



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

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Los Angeles, CA 90017

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MEETING OF THE

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

***Members of the Public are Welcome to Attend
In-Person & Remotely***

Thursday, September 4, 2025

9:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

To Attend In-Person:

**SCAG Main Office – Policy A Meeting Room
900 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1700
Los Angeles, CA 90017**

To Watch or View Only:

<https://scag.ca.gov/scag-tv-livestream>

To Attend and Participate on Your Computer:

<https://scag.zoom.us/j/81703196837>

To Attend and Participate by Phone:

Call-in Number: 1-669-900-6833

Meeting ID: 817 0319 6837

PUBLIC ADVISORY

If members of the public wish to review the attachments or have any questions on any of the agenda items, please contact Maggie Aguilar at (213) 630-1420 or via email at aguilarm@scag.ca.gov. Agendas & Minutes are also available at: www.scag.ca.gov/committees.

SCAG, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), will accommodate persons who require a modification of accommodation to participate in this meeting. SCAG is also committed to helping people with limited proficiency in the English language access the agency's essential public information and services. You can request such assistance by calling (213) 630-1410. We request at least 72 hours (three days) notice to provide reasonable accommodations and will make every effort to arrange for assistance as soon as possible.



Instructions for Attending the Meeting

To Attend In-Person and Provide Verbal Comments: Go to the SCAG Main Office located at 900 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1700, Los Angeles, CA 90017 or any of the remote locations noticed in the agenda. The meeting will take place in the Policy A Meeting Room on the 17th floor starting at 9:30 a.m.

To Attend by Computer: Click the following link: <https://scag.zoom.us/j/81703196837>. If Zoom is not already installed on your computer, click "Download & Run Zoom" on the launch page and press "Run" when prompted by your browser. If Zoom has previously been installed on your computer, please allow a few moments for the application to launch automatically. Select "Join Audio via Computer." The virtual conference room will open. If you receive a message reading, "Please wait for the host to start this meeting," simply remain in the room until the meeting begins.

To Attend by Phone: Call (669) 900-6833 to access the conference room. Given high call volumes recently experienced by Zoom, please continue dialing until you connect successfully. Enter the **Meeting ID:** 817 0319 6837, followed by #. Indicate that you are a participant by pressing # to continue. You will hear audio of the meeting in progress. Remain on the line if the meeting has not yet started.

Instructions for Participating and Public Comments

Members of the public can participate in the meeting via written or verbal comments.

In Writing: Written comments can be emailed to: ePublicComment@scag.ca.gov. Written comments received **by 5pm on Wednesday, September 3, 2025** will be transmitted to members of the legislative body and posted on SCAG's website prior to the meeting. You are **not** required to submit public comments in writing or in advance of the meeting; this option is offered as a convenience should you desire not to provide comments in real time as described below. Written comments received after 5pm on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, will be announced and included as part of the official record of the meeting. Any writings or documents provided to a majority of this committee regarding any item on this agenda (other than writings legally exempt from public disclosure) are available at the Office of the Clerk, at 900 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1700, Los Angeles, CA 90017 or by phone at (213) 630-1420, or email to aguilarm@scag.ca.gov.

Remotely: If participating in real time via Zoom or phone, please wait for the presiding officer to call the item for which you wish to speak and use the "raise hand" function on your computer or *9 by phone and wait for SCAG staff to announce your name/phone number.

In-Person: If participating in-person, you are invited but not required, to fill out and present a Public Comment Card to the Clerk of the Board or other SCAG staff prior to speaking. It is helpful to indicate whether you wish to speak during the Public Comment Period (Matters Not on the Agenda) and/or on an item listed on the agenda.

General Information for Public Comments

Verbal comments can be presented in real time during the meeting. Members of the public are allowed a total of 3 minutes for verbal comments. The presiding officer retains discretion to adjust time limits as necessary to ensure efficient and orderly conduct of the meeting, including equally reducing the time of all comments.

For purpose of providing public comment for items listed on the Consent Calendar, please indicate that you wish to speak when the Consent Calendar is called. Items listed on the Consent Calendar will be acted on with one motion and there will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the legislative body so requests, in which event, the item will be considered separately.

In accordance with SCAG's Regional Council Policy, Article VI, Section H and California Government Code Section 54957.9, if a SCAG meeting is "willfully interrupted" and the "orderly conduct of the meeting" becomes unfeasible, the presiding officer or the Chair of the legislative body may order the removal of the individuals who are disrupting the meeting.



ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

TELECONFERENCE AVAILABLE AT THESE ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS*

Ana Beltran America's Best Value Inn Lobby 351 W. Main Street Westmorland, CA 92281	Daniel Brotman City of Glendale - City Hall 613 E Broadway, Ste 200 Glendale, CA 91206	Ned E. Davis City of Westlake Village - City Hall 31200 Oak Crest Drive Westlake Village, CA 91361
Carmen Hernandez City of Barstow - City Hall 220 E. Mountain View Barstow, CA 92311	Shari L. Horne City of Laguna Woods - City Hall 24264 El Toro Road Laguna Woods, CA 92637	Britt Huff City of Rolling Hills Estates - City Hall 4045 Palos Verdes Drive North Rolling Hills Estates CA, 90274
Brian Johsz City of Chino Hills - City Hall 14000 City Center Drive Chino Hills, CA 91709	Steven Leash Cahuilla Band of Indians 52701 Hwy 371 Anza, CA 92539	Elaine Litster City of Simi Valley - City Hall 2929 Tapo Canyon Road Simi Valley, CA 93063
Jennifer Stark City of Claremont - City Hall 207 Harvard Avenue 2nd Floor, Citrus Room Claremont, CA 91711	Tamala Takahashi City of Burbank - City Hall 275 East Olive Avenue 2nd Floor, Council Office Burbank, CA 91502	Connor Traut 7661 Silver Street Buena Park, CA 90620
Stephanie Virgen City of Coachella - City Hall 1515 Sixth Street Coachella, CA 92236	Dale Welty City of Canyon Lake - City Hall 31526 Railroad Canyon Road City Antechamber Canyon Lake, CA 92584	

* Under the teleconferencing rules of the Brown Act, members of the body may remotely participate at any location specified above.



ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

EEC - Energy and Environment Committee *Members – September 2025*

1. **Hon. Rick Denison**
EEC Chair, Yucca Valley, RC District 11
2. **Hon. Daniel Ramos**
EEC Vice Chair, Adelanto, RC District 65
3. **Hon. Ana Beltran**
Westmorland, ICTC
4. **Hon. Arthur Bishop**
Apple Valley, SBCTA
5. **Hon. Daniel Brotman**
Glendale, AVCJPA
6. **Hon. Margaret Clark**
Rosemead, RC District 32
7. **Hon. Robert Copeland**
Signal Hill, GCCOG
8. **Hon. Jenny Crosswhite**
Santa Paula, RC District 47
9. **Hon. Ned Davis**
Westlake Village, LVMCOG
10. **Hon. Carmen Hernandez**
Barstow, SBCTA
11. **Hon. Shari Horne**
Laguna Woods, OCCOG
12. **Hon. Britt Huff**
Rolling Hills Estates, SBCCOG
13. **Hon. Brian Johsz**
Chino Hills, SBCTA
14. **Hon. Joe Kalmick**
Seal Beach, RC District 20
15. **Hon. Steven Leash**
Cahuilla Band of Indians
16. **Hon. Elaine Litster**
Simi Valley, VCOG



ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

- 17. Hon. Patricia Lock Dawson**
Riverside, RC District 68
- 18. Sup. Vianey Lopez**
Ventura County
- 19. Hon. Yasmine-Imani McMorris**
Culver City, WCCOG
- 20. Hon. Cory Moss**
Industry, Pres. Appt. (Member at Large)
- 21. Hon. Jeannette Sanchez-Palacios**
Ventura, VCOG
- 22. Hon. Suely Saro**
Long Beach, RC District 29
- 23. Hon. Patty Senecal**
Seal Beach, OCCOG
- 24. Hon. Jennifer Stark**
Claremont, SGVCOG
- 25. Hon. Ali Taj**
Artesia, GCCOG
- 26. Hon. Tamala Takahashi**
Burbank, SFVCOG
- 27. Hon. Connor Traut**
Buena Park, OCCOG
- 28. Hon. Stephanie Virgen**
Coachella, CVAG
- 29. Hon. Dale Welty**
Canyon Lake, WRCOG



ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

Southern California Association of Governments
900 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1700 - Policy A Meeting Room
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Thursday, September 4, 2025
9:30 AM

The Energy and Environment Committee may consider and act upon any of the items on the agenda regardless of whether they are listed as Information or Action items.

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(The Honorable Rick Denison, Chair)

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD (Matters Not on the Agenda)

This is the time for public comments on any matter of interest within SCAG's jurisdiction that is **not** listed on the agenda. For items listed on the agenda, public comments will be received when that item is considered. Although the committee may briefly respond to statements or questions, under state law, matters presented under this item cannot be discussed or acted upon at this time.

REVIEW AND PRIORITIZE AGENDA ITEMS

CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval Items

1. Minutes of the Meeting – June 5, 2025

PPG. 7

Receive and File

2. Status Update on Transportation Conformity Challenges in SCAG Region

PPG. 13

ACTION ITEM

3. Connect SoCal 2050: Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategy Framework and Guidelines
(Camille Guiriba, Senior Regional Planner, SCAG)

10 Mins.

PPG. 17

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Recommend that the Regional Council adopt the Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategy Framework and Guidelines for use in the development of the 2028-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS).

INFORMATION ITEMS

4. Energy and Environment Committee Outlook and Future Agenda Items
(Ryan Wolfe, Manager of Sustainable and Resilient Development, SCAG)

10 Mins.

PPG. 51

5. Innovative Clean Transit Regional Assessment Study Introduction
(Priscilla Freduah-Agyemang, Senior Regional Planner, SCAG)

10 Mins.

PPG. 56



ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

6. Natural & Agricultural Lands Benefits Study <i>(India Brookover, Senior Planner, SCAG)</i>	10 Mins.	PPG. 68
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7. Ecosystem Services Overview <i>(Ryan Wolfe, Sustainable & Resilient Development Department, SCAG)</i>	40 Mins.	PPG. 76
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CHAIR'S REPORT

(The Honorable Rick Denison, Chair)

STAFF REPORT

(Ivette Macias, Government Affairs Officer, SCAG)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT



AGENDA ITEM 1 REPORT

Southern California Association of Governments
September 4, 2025

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES ARE A SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (EEC). A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THE ACTUAL MEETING IS AVAILABLE AT: [<http://scag.iqm2.com/Citizens/>](http://scag.iqm2.com/Citizens/).

The Energy and Environment Committee (EEC) of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) held its regular meeting both in person and virtually (telephonically and electronically). A quorum was present.

