

A group of six diverse young children are smiling and hugging each other on a green lawn. The children are of various ethnicities and are dressed in casual clothing. The scene is bright and cheerful, with the children's faces being the central focus.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Your Participation Affects 18 Million People

THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

COUNTIES

Imperial County
Los Angeles County
Orange County
Riverside County
San Bernardino County
Ventura County

CITIES

IMPERIAL COUNTY

Brawley
Calexico
Calipatria
El Centro
Holtville
Imperial
Westmorland

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Agoura Hills
Alhambra
Arcadia
Artesia
Avalon
Azusa
Baldwin Park
Bell
Bell Gardens
Bellflower
Beverly Hills
Bradbury
Burbank
Calabasas
Carson

Cerritos
Claremont
Commerce
Compton
Covina
Cudahy
Culver City
Diamond Bar
Downey
Duarte
El Monte
El Segundo
Gardena
Glendale
Glendora
Hawaiian Gardens
Hawthorne
Hermosa Beach
Hidden Hills
Industry
Inglewood
Irwindale
La Cañada Flintridge
La Habra Heights
La Mirada
La Puente
La Verne
Lakewood
Lancaster
Lawndale
Lomita
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Lynwood

Malibu
Manhattan Beach
Maywood
Monrovia
Montebello
Monterey Park
Norwalk
Palmdale
Paramount
Pasadena
Pico Rivera
Pomona
Rancho Palos Verdes
Redondo Beach
Rolling Hills
Rolling Hills Estates
Rosemead
San Dimas
San Fernando
San Gabriel
San Marino
Santa Clarita
Santa Fe Springs
Santa Monica
Sierra Madre
Signal Hill
South El Monte
South Pasadena
Torrance
Vernon
Walnut
West Covina
West Hollywood
Westlake Village

ORANGE COUNTY

Anaheim
Brea
Buena Park
Cypress
Dana Point
Fullerton
Huntington Beach
Irvine
La Palma
Laguna Beach
Laguna Niguel
Laguna Woods
Lake Forest
Los Alamitos
Mission Viejo
Newport Beach
Placentia
San Clemente
Seal Beach
Tustin
Yorba Linda

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Banning
Beaumont
Blythe
Calimesa
Canyon Lake
Cathedral City
Coachella
Corona
Desert Hot Springs
Hemet

Indian Wells
Indio
La Quinta
Lake Elsinore
Lake Moreno Valley
Murrieta
Norco
Palm Desert
Palm Springs
Perris
Rancho Mirage
Riverside
San Jacinto
Temecula

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Apple Valley
Barstow
Big Bear Lake
Chino
Chino Hills
Colton
Fontana
Grand Terrace
Highland
Loma Linda
Montclair
Needles
Ontario
Rancho Cucamonga
Redlands
Rialto
San Bernardino
Upland

Victorville
Yucaipa
Yucca Valley

VENTURA COUNTY

Camarillo
Fillmore
Moorpark
Ojai
Oxnard
Port Hueneme
San Buenaventura
Santa Paula
Simi Valley
Thousand Oaks

TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

Pechanga Band Of
Luiseño Indians

COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

COMMISSIONS

Orange County
Transportation Authority

Riverside County
Transportation
Commission

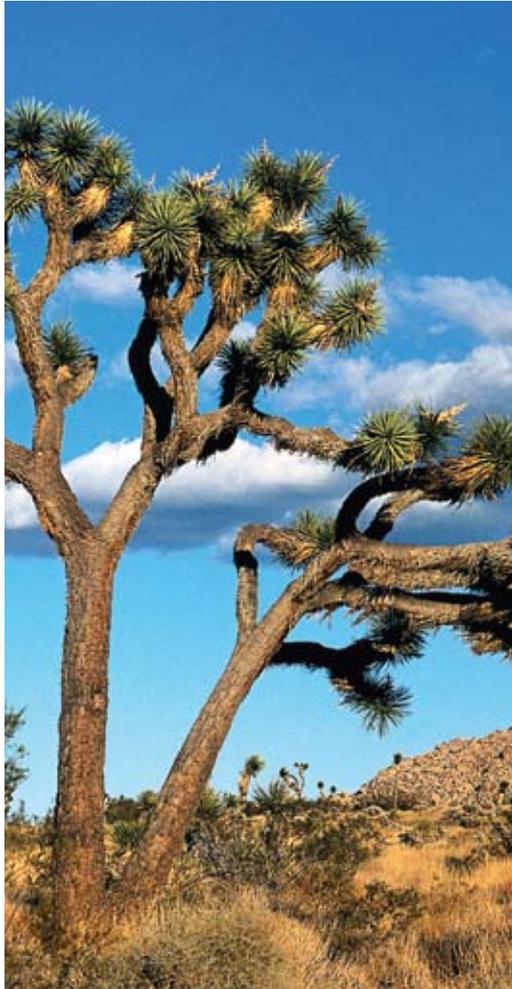
San Bernardino
Associated Governments

Ventura County
Transportation
Commission



THE MANY COMPELLING REASONS TO BELONG

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SCAG – THE BIG PICTURE

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) was formed on October 28, 1965, when local elected officials from 56 cities and five counties convened to begin regional planning for Southern California's future. Over the past four decades, SCAG has grown to become the largest of nearly 700 Councils of Government in the United States, functioning as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for six counties: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura. With a land mass equivalent to the country of Austria and a population approaching that of Australia, the SCAG region shares the characteristics of many nations. As one indication, it has been recognized as the fifteenth largest economy in the world.

