community engagement and/or an existing plan and provide the opportunity to immediately respond to a community safety need. Quick-build projects are typically installed for one to five years, depending on how quickly a design is modified or how long materials last, with evaluation occurring one to three years post-implementation.

The 2024 SCP-ATS will evaluate and fund quick-build projects using an equity-centered prioritization framework to prioritize the repair of historic and current inequities. The framework will consider project readiness, alignment with communities most harmed by traffic injuries and fatalities, and opportunities for mutually beneficial partnerships with local community organizations. These quick-build projects will provide an opportunity to pilot projects that not only enhance or expand the active transportation network but also contribute to a more resilient transportation network given the increased demand expected with large-scale events to be hosted by the region.

The maximum award for quick-build projects is $900,000, which includes planning, design, and implementation. There is no required minimum funding request. Awards for Quick-Builds shall take the form of technical assistance, with a consultant leading project development and seeking reimbursement directly from SCAG. An applicant may propose funding staff costs related to the construction of the quick-build project. See Section IV.b (Funding Allocation for Award Recipients) for more information.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Examples of quick-build elements and materials include, but are not limited to:
- Curb extensions: paint and plastic posts, plastic bollards, or planters
- Pedestrian safety enhancements: rectangular rapid flashing beacons, leading pedestrian intervals at signalized intersections, raised crosswalks, and/or high-visibility crosswalks
- Modular transit stops: temporary transit platform to safely transition bike lanes through transit areas
- Pedestrian plaza/corridors: concrete barriers, barricades, planters, and/or signage
- Protected bike lanes: striping and plastic posts, plastic bollards, planters, or parking
- Traffic calming treatments: temporary speed cushions, curb extensions (described above), and/or chicanes (i.e. curb extensions in a parking lane)
- Traffic circles: striping, rubber curbs, plastic posts, and signage

REQUIRED QUICK-BUILD COMPONENTS

Quick-build projects must include the following components:
- Ongoing community engagement to inform final project design and evaluation.
- Data collection to establish existing conditions and to complete before/after evaluation of project implementation.

- Final (100%) project design reviewed, approved, and stamped by a license Professional Engineer and project cost estimates.
- Quick-build installed for a minimum of six (6) months before conducting evaluation.
- Final report summarizing work completed and recommendation of next steps.

See the ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines (Attachment A) and ATP Quick-Build Supplemental Guidance (Attachment B) for additional guidance on quick-build materials and designs.

IV.   Funding

A) FUNDING SOURCES

Funding for the 2024 SCP-ATS is provided through a combination of state and federal sources, including the state Cycle 7 Active Transportation Program (ATP), which programs funds from FY25/26 to FY28/29 and a federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant, and which is anticipated to allocate funding in 2025 and expend funding within five years from allocation.

- Community/Areawide Plan projects shall be funded by ATP funds.
- Quick-Build projects shall be funded with ATP funds, SS4A funds, or a combination of ATP and SS4A funds.

Recipients of 2024 SCP-ATS awards are required to comply with all applicable federal laws and state regulations including, but not limited to, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR part 200); National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.); and Build America, Buy America Act (BIL, div. G §§ 70901-27).

Hosting a Call for Applications to award funds from multiple funding streams is intended to simplify the application process and achieve efficiencies in program administration. The program anticipates awarding approximately $10.4 million, with up to $2.4 million available for planning projects benefiting disadvantaged communities and a minimum of $7.5 million set aside for quick-build projects. SCAG will allocate funding for selected projects based on the eligibility of each funding source and the applicant's readiness.

B) FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

Recipients of 2024 SCP-ATS awards shall establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SCAG for technical assistance, which shall memorialize roles and responsibilities for each party, including but not limited to identifying a project manager for each party and assuming responsibility for a timely use of funds. MOUs shall also identify the funding sources for the award.
Community/Areawide Plan projects shall only be eligible for technical assistance. Quick-Build Projects shall be eligible for technical assistance and pass through funds; pass through funds shall only be used for construction.