Members Present

Hon. Rick Denison (Chair)	<i>Yucca Valley</i>	District 11
Hon. Daniel Ramos (Vice Chair)	<i>Adelanto</i>	District 65
Hon. Ana Beltran	<i>Westmoreland</i>	ICTC
Hon. Art Bishop	<i>Town of Apple Valley</i>	SBCTA
Hon. Margaret Clark	<i>Rosemead</i>	SGVCOG
Hon. Ned Davis	<i>Westlake Village</i>	LVMCOG
Hon. Jenny Crosswhite	<i>Santa Paula</i>	District 47
Hon. Carmen Hernandez	<i>Barstow</i>	SBCTA
Hon. Shari Horne	<i>Laguna Woods</i>	OCCOG
Hon. Britt Huff	<i>Rolling Hills Estates</i>	SBCCOG
Hon. Brian Johsz	<i>Chino Hills</i>	SBCTA
Hon. Joe Kalmick	<i>Seal Beach</i>	District 20
Hon. Elaine Litster	<i>Simi Valley</i>	VCOG
Hon. Vianey Lopez		Ventura County
Hon. Yasmine-Imani McMorris	<i>Culver City</i>	WCCOG
Hon. Patty Senecal	<i>Seal Beach</i>	OCCOG
Hon. Jennifer Stark	<i>Claremont</i>	SGVCOG
Hon. Ali Taj	<i>Artesia</i>	Pres. Appt
Hon. Tamala Takahashi	<i>Burbank</i>	SFVCOG
Hon. Connor Traut	<i>Buena Park</i>	OCCOG
Hon. Dale Welty	<i>Canyon Lake</i>	WRCOG

Members Not Present

Hon. Robert Copeland	<i>Signal Hill</i>	GCCOG
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Hon. Jesus Escobar		Imperial County
Hon. Steven Leash	<i>Cahuilla Band of Indians</i>	
Hon. Patricia Lock Dawson	<i>Riverside</i>	District 68
Hon. Cory Moss	<i>City of Industry</i>	Pres. Appt
Hon. Jose Sanchez	<i>Los Angeles County</i>	COC
Hon. Jeannette Sanchez-Palacios	<i>Ventura</i>	VCOG
Hon. Suely Saro	<i>Long Beach</i>	District 29
Hon. Stephanie Virgen	<i>Coachella</i>	CVAG

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Denison called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and 2nd Vice President Jenny Crosswhite, Santa Paula, District 47, led the Pledge of Allegiance. Staff confirmed a quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Chair Denison opened the public comment period and noted that this was the time for members of the public to offer comment on matters that are within SCAG's jurisdiction but are not listed on the agenda.

Chair Denison asked if any comments were received after the deadline. SCAG staff acknowledged there were no public comments received after the 5:00 p.m. deadline on June 4, 2025.

Seeing no public comment, Chair Denison closed the public comment period for matters not listed on the agenda.

REVIEW AND PRIORITIZE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests to prioritize agenda items.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval Items

1. Minutes of the Meeting – April 3, 2025

Receive and File

2. Energy and Environment Committee Outlook and Future Agenda Items

A MOTION was made (Kalmick) to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion was SECONDED (Clark)

and passed by the following votes:

AYES: Beltran, Bishop, Clark, Crosswhite, Denison, Hernandez, Horne, Huff, Johsz, Kalmick, Litster, Lopez, Ramos, Senecal, Stark, Taj, Takahashi, Traut, and Welty (19)

NOES: None (0)

ABSTAIN: None (0)

INFORMATION ITEMS

3. Connect SoCal 2024: Implementation Strategies Update

There were no public comments on item 3.

Annaleigh Ekman, Associate Regional Planner, SCAG, provided an update on the milestones that have been made on the Implementation Strategies. She provided an overview of SCAG's role in the region and discussed the four primary ways SCAG supported their partners in implementation which were to coordinate policy efforts across jurisdictions and stakeholders; ensure state and federally funded transportation projects and programs support Connect SoCal and assist the region in advancing key performance measures; and conduct data collection, analysis, and research to further policy advancement and provide funding and resources for local government. She stated SCAG had progressed on 79 of the 93 strategies since plan adoption. Lastly, she reviewed the vision and goals for mobility, communities, environment, and economy.

The comprehensive staff report was included in the agenda packet and posted on the SCAG website. The meeting video is also available on the SCAG website.

4. Connect SoCal 2024: Sustainable Communities Strategy Acceptance and Target Updates

Camille Guiriba, Senior Regional Planner, SCAG, stated that on May 7th, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) communicated they had accepted SCAG's determination that Connect SoCal 2024 met the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. She indicated CARB anticipated updating regional GHG emission targets by the fall of 2026 and that this process typically occurred every 8 years with the last one being in 2018. She stated SCAG and other MPO's had requested to maintain the same targets and focus efforts on implementation.

The comprehensive staff report was provided verbally. The meeting video is also available on the SCAG website.

5. Water Action Resolution White Paper

Kim Clark, Planning Supervisor, SCAG, stated that by 2050, an additional 2.5 million people were projected to live in the SCAG region. The region was also anticipating major growth in water-intensive industries. Water agencies were grappling with issues and needed funding to address them. She indicated SCAG conducted interviews with stakeholders across six counties to understand opportunities for collaboration. She stated the findings were based on the five indicators for water equity which were reliability, cleanliness and safety, affordability, accessibility, and resilience. She provided an overview for each of the indicators. Lastly, she stated key conclusions and stated next steps.

Ms. Clark introduced the panel speakers: Tracy Quinn, President and CEO of Heal the Bay; Rod Woods, Deputy General Manager of the Moulton Niguel Water District; and Greg Woodside, Chief of Planning & Watershed Resilience of the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District. The speakers discussed connections between water, quality, resilience, and wildfires, and included challenges and solutions due to recent events in Los Angeles County.

The comprehensive staff report was included in the agenda packet and posted on the SCAG website. The meeting video is also available on the SCAG website.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Denison stated that in May, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) accepted SCAG's determination that the Connect SoCal 2024 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy met CARB's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. He congratulated EEC member and Riverside Mayor, Patricia Lock Dawson, on her recent appointment to the California Air Resources Board. Lastly, he thanked everyone who joined the 60th annual General Assembly and stated he was looking forward to continuing the work of the committee throughout the upcoming year.

STAFF REPORT

Ivette Macias, Senior Government Affairs Officer, announced that she had taken over as the support government affairs staff member to the Energy & Environment Committee. She provided information on Go Human opportunities such as Under the Traffic Safety Event Sponsorship and helmet distribution.

ANNOUNCEMENT

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Denison adjourned the Energy and Environment Committee meeting at 11:41 a.m.

[MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE EEC]

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ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE REPORT																
2024-2025																
MEMBERS	Representing	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Jun	Total Mtgs Attended To Date	
Beltran, Ana	Westmoreland, ICTC	0			0		0	1			1	1		1	4	
Bishop, Art	Apple Valley, SBCTA	1			1		1	0			1	1		1	6	
Clark, Margaret	Rosemead, RC District 32	1			1		1	1			1	1		1	7	
Copeland, Robert	Signal Hill, GCCOG	1			0		1	0			1	0		0	3	
Crosswhite, Jenny	Santa Paula, RC District 47	1			1		1	1			1	1		1	7	
Davis, Ned	Westlake Village, LVMCOG	1			0		0	1			1	1		1	5	
Denison, Rick	Yucca Valley, RC District 11	1			1		1	1			1	1		1	7	
Esobar, Jesus	Imperial County										1	1		0	2	
Hernandez, Carmen	Barstow, SBCTA	1			1		1	1			1	1		1	7	
Horne, Shari	Laguna Woods, OCCOG	1			1		1	1			1	1		1	7	
Huff, Britt	Rolling Hills Estates, SCBCOG	1			1		1	1			0	1		1	6	
Johsz, Brian	Chino Hills, SBCTA										1	1		1	3	
Kalmick, Joe	Seal Beach, RC District 20	1			1		1	1			1	1		1	7	
Leash, Steven	Cahuilla Band of Indians	1			1		0	0			0	0		0	2	
Litster, Elaine	Simi Valley, VCOG	0			1		1	1			1	1		1	6	
Lock Dawson, Patricia	Riverside, District 68				1		1	1			0	1		0	4	
Lopez, Vianey	Ventura County	1			1		1	1			1	1		1	7	
McMorrin, Yasmine-Imani	Culver City, WCCOG										1	1		1	3	
Moss, Cory	City of Industry, Pres. Apt						0	0			0	0		0	0	
Ramos, Daniel	Adelanto, SBCTA	1			1		1	1			1	1		1	7	
Sanchez-Palacios, Jeanette	Ventura, VCOG	0			0		0	1			1	0		0	2	
Saro, Suely	Long Beach, RC District 29										1	1		0	2	
Senecal, Patty	Seal Beach, OCCOG										1	1		1	3	
Stark, Jennifer	Claremont, SGVCOG	1			1		0	1			0	0		1	4	
Taj, Ali	Artesia, Pres. Apt	1			0		0	0			0	0		1	2	
Takahashi, Tamala	Burbank, SFVCOG	1			1		0	1			1	0		1	5	
Traut, Connor	Buena Park, OCCOG	1			1		0	1			0	1		1	5	
Virgen, Stephanie	Coachella, CVAG	1			1		0	1			1	1		0	5	
Welty, Dale	Canyon Lake, WRCOG	1			1		1	1			0	1		1	6	



AGENDA ITEM 2

REPORT

Southern California Association of Governments
September 4, 2025

To: Energy & Environment Committee (EEC)
Transportation Committee (TC)
Regional Council (RC)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
APPROVAL

From: Lijin Sun, Principal Planner
213-236-1804, sunl@scag.ca.gov

Subject: Status Update on Transportation Conformity Challenges in SCAG Region

Kome Ajise

RECOMMENDED ACTION FOR EEC, TC, AND RC:

Receive and File

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following Strategic Priority 5: Secure and optimize diverse funding sources to support regional priorities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

SCAG develops the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) every four years, the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) every two years, and their amendments from time to time. SCAG's RTP/SCS, FTIP, and their amendments are required to demonstrate regional transportation conformity and receive federal approval of conformity determination. As part of the federal conformity regulations, SCAG is required to use the vehicle emission factors (EMFAC) model developed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

On June 12, 2025, the President signed into law three joint resolutions (H.J. Res. 87, H.J. Res 88, and H.J. Res. 89) passed by Congress under the authority of the Congressional Review Act (CRA). This action revoked California's three EPA-approved Clean Air Act (CAA) waivers and nullified the State's ability to adopt and enforce stricter vehicle emissions standards than federal requirements, subject to EPA approval. The revocation rendered the latest EPA-approved version of the EMFAC model (EMFAC2021) unusable for federal transportation conformity purposes because the waivers revocation invalidated key planning assumptions underlying that model. As such, California and the SCAG region are currently under the so-called transportation conformity lockdown – meaning no new regional transportation conformity determinations can be made until the lockdown is lifted. Currently, there is no clear indication of when the lockdown would be lifted.

The conformity lockdown will potentially impact SCAG's next scheduled regional transportation conformity determination for the 2027 FTIP and Connect SoCal 2024 Amendment 2, including any projects associated with the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games needing new transportation conformity analyses. SCAG staff at all levels take the conformity lockdown very seriously and will continue to provide the Policy Committees and RC with status updates in the future.

BACKGROUND:

1. California's Clean Air Act Waivers

The CAA requires the EPA to set federal emission standards for air pollutants from new motor vehicles or new motor vehicle engines that cause or contribute to air pollution that endangers public health or welfare. The CAA broadly preempts state governments from adopting independent emissions standards for motor vehicles but specifically allows California to set independent and more stringent emissions standards upon application to the EPA for a waiver (based on California's preexisting emissions regulations and the unique topography of the state). Historically, EPA granted California more than 75 preemption waivers for updates to the State's new motor vehicle emissions control program. These waivers have allowed California to improve its vehicle emissions program, significantly influenced clean air efforts, and allowed the State to adopt and enforce stricter vehicle emissions standards than the federal government, subject to EPA approval.

