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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ***Draft regional plan identifies 86 key projects to reduce travel delays, improve health outcomes and generate jobs in Imperial County***

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has identified 86 major projects in Imperial County that would generate 600 jobs per year, reduce travel delays and improve health outcomes as part of the draft Connect SoCal 2024 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy released in early November.

Connect SoCal 2024 provides a long-term vision for transportation investments throughout the six-county SCAG region—one of the most vibrant and diverse economies in the United States. SCAG planners spent four years analyzing data and working with local communities to develop this regional vision to improve mobility, meet air-quality goals, create economic opportunities and enhance quality of life. Notable in this plan update are new strategies for addressing the housing crisis, adapting to climate change and investing in underserved communities.

Connect SoCal identifies \$750 billion in transportation improvements for the six-county region over the next quarter-century. Among the Imperial County projects included in the plan:

- Widening and interchange improvements on State Route 111, from State Route 98 to Interstate 8 (\$999 million).
- Widening of Forrester Road from Interstate 8 to State Route 78 (\$307 million).
- Expressway improvements on State Route 115 (\$232 million).
- Expansion of the Calexico East Port of Entry (\$32 million).
- Interchange improvements on Interstate 8 at State Route 186 (\$44 million)

“Making sure these kinds of projects are funded and built is critical to the future of Imperial County and Southern California as a whole, connecting communities, creating new business opportunities and ensuring that we grow the right way,” said Luis A. Plancarte, Imperial County supervisor and member of SCAG’s Regional Council.

Connect SoCal 2024 projects that Imperial County’s population will grow by nearly 30,000 people over the next quarter century, to 210,000 by 2050. If implemented across Southern California, the 25-year plan would net 11.4% reduction in overall vehicle miles traveled, more than 480,000 jobs created per year and a return of \$2 for every \$1 spent on transportation improvements.

SCAG updates this long-range planning document every four years to respond to challenges, plan for emerging trends and meet federal and state planning requirements. Following the public review period, a final version of Connect SoCal 2024 is expected to be presented to SCAG’s Regional Council for approval in spring 2024.

“This plan incorporates local input more so than in past cycles,” said Art Brown, SCAG’s Regional Council president and Buena Park mayor. “This can help us move together as a region toward improving our transportation network and meeting our sustainability goals.”

The draft Connect SoCal 2024 is available for public comment and review until Jan. 12, 2024. To learn more and submit your comments, visit [www.connectsocial.org](http://www.connectsocial.org).

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### ***About SCAG***

SCAG is the nation’s largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and nearly 19 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG’s regional efforts, please visit [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov).

