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# Press Release

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## **SCAG RELEASES 2008 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

### *Strategic Highway and Transit Projects Target Regional Challenges of Air Quality, Congestion, Goods Movement and Population Growth*

**LOS ANGELES – May 9, 2008** – The Regional Council of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) yesterday released the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP is a comprehensive outline that provides a vision for transportation investments in the Southern California region through 2035. SCAG is federally mandated to update and adopt an RTP every four years to address regional transportation needs, and only projects in the RTP become eligible for federal and state funding and federal environmental clearance.

“Southern California on its own represents the 15<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world, but we struggle with some of the worst traffic in the nation, with more congestion and increasing freight, truck and air travel,” said Lake Forest Council Member and SCAG President Richard Dixon. “It will take careful planning and new revenue sources to fulfill the transportation needs of our region, and today, we are acting now with this Plan to meet that challenge.”

By 2035, Southern California’s population is expected to grow from 18.6 million to 24 million residents in America’s largest region of six counties and nearly 200 cities. The RTP provides long-range regional strategies, including new construction and improvements to balance the existing transportation system and to move people and goods efficiently. The RTP improves the quality of life in Southern California by preparing for economic growth while addressing air quality challenges with environmentally friendly strategies and technologies.

The plan recommends a number of investments to support Southern California’s burgeoning transportation needs, such as:

- A significant funding commitment to maintain and improve the existing system of roads, highways, rail and other transit systems;
- Numerous projects to increase capacity on various Southern California freeways;
- A series of new High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes to fill gaps in the HOV network;
- A regional approach to handling airport passenger and cargo demand as well as airport ground access improvements;

- Implementation of numerous heavy rail, light rail and bus rapid transit corridors; increased capacity of the Metrolink commuter rail system; and other key improvements to transit systems;
- New and cleaner ways to move goods, such as clean-technology engines, a High-Speed Regional Transport freight system, dedicated lanes for clean technology trucks, and road and rail capacity enhancements;
- Development of a High-Speed Regional Transport passenger system connecting Southern California's major population and transportation centers and airports;
- Measures to enhance the region's ability to prevent, protect and respond to major emergencies; and
- Increased planning for bicyclist and pedestrians.

“Hundreds of projects in this RTP link vital transportation activities more effectively to our jobs, homes, schools and shopping,” said Hasan Ikhata, SCAG’s Executive Director. “Our goal is to provide traffic relief so that people can get where and when they want, and to do it in a way that corresponds with the current and long-term costs of transportation in Southern California.”

Major costs outlined in the RTP total almost \$532 billion and include capital projects such as new highways and new transit, as well as operations and maintenance needs, and debt service. The SCAG region is expected to generate approximately \$411 billion in existing revenue sources through 2035 to invest in the transportation system, and the RTP presents new alternative funding sources and innovative financing strategies in order to fund the shortfall. Some of these sources include land value capture strategies; local option sales tax extensions; user fees from tolls, container cargo and fares generated from a High-Speed Regional Transport system; state and federal gas excise tax adjustment; and private equity participation.

SCAG developed the RTP in collaboration with county transportation commissions, subregions and local governments, Caltrans, state and federal agencies, environmental and business groups, tribal governments, non-profit groups and the general public. A copy of the 2008 RTP can be downloaded, and more information is available at SCAG’s RTP Web site: <http://scag.ca.gov/rtp2008>.

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### **About SCAG**

SCAG is the nation’s largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 188 cities and more than 18 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).