More recently, Congress passed and then on June 12, 2025 the President signed three joint resolutions that revoked California's three CAA waivers: (i) the Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) Regulation (phasing out the sale of new, gas-powered cars by 2035), (ii) the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) Regulation (mandating an increased mix of zero-emission trucks for sale in the state); and (iii) the Omnibus Low NO_x (Low NO_x) Regulation (implementing the state's updated nitrogen oxide emission standards). The revocation was enacted using the CRA, a legislative tool that enables Congress to overturn recently finalized federal regulations. On the same day (June 12, 2025), California—joined by 10 other states—sued the administration in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, challenging the resolutions on the grounds that the waivers are not subject to the CRA, and that revocation of the waivers violates several provisions of the Constitution.

2. Conformity Lockdown

Transportation conformity is required under the CAA to ensure that federally supported transportation activities conform to or are consistent with the purpose of the applicable air quality management plan (AQMP) or State Implementation Plan (SIP). Conformity for the purpose of the SIP means that federally supported transportation plans, programs, and projects are required to not

create new violations of the federal air quality standards, worsen the existing violation, or delay the timely attainment of the applicable federal air quality standards. The Transportation Conformity Regulations apply nationwide to areas that are designated nonattainment, those redesignated to attainment after 1990, and maintenance areas, with plans developed for the specific transportation-related criteria air pollutants (40 CFR Section 93.102). The SCAG region is subject to transportation conformity requirements for three criteria air pollutants: Carbon Monoxide, Ozone, and Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀) and has 25 federally designated nonattainment and maintenance areas.

The nullification of California's ability to set its own vehicle emissions standards has led to a statewide conformity lockdown, causing potential delays in transportation investments and delivery across the state, including the SCAG region because SCAG cannot add new projects or make certain changes to existing projects under the lockdown.

It is important to note that the conformity lockdown is a result of anticipated significant changes in CARB's emission model (EMFAC2021) triggered by the revocation, not due to relaxation in regulations, policies, measures, programs, or projects of CARB or SCAG. On the contrary, we have been doing more. The State and the SCAG region have invested billions of dollars and developed policies in accelerating the development and deployment of clean transportation technologies and infrastructure.

With the nullification of these standards, SCAG cannot receive federal approval of regional transportation conformity determination for a major RTP/SCS amendment or FTIP until one of the following occurs: new emissions assumptions are incorporated into the EMFAC2021 model, the federal government issues interim guidance or a transitional grace period, or the court intervenes as part of California's litigation.

During the conformity lockdown, transportation conformity determinations of the current RTP/SCS and FTIP (Connect SoCal 2024 and 2025 FTIP) are still valid, but no new transportation conformity determinations that need new regional emissions analysis using the EMFAC2021 model may be made. As a result, only projects in the current conforming Connect SoCal 2024 and 2025 FTIP can move forward. No new projects or no new project changes requiring new regional emissions analysis are allowed except for exempt projects. However, during the conformity lockdown, not all transportation projects face delays. SCAG's Connect SoCal 2024 includes projects that are exempt from regional emissions analysis already. Such projects may make certain changes to scope and schedule although they may face some limitations. Projects that are included in SCAG's 2024 Plan and that need project-level conformity determinations may continue to obtain the project-level determinations under the lockdown.

Aside from the limitations identified in the preceding paragraph, the SCAG region is not facing immediate impacts from the conformity lockdown. However, if the conformity lockdown is not lifted by spring 2026, the lockdown could impact SCAG's next scheduled regional transportation conformity determination for the 2027 FTIP and Connect SoCal 2024 Amendment 2, including transit projects, several critical high-value investments needed to support the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as other near-term transformative investments in the region. If the lockdown is protracted, it has the potential to set in motion far-reaching consequences on critical aspects of regional transportation planning, programming, and project delivery, and the regional economy and jobs.

SCAG staff at all levels take the conformity lockdown very seriously. Staff has and will continue to urge CARB and EPA to work together to approve necessary updates to the EMFAC2021 model that can expeditiously resolve the conformity lockdown to avoid the serious consequences in the SCAG region. Staff also continue to monitor the situation at both federal and state levels and are engaging with staff from all levels of governments and other MPOs statewide. Staff will continue to update the Policy Committees and RC on status and return with more information as it becomes available.

FISCAL IMPACT:

SCAG staff's work associated with this item is included in the current FY 2025-26 Overall Work Program (25-025.0164.01: Air Quality Planning and Conformity). If the conformity lockdown is not lifted by in time for SCAG's 2027 FTIP and Connect SoCal 2024 Amendment 2, the lockdown could create short-term financial impacts on transportation projects in the SCAG region. The duration and magnitude of these impacts depend on largely how quickly California and the federal government resolve the current situation.



AGENDA ITEM 3

REPORT

Southern California Association of Governments
September 4, 2025

To: Community Economic & Human Development Committee (CEHD)
Transportation Committee (TC)
Energy and Environment Committee (EEC)
From: Camille Guiriba, Senior Regional Planner
(213) 236-1809, guiriba@scag.ca.gov
Subject: Connect SoCal 2050: Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategy
Framework and Guidelines

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
APPROVAL

Kome Ajise

RECOMMENDED ACTION FOR EEC:

Recommend that the Regional Council adopt the Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategy Framework and Guidelines for use in the development of the 2028-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS).

RECOMMENDED ACTION FOR CEHD AND TC:

Receive and File

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following Strategic Priority

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

SCAG is in the early stages of preparing the 2028-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) or Connect SoCal 2050. The law guiding SCAG's development of the SCS, also known as Senate Bill 375, provides the option for subregional councils of governments in the SCAG region to work with county transportation commission to prepare a subregional SCS for inclusion in the regional SCS. SCAG has developed Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategy Framework and Guidelines to outline the process for both development of a subregional SCS and the incorporation of that SCS into Connect SoCal 2050. For the previous, 2024 RTP/SCS, no subregions delegated to develop a subregional SCS. Subregional Councils of Governments will have until January 30, 2026, to communicate their intent to SCAG.

BACKGROUND:

The California Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008, commonly referred to as Senate Bill (SB) 375, requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) in the state of California, such as SCAG, to integrate transportation, land use, and housing planning while also establishing the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as part of the regional planning process. SB 375 also included a unique provision for the SCAG region to allow a subregional council of governments and the county transportation commission to work together to propose a

sustainable communities strategy (SCS) for that subregion. SB 375 also requires that SCAG “adopt a framework for a subregional SCS to address the intraregional land use, transportation, economic, air quality, and climate policy relationships.”

These *Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategy Framework and Guidelines* (“Framework and Guidelines”) attached to this staff report are intended to facilitate a subregion’s option to develop a subregional SCS which would then be incorporated into the 2028-2050 RTP/SCS. After receipt of any subregion’s decision to develop and adopt a subregional SCS, SCAG and the subregion would develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would provide additional details beyond these Framework and Guidelines.

Some key points included in the document include:

- SCAG will not issue subregional GHG or any other subregional performance goals.
- SCAG shall fulfill all the statutory outreach requirements under SB 375 for the regional SCS.
- Subregions are strongly encouraged to design and adopt their own outreach processes that mirror the requirements imposed on the region under SB 375.
- The governing board of the subregional agency and the respective CTC board (at their option) shall approve the subregional SCS prior to submission to SCAG.
- The subregions will need to collaborate with the respective CTC in their area to coordinate the subregional SCS with future transportation investments.
- Funding for subregional SCS or alternative planning strategy (APS) activities is not currently available.
- If a subregion chooses to prepare a subregional SCS, SCAG will develop an MOU to further define the process and timeline for submission of data and draft subregional SCS as well as to establish a conflict resolution process to address the potential modification or adjustments that may occur during the incorporation process.

The Framework and Guidelines have been amended from the same document previously prepared for the 2024 RTP/SCS, which was reviewed by the Community, Economic, and Human Development Committee (CEHD) and then adopted by the Regional Council on October 7, 2021. For the 2024 RTP/SCS, no subregions delegated to develop an SCS.

The main changes between the previously adopted Framework and Guidelines and this proposed version are:

- Inclusion of more recent policy resolutions adopted by Regional Council.
- Updated Data and Tools sections. These were revised to reflect the many upgrades that have been added to the Regional Data Platform and mention of the Local Data Exchange process.

An earlier draft of these changes have been shared with the Technical Working Group on May 22,

2025 and the Subregional Council of Governments Executive Directors on June 25, 2025. The proposed Framework and Guidelines are now brought before the EEC, rather than the CEHD, for recommendation given the document pertains to the process of SCS development to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Next steps:

Upon Regional Council approval of the Framework and Guidelines, SCAG will send a clean copy to each of the Councils of Governments in the SCAG region, with instructions on how to exercise their option to develop their own subregional SCS. This decision should be communicated to SCAG by January 30, 2026, proceeded by the MOU development process.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Work associated with this item is included in the FY 25-26 Overall Work Program (310.4874.01: Connect SoCal Development).

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. 2025-08_2028_Subregional_SCS Framework_track_changes
2. 2025-08_2028_Subregional_SCS Framework_clean
3. PowerPoint Presentation - 2025-09_Subregional_SCS_Framework

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
*Revised for use in developing the 2028~~84~~ Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable
Communities Strategy (2028~~84~~ RTP/SCS)*

SUBREGIONAL SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES

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I. INTRODUCTION

Codified in 2009, California’s Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (referred to as “SB 375”), calls for the integration of transportation, land use, and housing planning, and establishes the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as part of the regional planning process. SCAG, working with the individual ~~c~~County ~~t~~Transportation ~~c~~Commissions (CTCs) and the subregions within the SCAG region, is responsible for complying with SB 375 in the Southern California region. Success in this endeavor is dependent on the collaboration of SCAG with a range of public and private partners throughout the region.

Briefly summarized here, SB 375 requires SCAG as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to:

- Submit to the State every four years, a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The SCS, when integrated with the transportation network, and other transportation measures and policies, will reduce GHG emissions from automobiles and light trucks to achieve the State-determined regional GHG emission reduction target, if it is feasible to do so.
- Prepare an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) that is not part of the RTP if the SCS is unable to meet the regional GHG emission reduction target.
- Adopt a public participation process involving all required stakeholders.

Unique to the SCAG region, SB 375 provides that “a subregional council of governments and the county transportation commission may work together to propose the sustainable communities strategy and an ~~-~~alternative planning strategy, if one is prepared pursuant to subparagraph (I), for that subregional area.” Cal. Govt. Code § 65080(b)(2)(D).

In addition, SB 375 provides that SCAG “may adopt a framework for a subregional sustainable communities strategy or a subregional alternative planning strategy to address the intraregional land use, transportation, economic, air quality, and climate policy relationships.” *Id.*

Finally, SB 375 requires SCAG to “develop overall guidelines, create public participation plan pursuant to subparagraph (F), ensure coordination, resolve conflicts, make sure that the overall plan complies with applicable legal requirements, and adopt the plan for the region.” *Id.*

The intent of this ~~Subregional Sustainable Communities~~SCS Strategy Framework and Guidelines (also referred to herein as the “Framework and Guidelines” or the “Subregional Framework and Guidelines”) is to facilitate a subregion’s option to develop the SCS (and potential APS) as described in SB 375. The Framework and Guidelines offers SCAG’s subregional agencies the highest degree of autonomy, flexibility, and responsibility in developing a program and set of implementation strategies for their subregional areas while still achieving the goals of the regional SCS.