Activity and movement characterize an economic powerhouse of this size. The SCAG region's vast transportation network includes more than 11,000 lane miles of freeway, more than 36,000 lane miles of arterial roadways, several large public transit systems, four major airports (including the world's fifth largest), as well as the fifth largest port complex in the world. More than \$250 billion worth of goods pass through our seaports each year.

Although 188 cities are situated within SCAG's borders, their individual boundaries provide no barrier to the issues and problems associated with such a high degree of activity. Air pollution and traffic congestion know no borders. Resources shared by all are stressed and depleted by the needs and demands of a steadily expanding population. Because no local jurisdiction can effectively address the issues alone, and the state is too big to address local challenges, a regional forum that fosters collaboration and cooperation is the logical solution. It provides that critical middle ground between state and local levels – one with the inherent ability to respond to regional infrastructure and resource needs to compete globally and flourish locally.

EVERY MEMBER IS IMPORTANT

Historically, SCAG's Regional Council has charted an aggressive course for the organization, resulting in valuable and tangible benefits for the region and its inhabitants. However, now more than ever, Southern California collectively faces challenges of unprecedented proportions. Tremendous growth is projected in the SCAG region over the next 25 years, when the population will swell from over 18 million to over 24 million. Nearly half of the state's population is concentrated in our region. Developing and implementing successful strategies will be critical to maintaining sustainable development and a desired quality of life, and the best means of ensuring that we can be proud of the Southern California we leave to our children.

When it comes to materializing the collective vision for a greater Southern California, the voice and opinion of every member counts. Every Member is Important!

Providing a local perspective in formulating regional policy is the number one reason your membership and involvement is important.

Councilmember Richard Dixon
City of Lake Forest





RESOLVING REGIONAL CHALLENGES

In Southern California, SCAG is the forum for local leaders to discuss common problems and develop joint solutions to shared regional challenges. With paid membership and voluntary participation, SCAG facilitates and encourages coordination and cooperation among multiple levels of government for the benefit of all. Success is dependent on the number of opinions heard and the group's resolve to come to consensus on workable and fair solutions.

SCAG members are guaranteed a seat at a table where solutions to regional problems are formulated and adopted. From the conceptualization of the **Metrolink** commuter rail system, to advocacy for the creation of the **Alameda Corridor**, **Heal the Bay**, and the **Salton Sea Authority**, and most recently the **Compass Blueprint** demonstration projects, SCAG's work over the years has directly benefited the region in many ways.

MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD

There are many reasons to take your seat at the SCAG table, including financial. SCAG's *Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)*, which is updated and adopted every four years, serves as the gatekeeper that determines which specific transportation improvements within the region are eligible for state and federal funding over the next twenty years. If a particular highway, road or transit improvement project is not represented in the RTP, it cannot receive funding support. With transportation programming averaging about \$5 billion annually, members provide a voice on how and where the funds should be spent.

Due to SCAG's unique structure and ability to tackle regional challenges and generate innovative strategies, opportunities abound to undertake new, interesting and regionally significant efforts. For example, the Federal Aviation Administration supports SCAG and its members in carrying out regional aviation system planning, a function undertaken by no other agency in the region.

Your membership and participation is critical to contributing a local viewpoint in developing consensus on regional policy.

Councilmember Harry Baldwin
City of San Gabriel





MANY WAYS TO PARTICIPATE AND CONTRIBUTE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

When a jurisdiction joins SCAG, a new seat is created on the SCAG General Assembly. Representatives to the Assembly elect officers, adopt SCAG's annual Overall Work Program, set the agency's planning and policy priorities and approve the study of specific problems, programs and other matters that concern the region.

REGIONAL COUNCIL

The 83-member governing board known as the Regional Council guides SCAG's ongoing policy direction. Not all members automatically have a seat on the Council, but all members do have the opportunity of being chosen to represent their district by fellow district members. (There are 67 SCAG districts, each consisting of one or more cities and representing approximately 250,000 residents.)

POLICY COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

All elected officials from member jurisdictions, whether or not they serve on the Regional Council, are encouraged to serve on a Task Force or seek appointment to one of SCAG's three Policy Committees. This provides members with opportunities to analyze and recommend policy positions related to the spending of state and federal dollars in the region and to expand contacts with other organizations. Each meeting presents an occasion to help define the issues shaping Southern California's future. The Regional Council relies on the recommendations from these Committees and Task Forces to make its decisions.

In summary, SCAG provides a wide variety of participation and networking opportunities for member jurisdictions.

MORE CLOUT IN SACRAMENTO AND WASHINGTON

A priority of SCAG is to promote and protect the interests of its members in Sacramento and on Capitol Hill. Whether testifying to garner funds for regional projects, or making a case for a change in policy to cut red tape, SCAG promotes the region's interests and is the only organization that exclusively represents Southern California.

