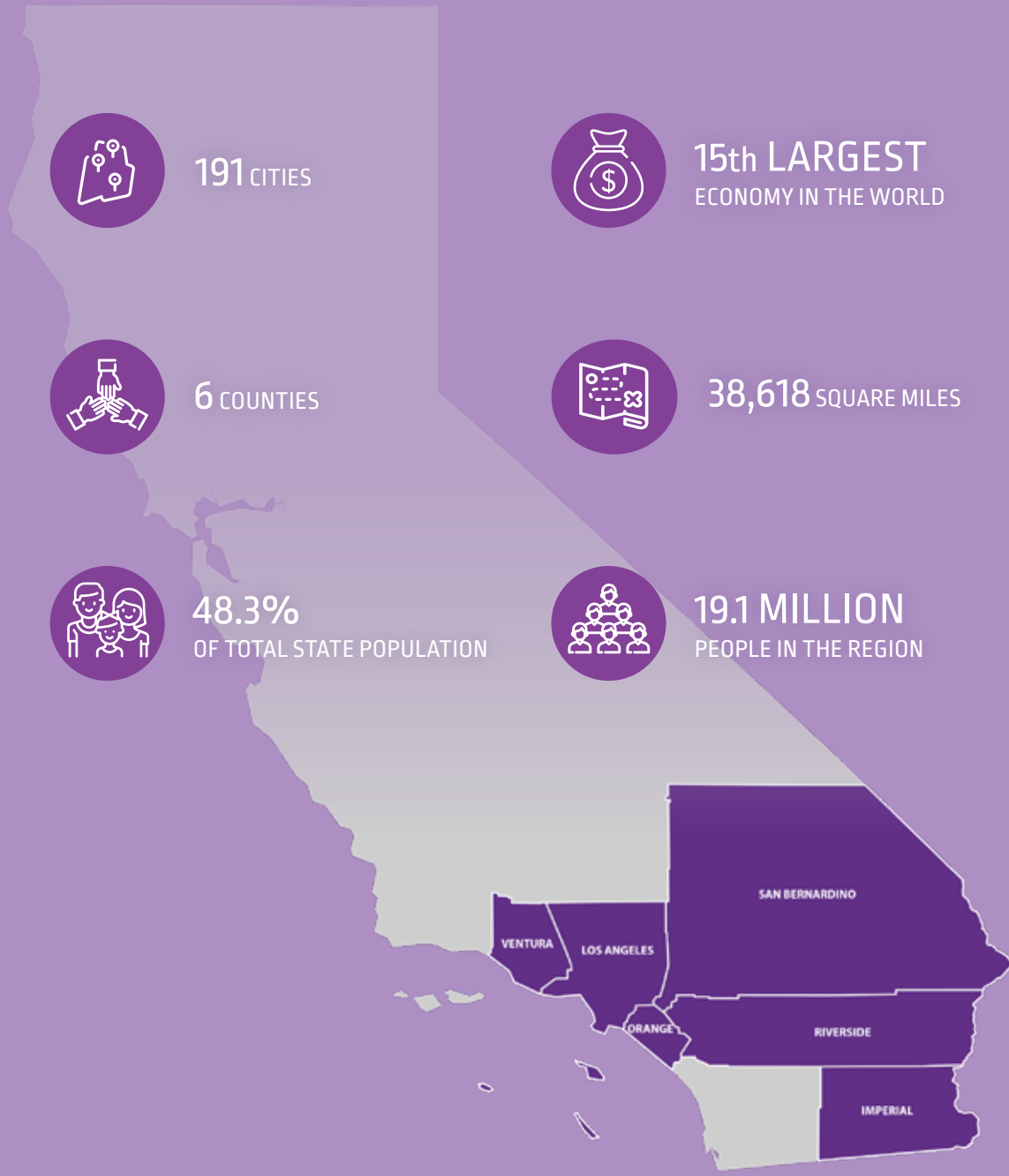




2019

Southern California Association of Governments
Federal Legislative Priorities

We represent **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**





The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) was founded in 1965, and is a Joint Powers Authority under California state law, established as an association of local governments and agencies that voluntarily convene as a forum to address regional issues.