Subregional strategies should address the issues, concerns, and future vision of the region’s collective jurisdictions with the input of the widest range of stakeholders. This Framework and Guidelines establishes guidance to assist in the development of subregional strategies and sets forth SCAG’s role in facilitating and supporting the subregional effort with data, tools, and other assistance. Note that the Framework and Guidelines herein may be administratively amended, at any time, subject to changes in applicable federal and/or state planning laws, regulations, and guidance.

II. ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

The option to develop a subregional SCS (and APS, as appropriate) is available to any subregional council of governments.

CTCs play an important and necessary role in the development of a subregional SCS. Any subregion that chooses to develop a subregional strategy will need to work closely with the respective CTC in its subregional area ~~in order to~~ identify and integrate transportation projects and policies. Beyond working with CTCs, SCAG encourages partnership efforts in the development of subregional strategies, including partnerships between and among subregions.

For the 2028 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2028 RTP/SCS) cycle, subregional agencies should indicate to SCAG, in writing by Friday, January 30, 2026~~Friday, October 29, 2021~~, if they intend to exercise their option to develop their own subregional SCS (see other major milestones for the 2028 RTP/SCS attached here as Appendix A.)

Subregions that choose to develop an SCS for their subregional area shall do so in a manner consistent with the most current version of this Framework and Guidelines. The subregion's decision to prepare the subregional SCS for their area must be communicated through formal action of the subregional agency's governing board or the agency's designee. Subsequent to receipt of any subregion's decision to develop and adopt an SCS, SCAG and the subregion will develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The final executed version of the MOU shall be consistent with the Framework and Guidelines, and may be amended during the process, if necessary.

III. FRAMEWORK

The Framework portion of this document covers regional objectives and policy considerations and provides general direction to the subregions in preparing a sub-regional SCS (and APS, as appropriate).

A. SCAG's Goals

In complying with SB 375, SCAG's goals include:

- Update the 2028 RTP/SCS with an emphasis on documenting the region's progress in implementing the strategies and actions described in the 2020-2050 RTP/SCS, Connect SoCal 2024.
- ~~Demonstrate continued reasonable progress in implementing the 2020 RTP/SCS.~~
- Prepare an SCS that will achieve the targets set for cars and light trucks as determined by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).
- Fully integrate SCAG's planning processes for transportation, growth, land use, housing, and the environment.
- Seek areas of cooperation with the subregions, CTCs, and any local jurisdictions that go beyond the procedural statutory requirements, but that also result in regional plans and strategies that achieve co-benefits.
- Build trust by providing an interactive, participatory, and collaborative process for all stakeholders.
- Provide for the robust participation of local jurisdictions, subregions, and CTCs in the development of the SCAG regional SCS and facilitate the development of any subregional SCSs and/or APSs.
- Ensure that the SCS adopted by SCAG and submitted to CARB reflects the region's collective growth strategy and the shared vision for the future.
- Develop strategies that incorporate and are respectful of local and subregional priorities, plans, and projects.
- Incorporate the goals and policies reflected in regional resolutions adopted by the SCAG Regional Council including but not limited to:

- Resolution 20-623-2¹ declaring racism a public health crisis;
- Resolution 21-628-1 on Climate Change Action²; and
- Resolution 21-629-2³ to bridge the digital divide in underserved communities;
- Resolution 22-647-3⁴ to address the drought and water shortage emergency;
- Resolution 23-653-1⁵ to ensure a safe, resilient, and efficient supply chain and goods movement system; and
- Resolution 23-653-2⁶ establishing a Regional Complete Streets Policy.

B. Flexibility, Targets and Adoption

Subregions may develop an appropriate strategy to address the region's GHG goals, the intent of SB 375, and the GHG targets for the SCAG region as established by CARB. Subregions may employ any combination of land use policy change, transportation policy, and transportation investment, within the specific parameters described in the Framework and Guidelines.

SCAG will not issue subregional GHG or any other subregional performance targets.

C. Outreach Effort and Principles

In preparing a subregional SCS, subregions are required to conduct an open and participatory process that allows for public and stakeholder input. A more detailed discussion on outreach effort and principles can be found in Section IV.A(3).

D. Communication and Coordination

Subregions developing their own SCS are strongly encouraged to maintain regular communication with SCAG staff, the respective CTC, their jurisdictions and other stakeholders, and other subregions if necessary, to review issues as they arise and to assure close coordination. Mechanisms for ongoing communication should be established in the early phases of strategy development.

E. Planning Concepts

SCAG, its subregions, and member cities have established a successful track record on a range of land use and transportation planning approaches up through and including planning approaches that are reflected in Connect SoCal 2024, the 2024 -20502020-2045-RTP/SCS. The subregional SCS should consider the 2024 -20502020-2045-RTP/SCS and build off from its policies and concepts, including emphasis on the Vision, Goals, and Regional Planning Policies~~Core Vision and Key Connections~~. Statutory requirements are further discussed in Section IV.A(1).

IV. GUIDELINES

These Framework and Guidelines describe specific parameters for the subregional SCS ~~/(and APS, as appropriate)~~ APS-effort under SB 375, including process, deliverables, data, documentation, and timelines. As

¹ https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/rcresolution206232_0.pdf?1605039926

² <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/rc010721resolution21-628-1.pdf?1610072923>

³ <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/rc020421fullpacket.pdf?1612231563>

⁴ <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/scag-resolution-22-647-3-water-final.pdf>

⁵ <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/rc030223fullpacket.pdf>

⁶ Ibid.

described above, the Framework and Guidelines are created to ensure that the SCAG region can successfully incorporate strategies developed by the subregions into the regional SCS, and that the region can comply with its own SB 375 requirements. Failure to proceed in a manner consistent with the Framework and Guidelines could result in SCAG not accepting a subregion's submitted strategy.

A. Subregion Role and Responsibilities

(1) Subregional ~~Sustainable Communities Strategy~~SCS

Subregions may choose to exercise their option under SB 375 to develop and adopt a subregional ~~Sustainable SCS~~~~Communities Strategy~~. That subregional strategy must contain all required elements, and follow all procedures, as described in SB 375 and outlined below:

- (i) identify the general location of uses, residential densities, and building intensities within the subregion;
 - (ii) identify areas within the subregion sufficient to house all the population of the sub- region, including all economic segments of the population, over the course of the planning period of the RTP taking into account net migration into the region, population growth, household formation and employment growth;
 - (iii) identify areas within the subregion sufficient to house an eight-year projection of the regional housing need for the subregion pursuant to Section 65584⁴;
 - (iv) identify a transportation network to service the transportation needs of the subregion;
 - (v) gather and consider the best practically available scientific information regarding resource areas and farmland in the subregion as defined in subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 65080.01;
 - (vi) consider the state housing goals specified in Sections 65580 and 65581;
 - (vii) set forth a forecasted development pattern for the subregion, which, when integrated with the transportation network, and other transportation measures and policies, will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks to achieve, if there is a feasible way to do so, the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets approved by the CARB; and
 - (viii) allow the RTP to comply with Section 176 of the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 7506).
- ~~{Government Cal. Gov. Code § 65080(b)(2)(B).}~~

SCAG strongly encourages that the subregion participates and partners in SCAG's growth forecasting process to ensure that any recommendations or insights are included in the development process. In preparing the subregional SCS, the subregion and respective CTC should consider feasible strategies, including local land use policies, transportation infrastructure investment (e.g., transportation projects), and other transportation policies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) (which includes pricing), and Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies. Subregions need not constrain land use strategies considered for the SCS to current General Plans. In other words, the adopted strategy need not be fully consistent with currently adopted local General Plans, but it should be noted that a sustainable communities strategy SCS does not supersede the exercise of the land use authority of cities and counties within the region. ~~{Government Cal. Gov. Code § 65080(b)(2)(K).}~~ If the land use assumptions included in the final subregional SCS depart from General Plans, it is recommended that subregions include a finding as part of their adoption action (e.g., adopting resolution) that concludes that the land uses are feasible and may be implemented. Technological measures and strategies, such as electric vehicle charging, may be included if they can be demonstrated to exceed measures captured in other state and federal requirements (e.g., AB 32 Scoping Plan).

⁴ Note that the 6th cycle of the regional housing needs assessment (RHNA) (wherein SCAG allocated the regional housing need as determined by the Department of Housing and Community Development) aligned with the 2020 RTP/SCS and that the next RHNA cycle (7th cycle) will align with the 2028 RTP/SCS.

Subregions will need to provide additional information to facilitate the CARB Strategy-Based SCS Evaluation Process as documented in the CARB 2019 Final Sustainable Communities Strategy Program and Evaluation Guidelines:⁵ or any newer guidance that may be released by CARB during the SCS development process. The strategy-based SCS Evaluation Process consists of the following four components: Tracking Implementation (SB 150), Policy Commitments, Incremental Progress, and Equity. These four components evaluate RTP/SCS strategies that are classified into four broad categories:

1. Land use and housing;
2. Transportation;
3. Local/regional pricing; and
4. New mobility

The information and data necessary for this evaluation includes land use and transportation system characteristics as well as performance indicators for 2005, the RTP/SCS base year, 2020, 2035 and the RTP/SCS horizon year.⁶

Land Use Characteristics include:

- Residential densities (total regional and by place type or sub-regional geography as defined by the MPO)
- Employment densities (total regional and by place type or sub-regional geography as defined by the MPO)
- Total regional housing product type/mix (single-family/multi-family)
- Total regional developed acres
- Total housing units and employment within ½ mile of a High-Quality Transit Station

Transportation System Characteristics include:

- Lane miles of roadway by functional classification
- Transit headways
- Transit operation miles
- Transit service hours
- Class I, II, and IV bike lane miles
- Average toll rate/congestion pricing per unit

Performance Indicators include:

- Household vehicle ownership
- Mode split
- Average travel time by mode
- Transit ridership
- Average vehicle trip length
- Seat utilization or Load factor
- Household VMT (external-external [XX] trips excluded)
- Per capita VMT (external-external [XX] trips excluded)

(2) Subregional Alternative Planning StrategyAPS

⁵ <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/Final%20SCS%20Program%20and%20Evaluation%20Guidelines%20Report.pdf>

⁶ See pg. 31-34 of CARB Final Sustainable Communities Strategy Program and Evaluation Guidelines (above link) for further details

SB 375 provides regions and subregions the option to ~~further~~ develop an APS, according to the procedures and requirements described in SB 375, if the combined regional SCS does not meet GHG emission reduction targets established by CARB. If the regional SCS does not meet the targets, subregions will be involved in the formation of an APS, ~~—~~either through their development of a subregional APS or through their participation and contribution in SCAG's regional APS. SCAG will not require subregions to complete a subregional APS; delegated subregions opting to complete their own subregional APS must first complete a subregional SCS. Written records reflecting the feedback between local jurisdictions and delegated subregions on the development of a regional or subregional APS must also be submitted to SCAG.

Subregions are encouraged to focus their efforts on feasible measures that can be included in an SCS. Any timing or submission requirements for a subregional APS will be determined based on further discussions. If a subregion opts to prepare an APS, the content of a subregional APS should be consistent with state requirements (See ~~Government-Cal. Gov.~~ Code § 65080(b)(2)(I)), as follows:

- (i) Shall identify the principal impediments to achieving the subregional sustainable communities strategy.
- (ii) May include an alternative development pattern for the subregion pursuant to subparagraphs (B) to (G), inclusive.
- (iii) Shall describe how the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets would be achieved by the alternative planning strategy, and why the development pattern, measures, and policies in the alternative planning strategy are the most practicable choices for achievement of the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.
- (iv) An alternative development pattern set forth in the alternative planning strategy shall comply with Part 450 of Title 23 of, and Part 93 of Title 40 of, the Code of Federal Regulations, except to the extent that compliance will prevent achievement of the regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets approved by the CARB.
- (v) For purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code), an alternative planning strategy shall not constitute a land use plan, policy, or regulation, and the inconsistency of a project with an alternative planning strategy shall not be a consideration in determining whether a project may have an environmental effect.

