

Advancing the Sustainability of Southern California

What do achievements reveal about roadblocks and opportunities?

INTRODUCTION

Background: The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) updated its Green Region Initiative sustainability plans and programs map in 2015, which includes the Sustainability Indicators Database (SID). The data examines and ranks the achievement quality of adopted policies and programs that address sustainability within eight categories.

Opportunity: This research investigation examines SID data to identify cities that have less than ideal performance in achieving sustainability practices, but have large potential. The goal is to identify areas for improvement and where future assistance should focus.

METHODOLOGY

Examine SID data to identify trends and variations utilizing both a total count of achievements and an index value.

SID GRADIENT RANKING SCALE AND INDEX VALUES

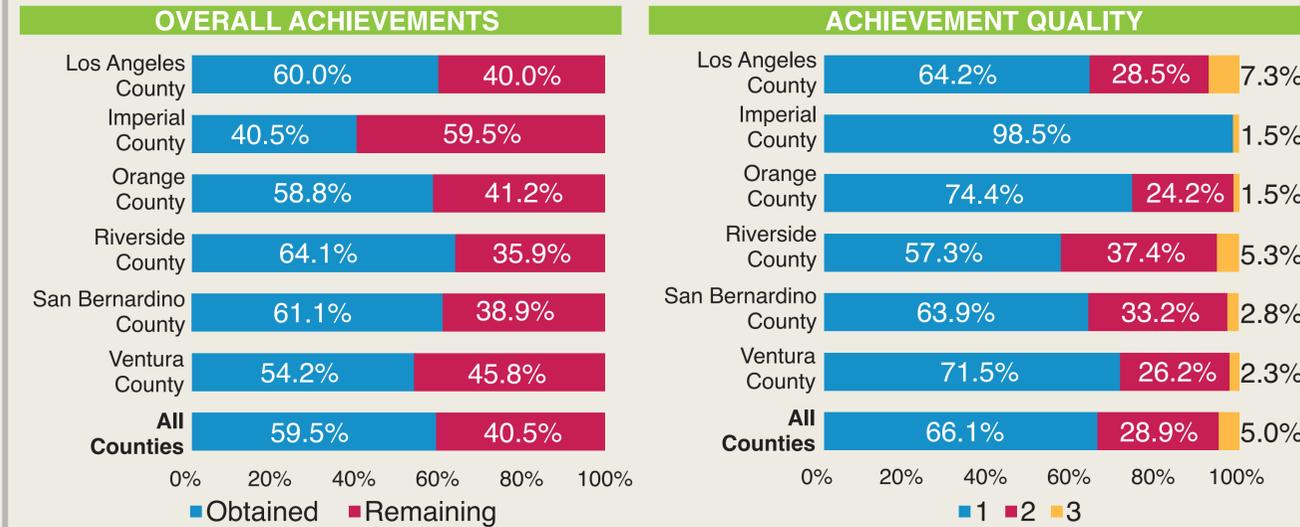
SID Gradient	IV	Achievement
White	0	No progress to report
Light Green	1	Basic general plan policy and/or state requirement met
Medium Green	2	Basic general plan policy & state requirement met plus additional resources implemented /projects completed
Dark Green	3	Basic general plan policy & state requirements met, various projects/unique programs implemented, awards won & able to show quantifiable metrics

Specific areas of investigation include:

- Overall achievements obtained and remaining per city and counties as a whole
- Quality of achievements per city and counties as a whole
- Overall achievements obtained and remaining per SID category
- Quality of achievements per SID category

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DATA



LOWEST AND HIGHEST RANKING CITIES BY OVERALL ACHIEVEMENTS AND INDEX VALUE

Overall Achievements				Index Value			
City	Low	City	High	City	Low	City	High
Calipatria	1	Santa Monica	24	Calipatria	1	Santa Monica	63
Hidden Hills	1	Pomona	23	Hidden Hills	2	Pasadena	54
Maywood	3	Pasadena	23	Maywood	3	Los Angeles	49
Irwindale	5	Claremont	23	Montebello	6	Riverside	45
Montebello	5	Rancho Cucamonga	22 ¹	Irwindale	7 ²	Pomona	45 ³

Notes:
 1. The cities of Santa Ana, San Clemente, West Hollywood, Santa Clarita, Los Angeles, and Long Beach also had 22 achievements.
 2. The cities of La Palma and Needles also had 7 achievements.
 3. The City of Glendale also had 45 achievements.

OVERALL ACHIEVEMENTS BY SID CATEGORY

Category	Potential Achievements	Achievements Obtained		Achievements Remaining	
		Number Obtained	Proportion of Potential	Number Remaining	Proportion of Potential
Energy	573	481	83.9%	92	16.1%
Air Quality	382	219	57.3%	163	42.7%
Green Building	382	309	80.9%	73	19.1%
Transportation	955	372	39.0%	583	61.0%
Land Use	573	365	63.7%	208	36.3%
Agriculture/Forestry/Waste	573	369	64.4%	204	35.6%
Water	382	342	89.5%	40	10.5%
Sustainability	764	271	35.5%	493	64.5%
All Categories	4,584	2,728	59.5%	1,856	40.5%

15% of cities had 0 achievements across all categories
 76 cities had 0 achievements in Air Quality
 Minimum

Maximum
 4 cities had maximum achievement in Energy
 0.9% of cities achieved maximum across all categories

TAKEAWAYS

- Good progress overall—40% of potential achievements remain to be accomplished
- Most significant potential for improvement in high level quality of achievements
- Imperial County as a whole has the most potential for improvement in both overall and quality of achievements
- The majority of high overall achievement and high index value cities are in Los Angeles County, while cities within the low ranges are more geographically dispersed
- The Transportation and Sustainability SID categories have the largest number of potential achievements and lowest obtainment rates overall

LOOKING FORWARD

- Learn from successful cities—look into what planning, policy, and programming practices have been successful

CITIES WITH MAXIMUM INDEX VALUE BY SID CATEGORY

Category	City
Energy	Santa Monica, Blythe, Indian Wells, and Palm Springs
Air Quality	Riverside and Santa Monica
Green Building	Glendale, Pasadena, and Santa Monica
Transportation	Los Angeles (13)
Land Use	Pasadena (8)
Agriculture/Forestry/Waste	Santa Monica
Water	Riverside, San Clemente, and Santa Monica
Sustainability	Santa Monica (9)

Note:
 No cities within the Transportation, Land Use, and Sustainability categories obtained the maximum IV. Instead, the next highest achieving cities and their corresponding IVs are shown.

- Future efforts should utilize this analysis as a basis for investigation into why certain indicators are more difficult to achieve than others

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