

SCAG PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

SCAG is committed to working with regional stakeholders to develop policies and plans that balance regional goals for mobility, livability, prosperity and sustainability. Public health outcomes are closely linked with each of these goals. Public Health is a key indicator of regional prosperity and sustainability, and an outcome of the mobility and livability strategies pursued in the region. Studies have consistently shown that the built environment affects a range of chronic health conditions including obesity, hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and asthma. Further evidence suggests that land-use and transportation planning and policy decisions can play a role in public health outcomes by improving air quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing opportunities for physical activity, reducing the risk of injury, and creating access to jobs, education and everyday necessities such as health care.

SCAG has a long history of supporting the region in achieving Federal and state mandates designed to protect public health as it relates to air quality, safety, and environmental justice. However, more recent research and guidance released by federal and state agencies suggests that earlier engagement between health practitioners and transportation professionals in a collaborative process can improve decision-making and help balance competing interests. SCAG can guide and influence the evolution of federal and state policies related to health and the built environment by strengthening its technical capacity and leadership related to public health.

POLICY DIRECTION

The 2012 RTP/SCS supports SCAG in taking a more proactive role in public health. The plan seeks to “Protect the environment and health of our residents by improving air quality and encouraging active transportation.” It also calls on SCAG to: “Collaborate with the region’s public health professionals to enhance how SCAG addresses public health issues in its regional planning, programming, and project development activities.” Following the adoption of the 2012 RTP/SCS, the Regional Council convened a Public Health Subcommittee and adopted policy recommendations that further define SCAG’s public health role. The recommendations include supporting transportation investments with an active transportation component, providing robust public health data and information to support regional policy and the development of the 2016 RTP/SCS, and promoting ongoing partnerships with regional partners, local public health departments and other stakeholders.

GOALS

- 1) Provide leadership in collaboration with the county transportation commissions, the county departments of public health, subregional partners, local cities and stakeholders, to measure and improve public health outcomes by expanding the knowledge base and increasing awareness of the relationship between health and the built environment throughout the region.
- 2) Develop and implement balanced policies in the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy that drive positive health outcomes related to physical activity from walking and bicycling, collision related injuries and fatalities, air quality impacts and emissions, accessibility, climate adaptation, environmental justice, job creation and economic development.
- 3) Provide support to regional and local agencies and partners, including data, statistics, benchmarks, and analysis tools, to help local agencies integrate public health into the multimodal transportation, economic development, job creation and land use planning processes in order to implement the regional public health program.

STRATEGIES

1) REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS (ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION)

Increase regional engagement and collaboration on the issue of public health as related to the built environment and SCAG core planning functions by raising awareness among policy leaders, agency staff, business, and the public.

- a) **Regional Convenings:** Facilitate information exchange through SCAG Committees, health forums, issue integration within other SCAG-led forums (active transportation, poverty, economy, etc.)
- b) **Partnerships:** Develop and sustain partnerships with agencies, local organizations, foundations, and stakeholder groups to accelerate the adoption of policies that support economic development, improve public health, support environmental justice, and reduce socio-economic disparities
- c) **Support Active Transportation Education:** Implement GA resolution to create partnerships between county public health departments, county transportation commissions, subregional partners, local agencies and local organizations to promote roadway safety and encourage active transportation by supporting public education and co-benefit research
- d) **Expand Regional Capacity:** Support opportunities to collaborate with partners and stakeholders to expand the knowledge base and momentum for integrating public health considerations into local and regional planning activities

2) PUBLIC HEALTH IN REGIONAL PLANNING (INTEGRATION)

Measure and improve health outcomes in the region by incorporating consideration of health in the regional transportation/SCS planning process.

- a) **Sustained Engagement and Collaboration:** Engage with policy makers, partners and stakeholders around health-specific topics to inform policy and planning discussions
- b) **Performance Measurement:** Develop information on the performance of alternatives across broad spectrum of health issues through data/statistics collection, modeling enhancements and research
- c) **Public Health Policy Development:** Identify and build off of existing policies that support public health integration with transportation and land use planning and identify policies that may create barriers to incorporating public health into regional transportation planning efforts and develop strategies to minimize these barriers

3) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT)

Provide technical assistance to local agencies to support implementation of the 2012 RTP/SCS.