(3) Subregional SCS Outreach

SCAG shall fulfill ~~all of all~~ the statutory outreach requirements under SB 375 for the regional SCS ~~/(and APS, as appropriate)/APS~~, which will include outreach regarding any subregional SCS ~~/(and APS, as appropriate)/APS~~. SCAG's

Public Participation Plan will incorporate the outreach requirements of SB 375, integrated with the outreach process for the 2028 RTP/SCS development. See Section IV.C(2) below for more information on SCAG's public participation plan.

In preparing a subregional SCS, subregions are strongly encouraged to design and adopt their own outreach processes that mirror the requirements imposed on the region under SB 375. Subregional outreach processes should reinforce the regional goal of full and open participation, and engagement of the broadest possible range of stakeholders.

Subregions that elect to prepare their own SCS are encouraged to present their subregional SCS (and potential APS), in coordination with SCAG, at all meetings, workshops and hearings held by SCAG in their respective counties. Additionally, the subregions are encouraged to either provide SCAG with their mailing lists so that public notices and outreach materials may also be posted and sent out by SCAG; or coordinate with SCAG to

distribute notices and outreach materials to the subregions' stakeholders. Additional outreach may be performed by subregions.

(4) Subregional SCS Approval

The governing board of the subregional agency and the respective CTC board (at their option) shall approve the subregional SCS prior to submission to SCAG. SCAG recommends that the governing board of the subregion adopt a resolution approving the subregional SCS with a finding that the land use strategies included in the subregional SCS are feasible and based upon consultation with the local jurisdictions in the respective subregion. Subregions should consult with their legal counsel as to compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In SCAG's view, the subregional SCS (and potential APS) is not a "project" for the purposes of CEQA because the RTP, which will include the regional SCS is the actual "project" that will be reviewed by SCAG under state law for environmental impacts pursuant to CEQA. As such, the regional SCS, which will include the subregional SCSs and is part of the RTP, will undergo a thorough CEQA review.

In accordance with SB 375, subregions are strongly encouraged to work in partnership with the CTC in their area. SCAG can facilitate these arrangements if needed.

(5) Incorporation of the Subregional SCS into the Regional SCS

The regional RTP/SCS, of which the SCS is a component, is required to be internally consistent. Therefore, for transportation investments included in a subregional SCS to be valid, they must also be included in the corresponding RTP/SCS. As such, subregions will need to collaborate with the respective CTC in their area to coordinate the subregional SCS with future transportation investments.

SCAG shall include the subregional SCS ~~for the subregion~~ in the regional SCS to the extent consistent with SB 375 and federal law and approve the sustainable subregional alternative planning strategy, if one is prepared for that subregional area to the extent it is consistent with SB 375.

More information on SCAG's subregional SCS incorporation process is included below in Section IV.C(4)

(6) Data Standards

Subregions will be required to submit subregional SCSs in GIS-based format, with data elements identified in Section IV.A(1) broken down to small area level (in a fashion specified by SCAG for each element, to be established through consultation with the subregion during the MOU process). This will enable SCAG to better integrate subregional submissions with the regional SCS and will allow subregions to prepare alternative scenarios if they so choose. SCAG will provide tools, and necessary training, free of charge for subregions and jurisdictions. Tools and training related to SCAG's Regional Data Platform (RDP) are available ~~and additional functionality will be released through early 2022~~. See Section IV.C(10) below for more information.

SCAG will distribute draft data to subregions and local jurisdictions via the region-wide local agency data validation process for the 2028 RTP/SCS. More information regarding the data development process is discussed below in Section IV.C(9).

(7) Documentation

Subregions are expected to maintain full and complete records related to the development of the subregional

SCS, and to ~~use~~refer to the most recent adopted local general plans and other locally approved planning documents. Subregions should also keep records of all electronic, in-person, and written feedback from local jurisdictions on the development of the socioeconomic estimates and projections for the SCS and the base land use data⁷ required for consideration in the development of the subregional SCS (and APS as appropriate).

(8) Implementation Monitoring

Delegated subregions for the 2028 RTP/SCS will be required to provide progress reporting on the implementation of policies included in their subregional SCS. SCAG will, likewise, monitor implementation of the regional SCS. This information will assist SCAG in preparing future plan updates and is consistent with SCAG's intended approach for developing the 2028 RTP/SCS, which will emphasize progress reporting, monitoring and updating. The intent is for SCAG to ensure that progress and success for our subregions and local jurisdictions are documented and recognized.

To monitor implementation, subregions should track subsequent actions on policies and strategies included in the subregional SCS. Monitoring should be focused on policy actions taken (e.g., General Plan updates) or subsequent planning work performed.

While subregions have substantial discretion within the overall goal of ascertaining progress of adopted plan policies and strategies, reporting should be done at least prior to the end of the four-year planning period. SCAG staff plans to conduct implementation monitoring for the region and will lead the effort for any necessary data-intensive exercise and technical analysis, with assistance from subregions and local jurisdictions.

Further guidance on implementation monitoring including required format and timing will be developed through further discussion and documented in MOUs with delegated subregions.

(9) Timing

An overview schedule of the major milestones of the 2028 RTP/SCS process is attached herein as Appendix A, which may be further delineated or adjusted in MOUs with delegated subregions.

B. County Transportation Commissions' Roles and Responsibilities

Subregions that develop a subregional SCS will need to work closely with the CTCs in their respective subregional area in order to coordinate and integrate transportation projects and policies as part of the subregional SCS, as it is the role of CTCs to make transportation planning decisions. As discussed above (under "Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategy"), any transportation projects identified in the subregional SCS must also be included in the associated RTP/SCS in order to be considered as a feasible strategy. SCAG can help to facilitate communication between subregions and CTCs.

C. SCAG Roles and Responsibilities

SCAG's roles in supporting the subregional SCS development process are as follows:

(1) Preparing and adopting the Framework and Guidelines

⁷ "Base land use data" consists of local general plan land use, zoning, existing land use, planned entitlements, recent demolitions, and other resource areas datasets required for consideration in the development of an SCS as described in section 65080 of SB 375

SCAG will update these Framework and Guidelines for adoption by the SCAG Regional Council each RTP/SCS cycle in order to assure regional consistency and the region's compliance with law.

(2) Public Participation Plan

SCAG will assist the subregions by developing, adopting and implementing a regional Public Participation Plan and outreach process with stakeholders. This process includes consultation with congestion management agencies, transportation agencies, and transportation commissions; as well as holding public workshops and hearings. SCAG will also conduct informational meetings in each county within the region for local elected officials (members of the board of supervisors and city councils), to present the draft SCS (and APS, as appropriate) and solicit and consider input and recommendations.

(3) Technical Methodology

As required by SB 375, prior to the start of the public participation process, SCAG will prepare and submit to CARB a description of the technical methodology it intends to use to estimate GHG emissions from the SCS. SCAG will work with CARB on this methodology until CARB concludes that the technical methodology operates accurately. Estimated GHG emissions will be analyzed at the regional level.

(4) Incorporation, Modification, and Conflict Resolution

SCAG will accept and incorporate the subregional SCS, unless (a) it does not comply with SB 375 (~~Government~~ Cal. Gov. Code Section 65080 *et seq.*), (b) it does not comply with federal law, or (c) it does not comply with SCAG's Subregional Framework and Guidelines.

For incorporation in the regional RTP/SCS, SCAG may adjust subregional growth totals, jurisdictional totals, and ~~land use data at the~~ sub-jurisdictional ~~growth level~~ for a number of reasons including compliance with statutory requirements, adherence with SCAG's expertly-informed growth projections and growth forecast process, compliance with Section 176 of the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 7506), and assurance that SCAG's regional SCS meets the regional GHG targets. Specifically, the thresholds for SCAG to adjust subregional SCS data are as follows:

- Jurisdictional growth totals: for purposes of adhering to regional and county level growth projections
- Jurisdictional (within County) or Sub-jurisdictional land use data (within jurisdiction): for purposes of complying with the federal Clean Air Act or meeting SCAG's regional GHG targets.

The intent of this provision is to allow SCAG to maintain flexibility in preparing the regional SCS to meet federal and/or state requirements. ~~In the event that~~ If SCAG indicates the need to alter the location and distribution of population, household, and employment growth for delegated subregions, SCAG staff will work directly with delegated subregions to review any proposed revisions through a collaborative and iterative process. First, SCAG staff will meet with the subregional staff to outline the incorporation issues (jurisdictional, sub-jurisdictional, or both). The subregion will identify and propose solutions to the issue. Feedback will be sought to gauge the availability of growth capacity at the local level, and adjustments will be made to the highest extent possible based on input received, with consideration of the goal to fulfill SCAG's statutory requirements and GHG emission reduction targets. Delegated subregions will need to seek input from local jurisdictions on any potential revision to sub-jurisdictional growth estimates and projections and will need to keep records of all feedback on these figures or the base land use data for the 202~~8~~⁴ RTP/SCS. Delegated subregions, however, will not be required to revise their SCS to reflect any such revisions.

The development of a subregional SCS does not exempt the subregion from other regional GHG emission reduction strategies not directly related to land use included in the regional SCS. All regional measures needed

to meet the regional target will be subject to adoption by the SCAG Regional Council.

The draft regional SCS, including incorporated subregional SCSs, is subject to a public review process, potential revisions, and final adoption by the SCAG Regional Council.

SCAG will develop an MOU with each subregion to define a process and timeline whereby subregions would submit a draft subregional SCS to SCAG for review and comments, so that any inconsistencies may be identified and resolved early in the process. SCAG will also establish a conflict resolution process as part of the MOU between SCAG and the subregion to address the potential modification or adjustments that may occur during the incorporation process. This process will be the same for all delegated subregions.

(5) Modeling

SCAG currently uses an Activity Based Model (ABM) and CARB's Emission Factor (EMFAC) model for emissions purposes. SCAG will compile and disseminate performance information on the preliminary regional SCS and its components in order to facilitate regional dialogue.

(6) Regional Performance Measures.

Below is a general description of the process for developing and finalizing formal Performance Measures.

SCAG is in the process of compiling two complete lists of performance measures and monitoring: one will be used for evaluating regional-level scenarios in support of development of the 2028⁴ RTP/SCS. The other will be used for monitoring implementation of the 2024⁰ RTP/SCS. The monitoring of implementation may include, for example, tracking local general plan updates, specific plan adoption in Transit Priority Areas, active transportation plan adoption, and housing element compliance. Building on the foundation of the performance measures developed in support of the 2024⁰ RTP/SCS, the 2028⁴ RTP/SCS performance measures will also include the set of federally designated MAP-21 performance measures, as well as any other updates adopted by the SCAG Regional Council. Most update related activities for the 2028⁴ RTP/SCS performance measures will be expected to occur between January 2026² and May 2027³. These updates will be addressed through discussions with SCAG regional stakeholders, and the SCAG Policy Committees.

(7) Adoption/Submission to State

After the incorporation of subregional strategies, the Regional Council will finalize and adopt the 2028⁴ RTP/SCS. SCAG will submit the regional SCS, including all subregional SCSs, to CARB for review as required in SB 375. The subregion will provide relevant documentation to support SCAG in complying with the CARB Evaluation Guidelines, referenced above in section IV.A(1).