GRANT ADMINISTRATIVE FEE

Awards and projects shall be managed by SCAG and implemented through its consultants through a five percent administrative fee, deducted from the grant award. As part of grant administration, SCAG shall manage the administrative activities associated with requesting funding allocation from the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for ATP funding and from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

for SS4A funding, procuring a consultant team, and providing all necessary reporting and documentation required by CTC, Caltrans, and FHWA.

C) ELIGIBLE COSTS

SCAG uses cost principles outlined in 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E and the ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines (Attachment A) to determine reasonable, allocable, and allowable costs. Award recipients are required to adhere to these requirements. Eligible costs include staff salaries, fringe, indirect costs (approved NICRA or independent confirmation letter required), consultant/contractual services, and other direct costs. These costs and others not listed here are subject to review and approval by SCAG staff.

Recipients of the 2024 SCP-ATS awards claiming reimbursement for indirect costs and/or fringe benefits cost must have the current rates approved in the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with its federal cognizant agency. In absence of the NICRA, recipients may elect a de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% and must annually complete a certification form provided by the SCAG Project Manager to confirm the eligibility and compliance with Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations Part 200 (2 CFR 200) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, And Audit Requirements For Federal Awards. The eligibility of the indirect cost and/or fringe benefits cost is subject to review and applicable funding guidelines and requirements. For the ATP funding, see "Local Government Agency Indirect Cost Review" on the Caltrans Internal Audits Office webpage. For the SS4A, please see the 2 CFR 200.

D) MATCH REQUIREMENTS

There are no match requirements for projects proposed through the SCP-ATS.

V.   Application Process

As noted above, applicants may apply for more than one project type and may submit multiple applications, which are available on the SCAG SCP-ATS website. Applications should include all supporting documents in a single PDF file. Applicants do not need a board resolution in order to apply, but applicants will be required to submit a supporting resolution from the elected body or a letter of intent in support of the project from the appropriate executive officer prior to receiving funding. Please contact SCAG staff (see section VI) if the project includes multiple components or if any other support is needed in identifying the proper application to use for a project application.

A) APPLICATIONS

Applications will be accepted via an online form. Application workshops will be scheduled on June 13 and June 27, 2024, to review project types, the application process, and address any questions. For more information and registration/details for the workshops, please see the SCAG SCP-ATS website. **Applications must be submitted online by 5:00 p.m., September 27, 2024.**

AUTOMATIC CONSIDERATION OF NON-SELECTED STATEWIDE ATP APPLICATIONS

Community/Areawide Plan and Quick-Build projects submitted to the statewide ATP Call for Applications but not selected for funding will also be considered in the 2024 SCP-ATS selection process. These applications will be automatically considered, and applicants do not need to indicate they want to be considered for the SCP-ATS. Please see the state ATP website for more information about the application process and deadlines. Interested applicants are welcome to contact SCAG staff (see section VI) to discuss statewide ATP applications as well.

B) SCORING RUBRIC & CRITERIA

Each project type is evaluated by three main scoring criteria – 1) Project Need, 2) Scope of Work and Project Outcomes and 3) Partnerships and Community Engagement. Application questions vary by project type. The potential points to be awarded for responses to each question, by project type, are noted in each application. Further clarification regarding how points are awarded will be provided in the project application forms.

SCP-ATS Program Application
Scoring Criteria

Scoring Criteria	Points
Focus Area 1: Project Need	**50 Points**
Mobility Need	15
Safety Benefits	20
Disadvantaged Communities and Public Health	15
Focus Area 2: Desired Project Outcomes	**35 Points**
Safety Strategies and Scope of Work	5
Public Health Strategies	5
Community Engagement Strategies	5
Project Benefits and Scope of Work	20
Focus Area 3: Partnerships and Engagement	15 Points
Cost Effectiveness	5
Commitments, Partnerships, and Leveraging	10
	100 Points

C) EVALUATION PROCESS

A minimum of six evaluation teams, one per county, will be established to review, score and rank applications submitted to the 2024 SCP-ATS; counties receiving a large volume of applications may require multiple evaluation teams. Projects will compete and be ranked against other projects within their respective county. Final awards will be based on application score, geographic distribution across the region, and funding eligibility. Following grant award announcements, unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to meet with SCAG staff to obtain feedback on opportunities to improve their applications for future grant cycles.

