

Connect SoCal UPDATE: UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

Bring your ideas and concerns about how the region will develop over the next 25 years to an upcoming Connect SoCal workshop! SCAG is hosting a series of open-house events throughout Southern California over the next month as part of the development of Connect SoCal, the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. The workshop series kicked off May 14 and will run through mid-June. Stop by to learn about how the region is anticipated to grow, understand the choices we have about where growth occurs and provide input on how to keep the region moving. Up next is a workshop June 5, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., in San Bernardino; June 5, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., in El Monte; June 6, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., in Buena Park; and June 6, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. [More workshops](#) are scheduled across the region.

But you don't have to attend in person to participate: There is a telephone town hall scheduled for June 11, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., that will allow people all over the region to join us virtually to learn more about Connect SoCal and share feedback on their hopes and priorities for Southern California. [Register here](#) and our telephone town hall automated dialing system will call you at the scheduled date and time. We're also collecting input via an [online survey](#), and if you haven't yet filled it out please do! Visit connectsocial.org to learn more about the Connect SoCal development process and follow the latest updates.

ADVOCATING IN SACRAMENTO FOR THE REGION'S HOUSING NEEDS

On May 28, we met with Ben Metcalf, Director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), and his staff. I was present along with SCAG's Acting Director of Planning Sarah Jepson and the SCAG housing team. This is part of an ongoing informal consultation process between SCAG and HCD as we work on developing 6th cycle of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Once the Regional Council approves a proposed consultation package, SCAG will continue to engage HCD in formal consultation the department makes its final decision on the regional numbers.

On May 29, I had the privilege of meeting with the members of the Los Angeles County Legislative Caucus in Sacramento to discuss our region's critical need for more housing. Other discussion items included Governor Newsom's housing budget proposal, which allocates \$750 million to cities and counties to increase housing production. The caucus is chaired by Assemblymember Sydney Kamlager-Dove and members in attendance included Senator Maria Elena Durazo, Senator Holly Mitchell, Senator Bob Archuleta, Senator Connie Leyva, Senator Steve Bradford, Assemblymember Christie Smith, Assemblymember Luz Rivas, Senator Susan Rubio, Assemblymember Richard Bloom, Assembly Member Adrin Nazarian, Assembly Member Wendy Carillo, Assemblymember Laura Friedman, Senator Ben Allen, and Assemblymember Patrick O'Donnell.

SCAG DELEGATION VISITS D.C. TO MEET WITH FEDERAL LAWMAKERS

A delegation of SCAG's leadership traveled to Washington, D.C., May 14-15 to attend a major freight conference and advocate on behalf of the Southern California region. The SCAG envoys included SCAG President Bill Jahn, First Vice President Randon Lane, Immediate Past President Alan Wapner, Regional Council member Ray Marquez and Executive Director Kome Ajise, as well as staff from SCAG's Legislation department. On May 14-15, the group attended the annual meeting of the Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors, a trade association dedicated to increasing federal investment in the nation's freight infrastructure. The delegation then held a series of sit-downs with federal lawmakers, designed to further develop SCAG's relationship with our region's congressional representatives as well as highlight priority legislative issues. The biggest issue of focus in those discussions was funding for transportation and infrastructure, specifically the reauthorization of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The SCAG delegation urged legislators to support the program, which provides essential stable and long-term investments into the national infrastructure and transportation system. We are committed to continuing to work with Southern California's elected representatives in Washington and Sacramento to advance SCAG's legislative priorities. For more information on SCAG's Legislation program, visit [the department webpage](#).

PHOTOS, HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2019 REGIONAL CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY AVAILABLE

On May 1-3, more than 950 civic leaders from throughout Southern California gathered in Palm Desert for SCAG's 54th Annual Regional Conference and General Assembly. The conference, "Beyond Boundaries," brought together a record number of elected officials and other high-level attendees for an engaged, informative event. On Wednesday, a special "Traffic Safety Leadership Symposium" brought together city and county officials to address one of the region's most serious issues, and discuss actionable strategies for making communities safer for people walking and biking. Panel sessions on Thursday addressed the rise of green business, the proliferation of new mobility platforms, opportunities for civic data-sharing and the threats of climate change. The program shone a light on exemplary local projects with the 2019 SCAG Sustainability Awards Luncheon, [honoring six projects](#) in the region that promote and improve mobility, livability, prosperity and sustainability. Friday's keynote address from Lea Endres, Co-Founder and CEO of leadership platform NationBuilder, spoke to the power of "Leadership Beyond Boundaries." Friday's program also featured a plenary panel that took a holistic look at climate goals, technology shifts and the future of transportation featuring an all-star roster of panelists. For highlights of the conference, visit the [event website](#).