(8) Funding

Funding for subregional SCS/APS activities is not currently available. Any specific parameters for future funding are speculative. While there is no potential future funding at this time, it is advisable for subregions to track and record their expenses and activities associated with these efforts.

(9) Data

SCAG will distribute data to subregions and local jurisdictions for review and input for the 2028⁴ RTP/SCS. This involves a bottom-up approach for developing the base land use data, growth forecast, scenarios, and integrates SCAG's other efforts (e.g., plan implementation, performance monitoring) to improve local jurisdictions' competitiveness for funding that helps implement the RTP/SCS.

SCAG will work with delegated subregions during the MOU process, and before prior to the local review and input process, to outline responsibilities for generating and refining the datasets required for consideration under SB 375. It is anticipated that the delegated subregion will take a leadership role in both outreach to local jurisdictions and data development, with SCAG offering support as needed.

(10) Tools

SCAG ~~is in the process of building~~ a comprehensive ~~Regional Data Platform (RDP)~~ to standardize regionally significant datasets, provide opportunities for local partners to update their data in real-time, and draw insights from local trends. The platform ~~will also feature~~ a data-driven collaboration hub, called the Local Data Exchange (LDX), for local jurisdictions to engage with stakeholders for individual projects, such as local and regional land use planning, active transportation planning, greenhouse gas reduction strategies, and development impact assessments. The RDP Planner's Corner houses specific resources to assist local jurisdictions with general plan updates, such as the Local General Plan Update Site template hosted on ArcGIS Hub, and a collection of training resources. The RDP also contains information about how to access StreetLight Insight, a big data transportation planning platform. SCAG is providing complimentary licenses through June 2026 and training resources to local jurisdictions and other regional partners as part of the StreetLight Insight Big Data Program. The RDP ~~and LDX are~~ intended as ~~a resource~~ for general plan updates, technical tools and resources, as well as two-way data sharing between jurisdictions and SCAG.

~~Beginning in Fall 2020, In developing the RDP, SCAG began engaged~~ with ten pilot jurisdictions to fine tune workflows, products, and data requirements ~~and made ESRI licenses available to all local jurisdictions. Since then, SCAG has developed several The first major RDP tools including, the Housing Element Parcel Tool (HELPR), the Parcel Locator, and the SoCal Atlas. was released in fall 2020 HELPR was recently updated to version 3.0 to better align with the adoption of Connect SoCal 2024 and includes updated and curated parcel-level land use data and other datasets. SCAG continues to update the RDP Apps & Maps page and Content Library with updated data and tools. More tools will continue to be rolled out through 2021 and into 2022.~~ SCAG's Local Information Services Team (LIST) ~~provides~~ aims to 1-on-1 training to local jurisdictions in the use of RDP tools, and provide data guidance, respond to data requests, and provide technical assistance.

The use of SCAG tools is not mandatory and is advisory only. Use of the tools is at the discretion of subregions and local jurisdictions. SCAG will consider providing guidance and training on additional tools based on further discussions with subregional partners.

(11) Resources and technical assistance

SCAG will assist the subregions by making available technical tools as described above. SCAG staff can participate in subregional workshops, meetings, and other processes at the request of the subregion, and pending funding and availability. Further, SCAG will prepare materials for its own process in developing the regional SCS, and will make these materials available to subregions.

D. Milestones/Schedule

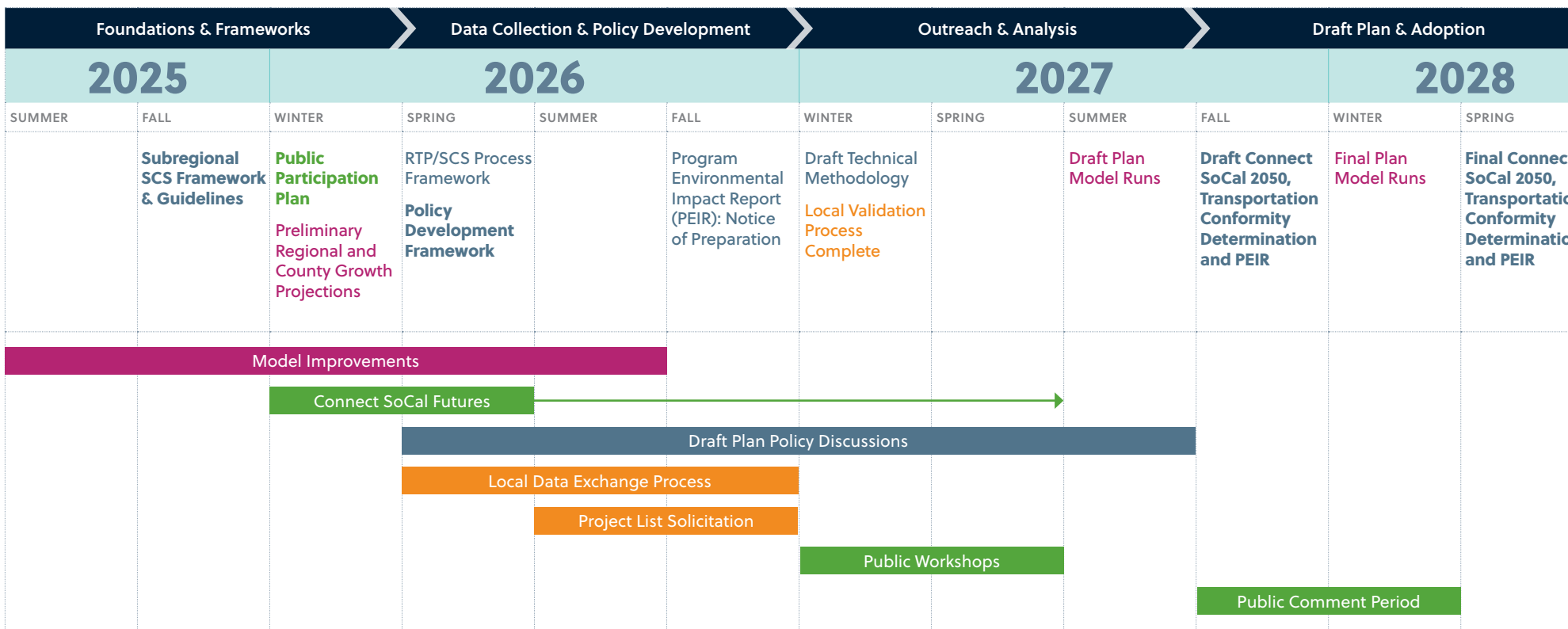
- Deadline for subregions to communicate intent to prepare a subregional SCS – January 30, 2026~~October 29, 2021~~
- SCAG and Subregional Council of Governments establish Memorandum of Understanding – Early 2026~~2~~
- Subregional SCS development – Early 2026~~2~~ through Fall 2026~~2~~
- Draft dataset delivery to SCAG – Summer 2026~~2~~

- Final dataset delivery to SCAG – Fall 202~~6~~2
- Draft subregional SCS to be incorporated into regional SCS – Winter 202~~7~~3
- Release Draft 202~~8~~4 RTP/SCS for public review – Fall 202~~7~~3
- Regional Council adopts 202~~8~~4 RTP/SCS – Spring 202~~8~~4

For more context on the process schedule and milestones, refer to the attached Appendix A. Further detailed milestones will be incorporated into the MOU between SCAG and the subregion.



Connect SoCal 2050 Preliminary Milestones*



Milestones Color Key:

Plan Foundation and Elements
 Local Agency Input Process
 Modeling/Forecast
 Outreach and Engagement

Bold = Action Item

* Draft - Subject to Change

Attachment: 2025-08_2028_Subregional_SCS Framework_track_changes (Connect SoCal 2050:)

**SUBREGIONAL SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY
FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Codified in 2009, California’s Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (referred to as “SB 375”), calls for the integration of transportation, land use, and housing planning, and establishes the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as part of the regional planning process. SCAG, working with the individual county transportation commissions (CTCs) and the subregions within the SCAG region, is responsible for complying with SB 375 in the Southern California region. Success in this endeavor is dependent on the collaboration of SCAG with a range of public and private partners throughout the region.

Briefly summarized here, SB 375 requires SCAG as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to:

- Submit to the State every four years, a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The SCS, when integrated with the transportation network, and other transportation measures and policies, will reduce GHG emissions from automobiles and light trucks to achieve the State-determined regional GHG emission reduction target, if it is feasible to do so.
- Prepare an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) that is not part of the RTP if the SCS is unable to meet the regional GHG emission reduction target.
- Adopt a public participation process involving all required stakeholders.

Unique to the SCAG region, SB 375 provides that “a subregional council of governments and the county transportation commission may work together to propose the sustainable communities strategy and an alternative planning strategy, if one is prepared pursuant to subparagraph (I), for that subregional area.” Cal. Gov. Code § 65080(b)(2)(D).

In addition, SB 375 provides that SCAG “may adopt a framework for a subregional sustainable communities strategy or a subregional alternative planning strategy to address the intraregional land use, transportation, economic, air quality, and climate policy relationships.” *Id.*

Finally, SB 375 requires SCAG to “develop overall guidelines, create public participation plan pursuant to subparagraph (F), ensure coordination, resolve conflicts, make sure that the overall plan complies with applicable legal requirements, and adopt the plan for the region.” *Id.*

The intent of this SCS Strategy Framework and Guidelines (also referred to herein as the “Framework and Guidelines” or the “Subregional Framework and Guidelines”) is to facilitate a subregion’s option to develop the SCS (and potential APS) as described in SB 375. The Framework and Guidelines offers SCAG’s subregional agencies the highest degree of autonomy, flexibility, and responsibility in developing a program and set of implementation strategies for their subregional areas while still achieving the goals of the regional SCS.

Subregional strategies should address the issues, concerns, and future vision of the region’s collective jurisdictions with the input of the widest range of stakeholders. This Framework and Guidelines establishes guidance to assist in the development of subregional strategies and sets forth SCAG’s role in facilitating and supporting the subregional effort with data, tools, and other assistance. Note that the Framework and Guidelines herein may be administratively amended, at any time, subject to changes in applicable federal and/or state planning laws, regulations, and guidance.

II. ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

The option to develop a subregional SCS (and APS, as appropriate) is available to any subregional council of governments.

CTCs play an important and necessary role in the development of a subregional SCS. Any subregion that chooses to develop a subregional strategy will need to work closely with the respective CTC in its subregional area to identify and integrate transportation projects and policies. Beyond working with CTCs, SCAG encourages partnership efforts in the development of subregional strategies, including partnerships between and among subregions.

For the 2028 RTP/SCS cycle, subregional agencies should indicate to SCAG, in writing by Friday, January 30, 2026, if they intend to exercise their option to develop their own subregional SCS (see other major milestones for the 2028 RTP/SCS attached here as Appendix A.)

Subregions that choose to develop an SCS for their subregional area shall do so in a manner consistent with the most current version of this Framework and Guidelines. The subregion's decision to prepare the subregional SCS for their area must be communicated through formal action of the subregional agency's governing board or the agency's designee. Subsequent to receipt of any subregion's decision to develop and adopt an SCS, SCAG and the subregion will develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The final executed version of the MOU shall be consistent with the Framework and Guidelines, and may be amended during the process, if necessary.

III. FRAMEWORK

The Framework portion of this document covers regional objectives and policy considerations and provides general direction to the subregions in preparing a subregional SCS (and APS, as appropriate).