SCAG is also the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and represents six counties—Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura—and 191 cities in an area covering more than 38,000 square miles. The agency develops the Regional Transportation Plan and compiles the Federal Transportation Improvement Program for the Southern California region. At the state level, SCAG compiles the Sustainable Communities Strategy, which demonstrates the region's attainment of greenhouse gas reduction goals set by the California Air Resources Board, and the allocation plan for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

SCAG is governed by an 86-member board of directors known as the Regional Council whose membership includes local and county elected officials. Additionally, SCAG Bylaws provide for representation of Native American tribes, air quality districts, and the Transportation Corridor Agencies on the Regional Council and Policy Committees.

In addition, SCAG works in partnership with six county transportation commissions (CTCs) that hold the primary responsibility for programming and implementing transportation projects, programs, and services in their respective counties.



LEADERSHIP & RE



Meet Our New Executive Director: Kome Ajise

On April 4, 2019, the Regional Council of SCAG approved the appointment of Kome Ajise as the agency’s new Executive Director. Mr. Ajise, who served as SCAG’s Planning Director since November 2017, was selected to lead the nation’s largest MPO following a nation-wide search. Mr. Ajise’s career spans 30 years in regional planning and transportation. Previously, Mr. Ajise served as Chief Deputy Director at the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and was the Deputy Director of Planning and Modal Programs where he oversaw the Aeronautics, Mass Transportation, Rail, Transportation Planning, Local Assistance, and Research Innovation and System Information divisions. Mr. Ajise has a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography and Regional Planning from the University of Benin, Nigeria and a Master of City and Regional Planning degree from California State University, Fresno.

SCAG Holds Membership with the Following Organizations:



REGIONAL ADVOCACY

SCAG's Federal Legislative Principles

SCAG maintains a Federal and State Legislative Program, which consists of the Regional Council's positions on policies and legislative initiatives related to SCAG's core planning and policy areas—transportation, air quality, freight/goods movement, housing, environmental impact, sustainability, and economic recovery and job creation—that need the leadership and support of Congress and the California State Legislature to resolve challenges facing the SCAG region.

The following are highlights from the 2019 Federal Legislative Program that encompass broad, policy-oriented objectives of the agency that build upon long-standing, Regional Council-adopted policies.

Freight & Goods Movement

- Support funding proposals that seek to maintain and expand transportation infrastructure for key regional goods movement infrastructure and corridors that link freight facilities and systems to the rest of the nation.
- Support the continuation of, and increased investment in, federal discretionary grant opportunities such as the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) and Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) programs. Expand the INFRA program to include both competitive and formula-based awards.
- Support increased federal freight funding through the establishment of a dedicated freight trust fund so that revenues can be distributed to states and regions that are most impacted by goods movement.
- Support the creation of programs designed to assist in leveraging technology to improve freight mobility, increase goods movement efficiency, reduce harmful emissions, mitigate negative impacts on disadvantaged communities, and address shifting consumer behaviors (i.e., e-commerce).

Reauthorization of the FAST Act

- Support the reauthorization of the FAST Act to provide long-term and stable investments into the national infrastructure and transportation system.
- Renew the INFRA program, which provides dedicated, discretionary funding for projects that address critical issues facing our nation's major freight corridor. Expand the INFRA program to include both competitive and formula-based awards.
- Expand eligibility for any planning awards under the reauthorized FAST Act to include MPOs.

Transportation Funding

- Support new transportation and infrastructure funding sources that provide additional investment into the national infrastructure and transportation system.
- Support long-term, stable, and sufficient funding sources to balance the Highway Trust Fund and provide funding stability for the future.
- Support new transportation and infrastructure funding sources that augment the Highway Trust Fund, including expanding tolling options on the interstate highway system and providing support for states willing to research and/or pilot innovative revenue programs.
- Support innovative financing tools, expand the TIFIA program, and reinstate advance refunding bonds to reduce the cost of transportation investment and debt service costs in order to allow savings to be reinvested in additional transportation infrastructure projects.
- Support continued investment in and expansion of federal grant programs, such as the BUILD and INFRA programs, which help SCAG region stakeholders implement their transportation projects and realize the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy.
- Support continued investment in and expansion of federal grant programs, such as the Capital Investment Grants (New Starts, Small Starts), which helps the SCAG region implement important projects contained within the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy.
- Support continued investment in the Transportation Alternatives Program which is a key funding source for the state's Active Transportation Program (ATP).

OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE SURFACE

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act currently authorizes federal highway and public transportation programs through September 30, 2020. As Congress develops the next surface transportation authorization legislation, SCAG and the six Southern California CTCs urge that the following principles be included:

Long-Term and Stable Funding

- Support a long-term surface transportation reauthorization bill with increased federal funding to provide stable investments into the national transportation infrastructure system, including public transportation, commuter rail/passenger rail, and ADA/paratransit. Work to increase the length of the authorization bill to give the certainty needed to transportation agencies to appropriately plan for the future.
- Support a sustainable solution that restores the long-term solvency of the Highway Trust Fund to maintain and improve the country's transportation assets. Identify funding alternatives and pilot programs that generate new revenues to replenish the Highway Trust Fund.
- Support a surface transportation reauthorization bill that includes incentive funding to reward self-help jurisdictions. This model recognizes that self-help jurisdictions take risks and make significant local investment while leveraging federal dollars to deliver transportation improvements.
- Support a surface transportation reauthorization bill that expands the eligibility of planning grants, such as the Surface Transportation System Funding Alternatives grants, to include MPOs commensurate with their responsibilities and opportunities to meet federal planning and air quality conformity requirements.
- Support reforms that increase local decision-making and flexibility in transportation funding programs to facilitate project selection and funding allocations at the regional level. Where appropriate seek the distribution of funds through proportionate formula allocations to provide more reliability and stability to project implementers.

Freight Programs

- Support freight funding programs to address critical issues facing our nation's major freight corridors and mitigate the impacts on local transportation systems and public health. Work to increase funding of these programs and prioritize eligibility for regions with nationally significant freight flows and major port complexes, such as Southern California, to maintain the region's economic competitiveness.

Financing Programs

- Support innovative financing tools by funding and streamlining the application process for the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) and Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Finance (RRIF) programs, ensuring continuing eligibility for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) projects in both programs, and allowing federal loans to be classified as local funds on federal grant applications. Furthermore, expand tolling options on the interstate highway system with locally-controlled authority, authorize the America Fast Forward Transportation Bonds to provide a powerful new finance tool for transportation agencies to use when financing major capital projects, and restore tax exemption for advance refunding bonds.

Project Delivery

- Support reforms that streamline the project planning and environmental review processes to expedite project delivery while maintaining core planning policies and strong environmental protections.

Technology

- Support collaborative efforts between local, regional, and state transportation agencies and private sector partners to develop and integrate innovative technology and new service-delivery approaches to improve mobility, as well as innovative financing methods.

TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZATION



WE ARE PLANNING

Connect SoCal - the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy, is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals.

Connect SoCal embodies a collective vision for the region's future and is developed with input from local governments, county transportation commissions, tribal governments, non-profit organizations, businesses, and local stakeholders within the counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura.

What is at the heart of Connect SoCal are over 4,000 transportation projects—including highway improvements, railroad grade separations, additional bicycle lanes, new transit hubs, and replacement bridges. These future investments were included in county plans developed by the six county transportation commissions and seek to reduce traffic bottlenecks, improve the efficiency of the region's network, and expand mobility choices for everyone.

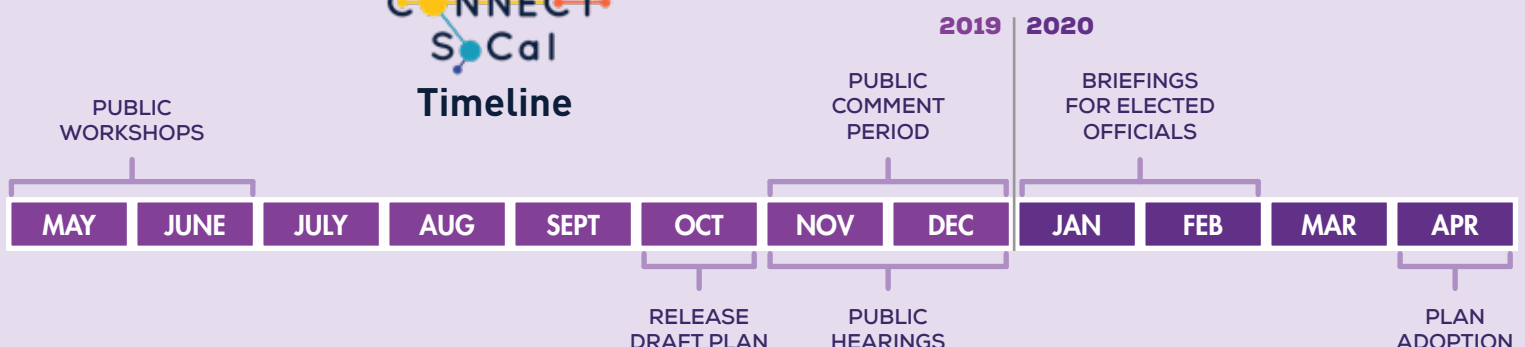
Why this plan is relevant:

- Connect SoCal is an important planning document for the region, allowing project sponsors to qualify for federal funding. The plan takes into account operations and maintenance costs to ensure reliability, longevity, and cost effectiveness.
- Connect SoCal is supported by a combination of transportation and land use strategies that help the region achieve state greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and federal Clean Air Act requirements, and takes into account other considerations such as preserving open space areas, improving public health and roadway safety, supporting our vital goods movement industry, and utilizing resources more efficiently.

In May and June, SCAG will host a series of Connect SoCal community workshops to have the public learn about how the region is anticipated to grow, understand the choices we have about where growth can happen and provide input on how to keep the region moving. These open house-style workshops will provide accessible and understandable information to the public about the challenges facing the region over the next 25 years and the potential solutions we have to address them.

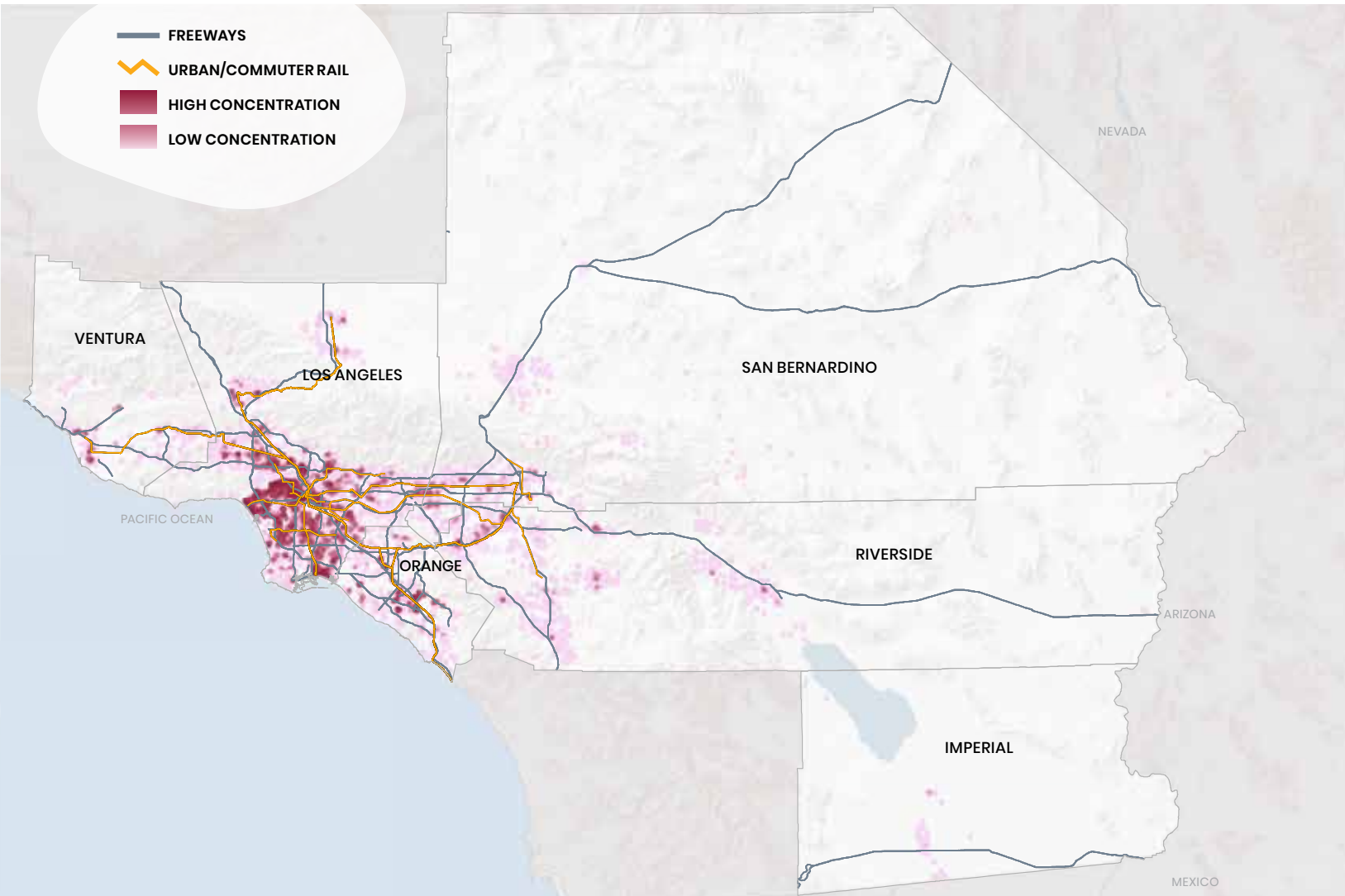
These community workshops will be conducted throughout the SCAG region. More information can be found at ConnectSoCal.org.