REGISTRATION CLOSING SOON FOR 2019 DEMOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP

On June 11, SCAG and the USC Price School of Public Policy will co-host the 30th annual Demographic Workshop, "[Make It Count – The Impact of Census 2020 & Connect SoCal on Our Future](#)," at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. This year's program will provide the most recent update on demographic trends and their implications as we embark upon two major efforts: the 2020 Census and Connect SoCal, SCAG's long-range regional transportation plan. The program will also feature a special luncheon keynote from the US Census Bureau's James T. Christy for preparing the best possible census in 2020 and a series of expert-led roundtable discussions to build skills about topics discussed throughout the day. The event is free for elected officials and discounted for students. AICP Certification Maintenance credits also are available. For more on the panels, speakers and other program details, check out the [full conference agenda](#). Online registration for the Demographic Workshop closes on Friday, June 7. On-site registration will also be available on the day of the event. To RSVP, visit scag.ca.gov/demographics.

COLLABORATING ACROSS THE REGION TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC SAFETY

At SCAG's Traffic Safety Leadership Symposium on May 1, local elected officials gathered to learn more about how to apply collision-reducing policies and strategies in their communities. A key component of the event was motivating action at the city level through a [Traffic Safety Pledge](#), which 22 local agencies have now signed on to. This commitment includes moving towards implementing education and awareness campaigns, hosting temporary safety demonstration projects, participating in upcoming safety workshops, developing a Safe Routes to School Plan or adopting a Vision Zero policy. SCAG will follow up with each agency to provide resources and assistance as they work to achieve their safety improvement goals. Next steps include workshops and webinar series on safety and targeted skill building efforts. If your agency is interested in taking the [Traffic Safety Pledge](#), it's not too late! For additional information regarding the Safety Leadership Symposium and Workshop Series, contact Hina Chanchlani, Assistant Regional Planner, at chanchlani@scag.ca.gov.

SCAG'S GO HUMAN PROGRAM RECEIVES NATIONAL PUBLIC OUTREACH AWARD

We're very proud to announce that SCAG's *Go Human* program has been selected to receive a National Public Outreach Award of Excellence from the [American Planning Association](#)! Members of the active transportation planning team accepted the honor at the 2019 National Planning Conference in April in San Francisco. The award recognizes 5 *Go Human* temporary safety demonstration events in Orange County in 2017, which promoted walking and biking and gave community members a chance to weigh in on planned improvements. To find out more, please visit the [Go Human blog](#). SCAG's *Go Human* program has hosted more than 30 events throughout the region, with more activities and resources launching this year. Follow the program on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) to stay up to date on the latest *Go Human* activities.

SCAG LENDS SUPPORT TO FIRST LADOT POP-UP SAFETY DEMONSTRATION

SCAG and *Go Human* supported the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's (LADOT) first ever safety demonstration pop-up project in conjunction with the city's Safe Routes to School program. The project, called *Little Street Re-Design*, was held May 14-15 at Esperanza Elementary School, just west of downtown Los Angeles. The pop-up demonstration, which utilized materials from the *Go Human* kit-of-parts, showcased a variety of safety improvements to make the streets surrounding the school safer and easier to navigate, especially at drop-off and pick-up times. Temporary improvements included a one-way street conversion with the addition of one curb extension and plaza area, two new crosswalks, a pedestrian refuge island and improved vehicle valet operation. Hundreds of students and parents tested out the improvements and provided feedback. The city is aiming to implement changes within one year.

LOCAL PROFILES FOR MEMBER JURISDICTIONS NOW AVAILABLE

On May 2, SCAG released the 2019 Local Profiles to delegates attending the General Assembly. SCAG prepares the Local Profiles reports every two years as a service to our member jurisdictions, providing them with a wide variety of data and analysis related to demographics, housing, economics, education and transportation. A total of 200 reports were created this year - including one for each of the 188 SCAG member cities, the region's 6 counties and 6 unincorporated county areas. Data and analysis in the Local Profiles are used to identify emerging trends, support community planning, economic development decision-making, grant proposals and community outreach efforts. The reports are also useful resources for the local business community, academia and residents of Southern California who are interested in learning more about their community. The 2019 Local Profiles are now available on the SCAG website at: <http://www.scag.ca.gov/localprofiles>.