D) RISK ASSESSMENT

Prior to entering into an MOU to receive funding from SCAG, each selected applicant will be subject to a risk assessment as required by 2 CFR 200.206 in accordance with SCAG's Subrecipient Monitoring Policies and Procedures. SCAG may evaluate the risks to the program imposed by each applicant to assess the applicant's ability to manage award funds pursuant to the requirements prescribed in the applicable funding guidelines. In some circumstances, special grant conditions may be imposed to mitigate anticipated risks. Each applicant may be required to provide documentation to SCAG for this evaluation.

VI. Schedule

The following schedule outlines key dates for the 2024 SCP-ATS.

SCP-ATS Key Dates

SCP-ATS Milestone	Date
SCP-ATS Call for Applications Opens	June 6, 2024
SCP-ATS Application Workshops	June 13, 2024 June 27, 2024
SCP-ATS Call for Applications Deadline	September 27, 2024
SCAG Regional Council Approval of the 2024 SCP–ATS Application Projects*	April 3, 2025
Final 2024 SCP-ATS Award Announcements*	June 2025

*Projects selected to receive ATP funding are subject to approval by the SCAG Regional Council and California Transportation Commission (CTC) as part of the adoption of the complete 2025 Regional ATP. In addition, projects receiving ATP funding will be subject to the programming and allocation process, requirements, and schedule of the CTC. SCAG Regional Council consideration is anticipated on April 3, 2025 followed by CTC action in June 2025.

A) TIMELY USE OF FUNDS/TIME EXTENSIONS

A project initiation schedule and expectations regarding the period of performance will be determined within three months of project award announcements, and will be based on project complexity, funding source, and SCAG staff capacity. In certain cases, projects may receive a notice to proceed two to three years after the project award announcements, such as if ATP funds are allocated in the latter part of the Cycle 7 ATP funding cycle (FY25/26 to FY28/29). Once the project schedule has been established, extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Extensions and scope changes must be requested in letter format. All requests must include an explanation of the issues and actions the agency has taken to correct the issues. All extensions will be contingent on funding availability and the program requirements of the funding source assigned to the project when awarded. SCAG intends all selected projects to be completed in a timely manner and requires that applicants coordinate internal resources to ensure timely completion of the projects.

VII. Contact Information

Questions regarding the SCP-ATS project types, applications, or application process should be directed to:

Rachel Om
Senior Regional Planner
Telephone: (213) 630-1550
Email: om@scag.ca.gov

Attachment A: ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines

Please see attachment: 2025 Active Transportation Program Cycle 7 Guidelines.

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Attachment B: ATP Quick-Build Supplemental Guidance

Please see attachment: Active Transportation Program Quick-Build Supplemental Guidance

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Attachment C: Allowable Costs

SCAG uses cost principles outlined in 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E and the ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines (Attachment A) to determine reasonable, allocable, and allowable costs.

- **Advertisement costs.** Including the purchase of advertising media to support program outreach.
- **Compensation—personal services.** Including wages and salaries.
- **Compensation—fringe benefits.** Including, but not limited to, costs of leave, employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans.
- **Insurance.** Including costs of insurance in connection with the general conduct of funded activities, subject to limitations numerated in 2 CFR 200.447(b).
- **Professional service costs.** Including costs of professional and consultant services.
- **Publication and printing costs.** Including costs for distribution, promotion, and general handling of electronic and print media.
- **Transportation costs.** Including costs for delivery of items and/or equipment
- **Contractual Services.** Including professional services necessary to complete the proposed project.
- **Travel.** Including transportation, food and lodging that meet the Travel Reimbursement policies established by CalHR.
- **Supplies or services.** Including printed material, translation and interpretation, supplies or services cost less than $10,000
- **Indirect costs.** Including an approved negotiated rate or a de minimis rate of 10%.

These costs and others not listed here are subject to review and approval by SCAG staff.