Our region will grow by 3.6 MILLION PEOPLE BY 2045



FOR THE FUTURE

Household Growth: 2008-2016



Projected Population Growth: 2016-2045

	2016	2045
IMPERIAL COUNTY	187,000	281,000
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	10,111,000	11,677,000
ORANGE COUNTY	3,180,000	3,535,000
RIVERSIDE COUNTY	2,364,000	3,252,000
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY	2,141,000	2,815,000
VENTURA COUNTY	850,000	947,000
SCAG REGION	18.832.000	22.507,000

OTHER REPORTS & STUDIES

New Report on Congestion Pricing: Mobility Go Zone & Pricing Feasibility Study

In March of this year, SCAG released its Mobility Go Zone & Pricing Feasibility Study. The study was funded through a grant from the Federal Highway Administration's Value Pricing Pilot Program, the goal of which was to study the technical feasibility and impact of congestion pricing strategies.

The study focused on addressing traffic hot spots with a range of tools and incubating what can work to relieve local congestion problems. The study explored how a Mobility Go Zone Program could be structured, with particular emphasis on the use of decongestion fees that can have sizable impacts on vehicle miles traveled and vehicle hours traveled. A decongestion fee, also referred to as congestion pricing, is a user fee assessed on vehicles traveling into a specified area during peak times.

During the iterative screening process, several geographic areas perceived to have the highest levels of traffic in the SCAG region were considered. The Westside area located in the cities of Los Angeles and Santa Monica was identified as a key proof-of-concept area due to its very high jobs-to-housing ratio, employment centers, and congested highways and arterial network.

The concept of a "Mobility Go Zone" was derived and defined as a geographic area with a suite of mobility service options for commuters, visitors, and residents to reduce dependency on personal automobiles. This expanded mobility ecosystem included increased local bus circulator routes, express commuter buses, bike share options, enhanced pedestrian infrastructure and incentive methods, including the decongestion fee on vehicles entering during peak traffic periods. Revenues collected from the fee would be used to fund local transportation improvements to help reduce congestion, carbon emissions, and offer improved travel options to the public.

SCAG's study found that with the implementation of a Mobility Go Zone Program, travelers choosing to drive a car into the study area would decrease by 19% during peak periods, including a 22% reduction of single occupancy vehicles entering the zone. Travelers choosing to take transit or bike/walk into the area would increase by 9% and 7% during peak periods, respectively. The end result is improved quality of life by improving pedestrian infrastructure, reducing vehicle miles traveled and associated greenhouse gas emissions, and a self-financing mobility program that would offer additional revenues for local reinvestment.

Read about SCAG's study at scag.ca.gov or see other decongestion fee systems proposed and implemented around the world at 100hoursla.com.



Local City Profile Reports

On a biannual basis, SCAG prepares Local Profiles for each member jurisdiction in the region. Local Profiles document current data and analysis to support community planning and outreach efforts, and they can serve as an essential resource for elected officials looking for detailed and up-to-date demographical information on the communities they represent. In addition, Local Profiles are a useful tool for the business community, academia, residents of Southern California, and policymakers. The most recent iteration of the Local Profiles were released at the annual SCAG Regional Conference and General Assembly on May 2, 2019. Individual profiles are available for free at scag.ca.gov/DataAndTools/Pages/LocalProfiles.



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