SCAG KICKS OFF RANDALL LEWIS EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAM

This summer, SCAG is kicking off an Employee Wellness Program sponsored by ex-officio Regional Council member Randall Lewis. This program aims to "gamify" and promote employee wellness across the region, engaging members of SCAG's staff and Executive Board. The program establishes three key health indicators to measure outcomes and improve wellness in the workplace, including increasing physical activity, promoting healthy eating and encouraging mindful wellness and stress reduction. Every month starting in June 2019, there will be a special "challenge" focused on one of the three indicators to engage different teams in friendly competition. At each monthly Regional Council meeting, the team leaderboard will display progress from each team and the leading team will earn a prize. SCAG thanks Randall Lewis for the generous sponsorship that makes this program possible.

SCAG CELEBRATES BIKE MONTH

Every year during the month of May, the League of American Bicyclists and cities across the country celebrate National Bike Month. This year, Bike to Work Week took place from May 13- 17. SCAG joined employers across the region to showcase the many benefits of bicycling and encourage more folks try bicycling. The active transportation department hosted a multi-faceted bike month "challenge", which included a Bike Month Pledge, regular trivia questions and a bicycle safety workshop. In total, there were more than 85 trivia responses, workshop participants and pledge commitments from staff.

SCAG HELD WORKSHOP ON APPLYING FOR FEDERAL GRANTS

On May 7, SCAG hosted the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) at our main Los Angeles office for their annual Grant Application Workshop, which is developed to help applicants broaden their understanding of the federal agency's program requirements. The event brought together staff from a wide range of municipal transit operators and county transportation commissions in the six-county SCAG region. The staff of SCAG's Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) department, along with staff from LA Metro, presented attendees with information on the project programming process. More information is available at: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/program-oversight/grantee-oversight-workshops>.

CALTRANS AWARDS FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT ACROSS THE REGION

Caltrans recently announced their funding recommendations for their 2019-20 transportation planning grant program in the categories of Sustainable Communities, Strategic Partnerships and Adaptation Planning. In total, 84 planning projects were selected for grant awards statewide, totaling approximately \$27.8 million. 22 of the grants were awarded to projects in the SCAG region, with a total of \$7.7 million dedicated to support the development of plans for active transportation, climate change adaptation, transit fleet electrification, bus rapid transit and more.

SCAG itself was awarded funding for four projects: a curb space management study, a freight impact assessment of goods movement communities, a mobility plan for the East San Gabriel Valley and a vehicle miles traveled mitigation assistance program. Other awardees in the SCAG region include: the cities of Adelanto, Anaheim, Artesia, Avalon, Bell Gardens, Hermosa Beach, Norwalk, Ontario, Pasadena, Rialto, San Fernando, Santa Fe Springs and Torrance; County of Los Angeles; Western Riverside Council of Governments; Orange County Transportation Authority; Eco Rapid Transit; and Metrolink. A complete list of projects recommended for funding statewide can be found on the Caltrans website: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/grants.html>.

SCAG STAFF TESTIFIES AGAINST PROPOSED FEDERAL ROLLBACK OF AUTO EMISSION STANDARDS

On May 16, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) jointly held a public workshop on a proposed federal rule which, if finalized, would roll back current auto emission standards and withdraw the waiver that allows California to set its own advanced regulations. SCAG teamed up with our fellow metropolitan planning organizations and Caltrans for a joint presentation expressing strong opposition to the federal rule. Chief Operating Officer Darin Chidsey spoke on behalf of SCAG, testifying that the proposed rollback could have serious and far-reaching consequences in the SCAG region. Not only would the policy lead to higher greenhouse gas emissions and worse air quality, but it would put many critical transportation projects at risk. This would mean losing hundreds of thousands of jobs per year, hindering goods movement and port activities worth hundreds of billions of dollars, and possible negative impacts on the 2028 Olympic Games.

CARB has been fighting and will continue to fight the rule through coalition-building, collective lobbying and litigation if necessary. If unsuccessful, in order to make up the shortfall, CARB would have to develop other emission control measures including potentially more stringent measures from the transportation sector that are difficult and take time. Staff has been closely monitoring and tracking this development and will continue to do so. For additional information on the workshop including recorded webcast, visit <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/workshop-potential-impacts-federal-vehicle-standards-rollback>.