A. SCAG's Goals

In complying with SB 375, SCAG's goals include:

- Update the 2028 RTP/SCS with an emphasis on documenting the region's progress in implementing the strategies and actions described in the 2024 RTP/SCS, Connect SoCal 2024.
- Prepare an SCS that will achieve the targets set for cars and light trucks as determined by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).
- Fully integrate SCAG's planning processes for transportation, growth, land use, housing, and the environment.
- Seek areas of cooperation with the subregions, CTCs, and any local jurisdictions that go beyond the procedural statutory requirements, but that also result in regional plans and strategies that achieve co-benefits.
- Build trust by providing an interactive, participatory, and collaborative process for all stakeholders.
- Provide for the robust participation of local jurisdictions, subregions, and CTCs in the development of the SCAG regional SCS and facilitate the development of any subregional SCSs and/or APSs.
- Ensure that the SCS adopted by SCAG and submitted to CARB reflects the region's collective growth strategy and the shared vision for the future.
- Develop strategies that incorporate and are respectful of local and subregional priorities, plans, and projects.
- Incorporate the goals and policies reflected in regional resolutions adopted by the SCAG Regional Council including but not limited to:
 - Resolution 20-623-2¹ declaring racism a public health crisis;
 - Resolution 21-628-1 on Climate Change Action²;

¹ https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/rcresolution206232_0.pdf?1605039926

² <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/rc010721resolution21-628-1.pdf?1610072923>

- Resolution 21-629-2³ to bridge the digital divide in underserved communities;
- Resolution 22-647-3⁴ to address the drought and water shortage emergency;
- Resolution 23-653-1⁵ to ensure a safe, resilient, and efficient supply chain and goods movement system; and
- Resolution 23-653-2⁶ establishing a Regional Complete Streets Policy.

B. Flexibility, Targets and Adoption

Subregions may develop an appropriate strategy to address the region's GHG goals, the intent of SB 375, and the GHG targets for the SCAG region as established by CARB. Subregions may employ any combination of land use policy change, transportation policy, and transportation investment, within the specific parameters described in the Framework and Guidelines.

SCAG will not issue subregional GHG or any other subregional performance targets.

C. Outreach Effort and Principles

In preparing a subregional SCS, subregions are required to conduct an open and participatory process that allows for public and stakeholder input. A more detailed discussion on outreach effort and principles can be found in Section IV.A(3).

D. Communication and Coordination

Subregions developing their own SCS are strongly encouraged to maintain regular communication with SCAG staff, the respective CTC, their jurisdictions and other stakeholders, and other subregions if necessary, to review issues as they arise and to assure close coordination. Mechanisms for ongoing communication should be established in the early phases of strategy development.

E. Planning Concepts

SCAG, its subregions, and member cities have established a successful track record on a range of land use and transportation planning approaches up through and including planning approaches that are reflected in Connect SoCal 2024, the 2024 RTP/SCS. The subregional SCS should consider the 2024 RTP/SCS and build off from its policies and concepts, including emphasis on the Vision, Goals, and Regional Planning Policies. Statutory requirements are further discussed in Section IV.A(1).

IV. GUIDELINES

These Framework and Guidelines describe specific parameters for the subregional SCS (and APS, as appropriate) effort under SB 375, including process, deliverables, data, documentation, and timelines. As described above, the Framework and Guidelines are created to ensure that the SCAG region can successfully incorporate strategies developed by the subregions into the regional SCS, and that the region can comply with its own SB 375 requirements. Failure to proceed in a manner consistent with the Framework and Guidelines could result in SCAG not accepting a subregion's submitted strategy.

³ <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/rc020421fullpacket.pdf?1612231563>

⁴ <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/scag-resolution-22-647-3-water-final.pdf>

⁵ <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/rc030223fullpacket.pdf>

⁶ Ibid.

A. Subregion Role and Responsibilities

(1) Subregional SCS

Subregions may choose to exercise their option under SB 375 to develop and adopt a subregional SCS. That subregional strategy must contain all required elements, and follow all procedures, as described in SB 375 and outlined below:

- (i) identify the general location of uses, residential densities, and building intensities within the subregion;
- (ii) identify areas within the subregion sufficient to house all the population of the sub-region, including all economic segments of the population, over the course of the planning period of the RTP taking into account net migration into the region, population growth, household formation and employment growth;
- (iii) identify areas within the subregion sufficient to house an eight-year projection of the regional housing need for the subregion pursuant to Section 65584⁴;
- (iv) identify a transportation network to service the transportation needs of the subregion;
- (v) gather and consider the best practically available scientific information regarding resource areas and farmland in the subregion as defined in subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 65080.01;
- (vi) consider the state housing goals specified in Sections 65580 and 65581;
- (vii) set forth a forecasted development pattern for the subregion, which, when integrated with the transportation network, and other transportation measures and policies, will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks to achieve, if there is a feasible way to do so, the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets approved by the CARB; and
- (viii) allow the RTP to comply with Section 176 of the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 7506). (Cal. Gov. Code § 65080(b)(2)(B).)

SCAG strongly encourages that the subregion participates and partners in SCAG's growth forecasting process to ensure that any recommendations or insights are included in the development process. In preparing the subregional SCS, the subregion and respective CTC should consider feasible strategies, including local land use policies, transportation infrastructure investment (e.g., transportation projects), and other transportation policies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) (which includes pricing), and Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies. Subregions need not constrain land use strategies considered for the SCS to current General Plans. In other words, the adopted strategy need not be fully consistent with currently adopted local General Plans, but it should be noted that a SCS does not supersede the exercise of the land use authority of cities and counties within the region. (Cal. Gov. Code §65080(b)(2)(K).) If the land use assumptions included in the final subregional SCS depart from General Plans, it is recommended that subregions include a finding as part of their adoption action (e.g., adopting resolution) that concludes that the land uses are feasible and may be implemented. Technological measures and strategies, such as electric vehicle charging, may be included if they can be demonstrated to exceed measures captured in other state and federal requirements (e.g., AB 32 Scoping Plan).

Subregions will need to provide additional information to facilitate the CARB Strategy-Based SCS Evaluation Process as documented in the CARB 2019 Final Sustainable Communities Strategy Program and Evaluation Guidelines⁵ or any newer guidance that may be released by CARB during the SCS development process. The strategy-based SCS Evaluation Process consists of the following four components: Tracking Implementation (SB 150), Policy Commitments, Incremental Progress, and Equity. These four components evaluate RTP/SCS strategies that are classified into four broad categories:

⁴ Note that the 6th cycle of the regional housing needs assessment (RHNA) (wherein SCAG allocated the regional housing need as determined by the Department of Housing and Community Development) aligned with the 2020 RTP/SCS and that the next RHNA cycle (7th cycle) will align with the 2028 RTP/SCS.

⁵ <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/Final%20SCS%20Program%20and%20Evaluation%20Guidelines%20Report.pdf>

1. Land use and housing;
2. Transportation;
3. Local/regional pricing; and
4. New mobility

The information and data necessary for this evaluation includes land use and transportation system characteristics as well as performance indicators for 2005, the RTP/SCS base year, 2020, 2035 and the RTP/SCS horizon year.⁶

Land Use Characteristics include:

- Residential densities (total regional and by place type or sub-regional geography as defined by the MPO)
- Employment densities (total regional and by place type or sub-regional geography as defined by the MPO)
- Total regional housing product type/mix (single-family/multi-family)
- Total regional developed acres
- Total housing units and employment within ½ mile of a High-Quality Transit Station

Transportation System Characteristics include:

- Lane miles of roadway by functional classification
- Transit headways
- Transit operation miles
- Transit service hours
- Class I, II, and IV bike lane miles
- Average toll rate/congestion pricing per unit

Performance Indicators include:

- Household vehicle ownership
- Mode split
- Average travel time by mode
- Transit ridership
- Average vehicle trip length
- Seat utilization or Load factor
- Household VMT (external-external [XX] trips excluded)
- Per capita VMT (external-external [XX] trips excluded)

(2) Subregional APS

SB 375 provides regions and subregions the option to develop an APS, according to the procedures and requirements described in SB 375, if the combined regional SCS does not meet GHG emission reduction targets established by CARB. If the regional SCS does not meet the targets, subregions will be involved in the formation of an APS, either through their development of a subregional APS or through their participation and contribution in SCAG's regional APS. SCAG will not require subregions to complete a subregional APS;

⁶ See pg. 31-34 of CARB Final Sustainable Communities Strategy Program and Evaluation Guidelines (above link) for further details

delegated subregions opting to complete their own subregional APS must first complete a subregional SCS. Written records reflecting the feedback between local jurisdictions and delegated subregions on the development of a regional or subregional APS must also be submitted to SCAG.

Subregions are encouraged to focus their efforts on feasible measures that can be included in an SCS. Any timing or submission requirements for a subregional APS will be determined based on further discussions. If a subregion opts to prepare an APS, the content of a subregional APS should be consistent with state requirements (See Cal. Gov. Code § 65080(b)(2)(I)), as follows:

- (i) Shall identify the principal impediments to achieving the subregional sustainable communities strategy.
- (ii) May include an alternative development pattern for the subregion pursuant to subparagraphs (B) to (G), inclusive.
- (iii) Shall describe how the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets would be achieved by the alternative planning strategy, and why the development pattern, measures, and policies in the alternative planning strategy are the most practicable choices for achievement of the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.
- (iv) An alternative development pattern set forth in the alternative planning strategy shall comply with Part 450 of Title 23 of, and Part 93 of Title 40 of, the Code of Federal Regulations, except to the extent that compliance will prevent achievement of the regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets approved by the CARB.
- (v) For purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code), an alternative planning strategy shall not constitute a land use plan, policy, or regulation, and the inconsistency of a project with an alternative planning strategy shall not be a consideration in determining whether a project may have an environmental effect.

(3) Subregional SCS Outreach

SCAG shall fulfill all the statutory outreach requirements under SB 375 for the regional SCS (and APS, as appropriate), which will include outreach regarding any subregional SCS (and APS, as appropriate). SCAG's Public Participation Plan will incorporate the outreach requirements of SB 375, integrated with the outreach process for the 2028 RTP/SCS development. See Section IV.C(2) below for more information on SCAG's public participation plan.

In preparing a subregional SCS, subregions are strongly encouraged to design and adopt their own outreach processes that mirror the requirements imposed on the region under SB 375. Subregional outreach processes should reinforce the regional goal of full and open participation, and engagement of the broadest possible range of stakeholders.

Subregions that elect to prepare their own SCS are encouraged to present their subregional SCS (and potential APS), in coordination with SCAG, at all meetings, workshops and hearings held by SCAG in their respective counties. Additionally, the subregions are encouraged to either provide SCAG with their mailing lists so that public notices and outreach materials may also be posted and sent out by SCAG; or coordinate with SCAG to distribute notices and outreach materials to the subregions' stakeholders. Additional outreach may be performed by subregions.

(4) Subregional SCS Approval

The governing board of the subregional agency and the respective CTC board (at their option) shall approve the subregional SCS prior to submission to SCAG. SCAG recommends that the governing board of the subregion adopt a resolution approving the subregional SCS with a finding that the land use strategies included in the subregional SCS are feasible and based upon consultation with the local jurisdictions in the respective

subregion. Subregions should consult with their legal counsel as to compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In SCAG's view, the subregional SCS (and potential APS) is not a "project" for the purposes of CEQA because the RTP, which will include the regional SCS is the actual "project" that will be reviewed by SCAG under state law for environmental impacts pursuant to CEQA. As such, the regional SCS, which will include the subregional SCSs and is part of the RTP, will undergo a thorough CEQA review.