- a) **Planning Resources:** Continued support through Sustainability Program Grants for transportation, land-use, and sustainability planning focused on improved health outcomes
- b) **Access to Expertise:** Toolbox Tuesdays, Website Resources
- c) **Communications:** Fact Sheets, Best Practices Documentation, Sustainability Awards

FY 2014-2015 PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION PLAN

SCAG plans to engage in the following activities in FY 2014-2015 to implement the public health program. These activities will complement other efforts being performed related to active transportation, the 2016 RTP/SCS and the county Joint Work Programs.

1) REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

- a) **Randall Lewis Health Policy Fellows:** Support placement of Randall Lewis Health Policy Fellows local cities to engage, educate and support local and regional efforts aimed at integrating public health into land use and planning activities.

Deliverables & Schedule

- i. Fellows Placed in Cities (October 2014-May 2015)
- ii. Public Health Forum (Spring 2015)

- b) **Active Transportation Safety and Encouragement Campaign (ATP Grant):** SCAG will conduct planning activities to prepare for a Fall 2015 media campaign to reduce bicycle and pedestrian collisions.

Deliverables & Schedule

- i. Caltrans Contract (Sept-Dec 2015)
- ii. Procure Consultant (Oct 2014-Jan 2015)
- iii. Steering Committee Meetings (January-June 2015)
- iv. Draft Outreach and Communications Plan (April 2015)
- v. Final Outreach and Communications Plan (June 2015)

- c) **Public Health Working Group:** Coordinate a public health working group including members of the county transportation commissions, county departments of public health and stakeholders to provide input to SCAG staff related to implementation of SCAG's Public Health Program.

Deliverables & Schedule

- i. Quarterly Meetings (Starting November 2014)

2) PUBLIC HEALTH IN REGIONAL PLANNING

- a) **Active Transportation Health & Economic Impact Study:** This study will fill a key knowledge gap related to the economic and health benefits generated regionally from current levels of active transportation trips. The results will be used to inform the 2016 RTP/SCS. (Funding Approved through 2014-2015 OWP – Fall 2014 to Summer of 2015)

Deliverables & Schedule

- i. Develop Scope of Work (July –Oct 2014)
- ii. Procure Consultant (Oct 2014-Jan 2015)
- iii. Conduct analysis (January-May 2015)

iv. Draft, Final Report (June 2015)

b) 2016 RTP Update Public Health Analysis Framework: Staff will develop a public health analysis framework exploring opportunities to integrate analysis of health impacts into the policy and technical components of 2016 RTP/SCS, including Scenario Planning, Sustainable Communities Strategy, Performance Measurement, Transportation Strategies, and Environmental Justice. The analysis framework will be used to inform internal strategy and to communicate to stakeholders the agency's plans for integrating health in the planning process.

Deliverables & Schedule

- i. Review SCAG 2012 Plan (October 2014))
- ii. Literature Review (October-November 2104)
- iii. Draft Analysis Framework (January 2014)
- iv. Final Analysis Framework (March 2015)

3) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

a) Trainings Toolkits (ATP Grant): The training toolkits activity builds off of deliverable 1.C to expand support for active transportation across the region. In partnership with the county public health departments and county transportation commissions, SCAG will develop Active Transportation Trainings and Training Toolkits for 3-4 target audiences. The trainings will create and empower local champions in key sectors to lead education and encouragement programs in their communities.

Deliverables & Schedule

- i. Targeted Trainings Strategy (April May 2015)
- ii. Develop RFP (May- June 2015)
- iii. Procure Consultant (June -August 2105)
- iv. Prepare Toolkits/Conduct Trainings (FY15-16)

b) Website Upgrades: SCAG will develop a website to track and provide information to stakeholders on SCAG's public health related initiatives. Developed with existing staff resources.

Deliverables & Schedule

- i. Develop site design with Communications team (October-November 2014)
- ii. Develop Content/Text (December 2014-January 2015)
- iii. Website Launch (Spring 2015)