SCAG WORKS WITH PLACENTIA TO HELP FINANCE TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE

SCAG has been working with the City of Placentia and other communities to bring EIFDs – and their tax-increment financing – to the six-county region. The Placentia City Council approved a resolution supporting the establishment of the EIFD on February 19. On April 23, the Orange County Board of Supervisors adopted a similar resolution. This clears the way for transit, streetscape and other improvements along one of the region's most congested highway corridors. It would be one of four EIFDs in California, and the first EIFD to involve both a city and county partnership statewide.

The financing districts were approved by the Legislature in 2014 as a successor to the former redevelopment agencies. These separate and independent government entities work with local agencies to finance a variety of public infrastructure and economic development projects. Placentia's EIFD will help finance much-needed transit supportive infrastructure improvements directly to the north and south of the upcoming Metrolink Station along State Route 91, one of the busiest and most congested transportation corridors in Southern California.

SCAG HOSTS WEBINARS ON IMPROVING ROAD SAFETY AND ADAPTING FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCY

This spring, SCAG continued its popular Toolbox Training webinar series with installments in April and May. On April 16, SCAG hosted a webinar titled “Improving Road Safety with High Injury Networks”, which introduced participants to a GIS-based methodology that local jurisdictions can use to identify streets where the highest concentrations of people have been harmed in traffic collisions. This is an increasingly popular method for cities to analyze crash-related data to develop informed decisions, prioritize investments and improve road safety.

On May 23 SCAG held another online training session, this one on “Adapting the Transportation System to Global Climate Change,” focusing on tools and programs available to local agencies to prepare for climate impacts. Dr. Robert Kay and Beth Rodehurst of ICF gave a presentation on the [Climate Resilience Toolbox](#), a collection of resources produced in collaboration with SCAG that transit agencies can use to prepare for climate related impacts to their fleets and programs. In addition, Grieg Asher, SCAG’s Green Region Initiative Program Manager, gave a brief presentation on the newly launched [Southern California Adaptation Framework](#), a region-wide effort to assist and encourage cities and counties to prepare vulnerability assessments and address climate threats in their communities. To view recordings of these event and access the presentations, please visit <http://sustain.scag.ca.gov/Pages/Online-Training-Materials.aspx>.

SOUTH COAST REGION REACHES MAJOR AIR QUALITY MILESTONE

The South Coast region has reached a major air quality improvement milestone. Because the region has consistently attained national ambient air quality standards for over 20 years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has determined that SCAG is no longer required to make transportation conformity determinations for federal nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) standards on our major plans. NO₂ has been designated as a criteria air pollutant since 1971 because in high concentrations it can irritate the human respiratory system. People with asthma, children and the elderly are generally at greater risk for the health effects of NO₂.

It is important to note that despite achieving this major milestone, the South Coast region still suffers among the worst air quality in the country in terms of the other criteria air pollutants, especially ozone and fine particulate pollution. As a result, the region will still need to consistently demonstrate transportation conformity under the other health-based national air quality standards.

SCAG SECURES STATE AND FEDERAL APPROVAL FOR PROJECT CHANGE IN ORANGE COUNTY

In February 2018, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) requested that SCAG make a substitution in a planned Transportation Control Measure (TCM) project. Rather than moving forward with an express lanes connector, as originally planned, they requested to substitute three traffic signal synchronization projects. I am pleased to report that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board have issued their respective concurrences on the substitution, which was adopted by the Regional Council on Sept. 6, 2018. Having secured federal and state approval, OCTA can proceed with their requested project modifications; and, more significantly, the SCAG region maintains transportation conformity so that all transportation projects in the SCAG region can continue to receive necessary federal approvals funding, continuing to move forward towards implementation.

SCAG SHARES KNOWLEDGE AT URBANISM NEXT CONFERENCE

At the 2019 National Urbanism Next conference on May 9, Acting Director of Planning Sarah Jepson represented SCAG on the panel “Ideation to Implementation: Putting emerging technologies to the test in Columbus, Los Angeles and Seattle.” Her presentation explored efforts in the SCAG region to align new mobility solutions with long-range transportation planning goals. Specifically, she highlighted the role SCAG’s *Go Human* campaign has played in changing the way people think about our roadways. She also highlighted land use strategies that SCAG is in the process of developing that identify the types of communities best suited to low-speed transportation modes. The other speakers on the panel also shared experiences in the deployment of micro-transit, micro-mobility and innovative transportation demand management strategies. Highlights of the conference are available at <https://urbanismnext.uoregon.edu/>.