It all starts with a legislative position. SCAG staff closely monitors legislation at state and federal levels to provide members with meaningful information from which to formulate and establish an annual Legislative Program. SCAG then aggressively advocates on behalf of the region's interests to legislative delegations (2 Senators and 29 members of the House of Representatives in Washington, and 23 Senators and 41 Assemblymembers in Sacramento), other key legislators, and members of the executive branch. Frequently, Regional Council members lead these delegations.

Over the years, SCAG has been at the forefront of advocating for the region's fair share of federal and state funding for plans and programs, and has been instrumental in delivering billions of dollars to the region. Strategically, this has involved SCAG working closely with county transportation commissions to facilitate and support the creation of transportation finance consensus programs to compete more effectively for transportation funds. SCAG is at the forefront of promoting innovative financing mechanisms to fund planned projects and programs.





VALUABLE SERVICES INFORMATION TO HELP DECISION-MAKING

From serving as a forum to identify, study and resolve regional issues to providing technical assistance and support services for local government operations, SCAG is focused on meeting the needs of its members.

New members receive a copy of the *SCAG Member Handbook*, a comprehensive guide to SCAG operations and activities that includes background information on fellow members to facilitate networking and communications.

Throughout the year, members are invited to SCAG summits and conferences on subjects ranging from housing, transit, the economy and even earthquake preparedness. Additionally, SCAG sponsors numerous conferences throughout the year, and members are invited to attend these conferences free of charge.

For assistance in gaining access to key people at federal agencies, SCAG extends its National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) membership privileges to individual SCAG members with special password access. Automatic electronic delivery of SCAG's monthly newsletter, *eVision*, keeps all members informed and up-to-date.

As a member, the most rewarding challenge will be balancing local priorities while building a regional consensus that best serves the 18 million people that SCAG represents.

Mayor Jon Edney
City of El Centro

ASSISTANCE IN ACHIEVING LOCAL OBJECTIVES

SCAG provides the methodology, tools and training necessary to help members carry out the strategies and principles of approved regional plans. SCAG staff can also perform site-specific performance analyses and transportation/land use benefits analyses to aid in local planning. Local jurisdictions can apply the environmental policy and mitigation measures developed through SCAG's Environmental Impact Report for the Regional Transportation Plan to local projects, saving time and money.

Financial assistance also comes in other forms. SCAG regularly helps members find and secure grant funding from federal and state agencies for local projects. Additionally, SCAG supplements the planning activities of members through the financial support and funding of their subregion. An average of one million dollars is distributed among the 14 subregions each year.

SPECIAL PRIVILEGES

As a member-driven organization, SCAG prides itself on meeting the needs and requests of its membership. Members always receive priority turn-around from responsive and highly professional SCAG staff for requests of data, custom maps, publications or planning support, and the first 20 hours of staff time each year is complimentary. However, an even quicker way to access key information is by going to SCAG's website where members can use their assigned password to enter a "Members Only" section where an ever-evolving suite of services reside, including:

- Existing land use maps for each member jurisdiction
- SCAG socio-economic forecast data at small geographic levels in spreadsheet format





- Easy access to census files upon request
- Customized census data reports and maps upon request

Using a “Special Data Request” email window, members can ask about the availability of, or request a copy of, specific data with a guaranteed query response within 48 hours.

SCAG’s Compass Blueprint Program offers complimentary services to local cities with plans and projects consistent with the Compass Principles. The Compass Blueprint tool kit offers free staff and consultant services to jurisdictions planning for regional growth locally. Services include sophisticated, pro-forma-based return-on-investment analysis for potential projects, photorealistic visualizations, urban design and public involvement services. Members receive priority during the project selection process. In November 2007, SCAG kicked off its Toolbox Tuesdays training series. These free monthly training classes offer planners from member jurisdictions and partner agencies the opportunity to build local-level expertise for using the sophisticated software tools which are at the heart of the Compass Blueprint suite of services.

FREE LEADERSHIP AND MEDIA TRAINING

The Regional Leadership Academy program is designed specifically for the elected officials who serve as members of the Regional Council and its Policy Committees. This program offers new approaches aimed at enhancing leadership skills and expertise in regional planning.

Members are encouraged to take advantage of free media training seminars conducted by public relations experts. This is an important benefit to those who would like to practice interview or public speaking skills, as members are sometimes asked to share important regional information on programs, strategies and initiatives with the media or in public forums using easy-to-use, professionally developed, scripted presentations and fact sheets.

GOOD VALUE

SCAG members get the biggest bang for their buck. Dues paid to SCAG are equivalent to approximately 8 cents per capita, far less than those assessed for other Councils of Government locally and statewide (other regional COG dues generally range from 12-17 cents per capita).

Active participation also offers a return on investment. Regional Council representatives receive stipends for meeting participation, whether it is for monthly Policy Committee and Regional Council meetings or for participation on Task Forces. Subregional representatives appointed to Policy Committees and Task Forces also receive stipends.

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

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Membership Matters.





SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

Resolving Regional Challenges

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