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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ***Draft regional plan targets 1,900 transportation investments for the Inland Empire over the next 25 years***

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has identified 1,900 transportation improvement projects for the Inland Empire 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. For the IE, more than 1,900 projects are included, among them:

- ExpressLanes along Interstate 15 in Riverside County from Cajalco Road to State Route 74 (\$650 million) and on State Route 60 from I-15 to the State Route 91/60/215 interchange (\$381 million)
- ExpressLanes along Interstate 15 in San Bernardino County from State Route 60 to State Route 210 (\$476 million).
- The Brightline West High-Speed Rail system from Las Vegas to Rancho Cucamonga (\$3.1 billion).
- The Ontario International Airport Loop (\$492 billion).
- The West Valley Connector bus rapid transit system (\$320 million).
- Bus replacements throughout the Riverside Transit Authority service area (\$328 million).

“Making sure these kinds of projects are funded and built is critical to the future of our two counties and Southern California as a whole, connecting communities, creating new business opportunities and ensuring we can handle the growth that will continue to come our way,” said Curt Hagman, a San Bernardino County supervisor and first vice president of SCAG.

Connect SoCal 2024 projects that the Inland Empire’s population will grow by more than 1 million, or 23%, over the next quarter century, to more than 5.6 million by 2050—far and away the fastest rate of expansion in the six-county SCAG region. During that period, the IE is also expected to expand its role as an international trade gateway, requiring an investment in infrastructure that facilitates the movement of both people and goods.

The return on investment of implementing the plan would be significant—reducing travel delays, improving health outcomes and generating, for the IE alone, about 87,500 jobs, directly and indirectly, each year. 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).