In accordance with SB 375, subregions are strongly encouraged to work in partnership with the CTC in their area. SCAG can facilitate these arrangements if needed.

(5) Incorporation of the Subregional SCS into the Regional SCS

The regional RTP/SCS, of which the SCS is a component, is required to be internally consistent. Therefore, for transportation investments included in a subregional SCS to be valid, they must also be included in the corresponding RTP/SCS. As such, subregions will need to collaborate with the respective CTC in their area to coordinate the subregional SCS with future transportation investments.

SCAG shall include the subregional SCS in the regional SCS to the extent consistent with SB 375 and federal law and approve the sustainable subregional alternative planning strategy, if one is prepared for that subregional area to the extent it is consistent with SB 375.

More information on SCAG's subregional SCS incorporation process is included below in Section IV.C(4)

(6) Data Standards

Subregions will be required to submit subregional SCSs in GIS-based format, with data elements identified in Section IV.A(1) broken down to small area level (in a fashion specified by SCAG for each element, to be established through consultation with the subregion during the MOU process). This will enable SCAG to better integrate subregional submissions with the regional SCS and will allow subregions to prepare alternative scenarios if they so choose. SCAG will provide tools, and necessary training, free of charge for subregions and jurisdictions. Tools and training related to SCAG's Regional Data Platform (RDP) are available. See Section IV.C(10) below for more information.

SCAG will distribute draft data to subregions and local jurisdictions via the region-wide local agency data validation process for the 2028 RTP/SCS. More information regarding the data development process is discussed below in Section IV.C(9).

(7) Documentation

Subregions are expected to maintain full and complete records related to the development of the subregional SCS, and to refer to the most recent adopted local general plans and other locally approved planning documents. Subregions should also keep records of all electronic, in-person, and written feedback from local jurisdictions on the development of the socioeconomic estimates and projections for the SCS and the base land use data⁷ required for consideration in the development of the subregional SCS (and APS as appropriate).

(8) Implementation Monitoring

⁷ "Base land use data" consists of local general plan land use, zoning, existing land use, planned entitlements, recent demolitions, and other resource areas datasets required for consideration in the development of an SCS as described in section 65080 of SB 375

Delegated subregions for the 2028 RTP/SCS will be required to provide progress reporting on the implementation of policies included in their subregional SCS. SCAG will, likewise, monitor implementation of the regional SCS. This information will assist SCAG in preparing future plan updates and is consistent with SCAG's intended approach for developing the 2028 RTP/SCS, which will emphasize progress reporting, monitoring and updating. The intent is for SCAG to ensure that progress and success for our subregions and local jurisdictions are documented and recognized.

To monitor implementation, subregions should track subsequent actions on policies and strategies included in the subregional SCS. Monitoring should be focused on policy actions taken (e.g., General Plan updates) or subsequent planning work performed.

While subregions have substantial discretion within the overall goal of ascertaining progress of adopted plan policies and strategies, reporting should be done at least prior to the end of the four-year planning period. SCAG staff plans to conduct implementation monitoring for the region and will lead the effort for any necessary data-intensive exercise and technical analysis, with assistance from subregions and local jurisdictions.

Further guidance on implementation monitoring including required format and timing will be developed through further discussion and documented in MOUs with delegated subregions.

(9) Timing

An overview schedule of the major milestones of the 2028 RTP/SCS process is attached herein as Appendix A, which may be further delineated or adjusted in MOUs with delegated subregions.

B. County Transportation Commissions' Roles and Responsibilities

Subregions that develop a subregional SCS will need to work closely with the CTCs in their respective subregional area in order to coordinate and integrate transportation projects and policies as part of the subregional SCS, as it is the role of CTCs to make transportation planning decisions. As discussed above (under "Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategy"), any transportation projects identified in the subregional SCS must also be included in the associated RTP/SCS in order to be considered as a feasible strategy. SCAG can help to facilitate communication between subregions and CTCs.

C. SCAG Roles and Responsibilities

SCAG's roles in supporting the subregional SCS development process are as follows:

(1) Preparing and adopting the Framework and Guidelines

SCAG will update these Framework and Guidelines for adoption by the SCAG Regional Council each RTP/SCS cycle in order to assure regional consistency and the region's compliance with law.

(2) Public Participation Plan

SCAG will assist the subregions by developing, adopting and implementing a regional Public Participation Plan and outreach process with stakeholders. This process includes consultation with congestion management agencies, transportation agencies, and transportation commissions; as well as holding public workshops and hearings. SCAG will also conduct informational meetings in each county within the region for local elected officials (members of the board of supervisors and city councils), to present the draft SCS (and APS, as appropriate) and solicit and consider input and recommendations.

(3) Technical Methodology

As required by SB 375, prior to the start of the public participation process, SCAG will prepare and submit to CARB a description of the technical methodology it intends to use to estimate GHG emissions from the SCS. SCAG will work with CARB on this methodology until CARB concludes that the technical methodology operates accurately. Estimated GHG emissions will be analyzed at the regional level.

(4) Incorporation, Modification, and Conflict Resolution

SCAG will accept and incorporate the subregional SCS, unless (a) it does not comply with SB 375 (Cal. Gov. Code Section 65080 *et seq.*), (b) it does not comply with federal law, or (c) it does not comply with SCAG's Subregional Framework and Guidelines.

For incorporation in the regional RTP/SCS, SCAG may adjust subregional growth totals, jurisdictional totals, and sub-jurisdictional growth for a number of reasons including compliance with statutory requirements, adherence with SCAG's expertly-informed growth projections and growth forecast process, compliance with Section 176 of the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 7506), and assurance that SCAG's regional SCS meets the regional GHG targets. Specifically, the thresholds for SCAG to adjust subregional SCS data are as follows:

- Jurisdictional growth totals: for purposes of adhering to regional and county level growth projections
- Jurisdictional (within County) or Sub-jurisdictional land use data (within jurisdiction): for purposes of complying with the federal Clean Air Act or meeting SCAG's regional GHG targets.

The intent of this provision is to allow SCAG to maintain flexibility in preparing the regional SCS to meet federal and/or state requirements. If SCAG indicates the need to alter the location and distribution of population, household, and employment growth for delegated subregions, SCAG staff will work directly with delegated subregions to review any proposed revisions through a collaborative and iterative process. First, SCAG staff will meet with the subregional staff to outline the incorporation issues (jurisdictional, sub-jurisdictional, or both). The subregion will identify and propose solutions to the issue. Feedback will be sought to gauge the availability of growth capacity at the local level, and adjustments will be made to the highest extent possible based on input received, with consideration of the goal to fulfill SCAG's statutory requirements and GHG emission reduction targets. Delegated subregions will need to seek input from local jurisdictions on any potential revision to sub-jurisdictional growth estimates and projections and will need to keep records of all feedback on these figures or the base land use data for the 2028 RTP/SCS. Delegated subregions, however, will not be required to revise their SCS to reflect any such revisions.

The development of a subregional SCS does not exempt the subregion from other regional GHG emission reduction strategies not directly related to land use included in the regional SCS. All regional measures needed to meet the regional target will be subject to adoption by the SCAG Regional Council.

The draft regional SCS, including incorporated subregional SCSs, is subject to a public review process, potential revisions, and final adoption by the SCAG Regional Council.

SCAG will develop an MOU with each subregion to define a process and timeline whereby subregions would submit a draft subregional SCS to SCAG for review and comments, so that any inconsistencies may be identified and resolved early in the process. SCAG will also establish a conflict resolution process as part of the MOU between SCAG and the subregion to address the potential modification or adjustments that may occur during the incorporation process. This process will be the same for all delegated subregions.

(5) Modeling

SCAG currently uses an Activity Based Model (ABM) and CARB's Emission Factor (EMFAC) model for emissions purposes. SCAG will compile and disseminate performance information on the preliminary regional SCS and its components in order to facilitate regional dialogue.

(6) Regional Performance Measures.

Below is a general description of the process for developing and finalizing formal Performance Measures.

SCAG is in the process of compiling two complete lists of performance measures and monitoring: one will be used for evaluating regional-level scenarios in support of development of the 2028 RTP/SCS. The other will be used for monitoring implementation of the 2024 RTP/SCS. The monitoring of implementation may include, for example, tracking local general plan updates, specific plan adoption in Transit Priority Areas, active transportation plan adoption, and housing element compliance. Building on the foundation of the performance measures developed in support of the 2024 RTP/SCS, the 2028 RTP/SCS performance measures will also include the set of federally designated MAP-21 performance measures, as well as any other updates adopted by the SCAG Regional Council. Most update related activities for the 2028 RTP/SCS performance measures will be expected to occur between January 2026 and May 2027. These updates will be addressed through discussions with SCAG regional stakeholders and the SCAG Policy Committees.

(7) Adoption/Submission to State

After the incorporation of subregional strategies, the Regional Council will finalize and adopt the 2028 RTP/SCS. SCAG will submit the regional SCS, including all subregional SCSs, to CARB for review as required in SB 375. The subregion will provide relevant documentation to support SCAG in complying with the CARB Evaluation Guidelines, referenced above in section IV.A(1).

(8) Funding

Funding for subregional SCS/APS activities is not currently available. Any specific parameters for future funding are speculative. While there is no potential future funding at this time, it is advisable for subregions to track and record their expenses and activities associated with these efforts.

(9) Data

SCAG will distribute data to subregions and local jurisdictions for review and input for the 2028 RTP/SCS. This involves a bottom-up approach for developing the base land use data, growth forecast, scenarios, and integrates SCAG's other efforts (e.g., plan implementation, performance monitoring) to improve local jurisdictions' competitiveness for funding that helps implement the RTP/SCS.

SCAG will work with delegated subregions during the MOU process, and before prior to the local review and input process, to outline responsibilities for generating and refining the datasets required for consideration under SB 375. It is anticipated that the delegated subregion will take a leadership role in both outreach to local jurisdictions and data development, with SCAG offering support as needed.

(10) Tools

SCAG built a comprehensive RDP to standardize regionally significant datasets, provide opportunities for local partners to update their data in real-time, and draw insights from local trends. The platform also features a data-driven collaboration hub, called the Local Data Exchange (LDX), for local jurisdictions to engage with stakeholders for individual projects, such as local and regional land use planning, active transportation

planning, greenhouse gas reduction strategies, and development impact assessments. The RDP Planner's Corner houses specific resources to assist local jurisdictions with general plan updates, such as the Local General Plan Update Site template hosted on ArcGIS Hub, and a collection of training resources. The RDP also contains information about how to access StreetLight Insight, a big data transportation planning platform. SCAG is providing complimentary licenses through June 2026 and training resources to local jurisdictions and other regional partners as part of the StreetLight Insight Big Data Program. The RDP and LDX are intended as resources for general plan updates, technical tools and resources, as well as two-way data sharing between jurisdictions and SCAG.

In developing the RDP, SCAG engaged with ten pilot jurisdictions to fine tune workflows, products, and data requirements. Since then, SCAG has developed several RDP tools including the Housing Element Parcel Tool (HELPR), the Parcel Locator, and the SoCal Atlas. HELPR was recently updated to version 3.0 to better align with the adoption of Connect SoCal 2024 and includes updated and curated parcel-level land use data and other datasets. SCAG continues to update the RDP Apps & Maps page and Content Library with updated data and tools. SCAG's Local Information Services Team (LIST) provides 1-on-1 training to local jurisdictions in the use of RDP tools, provide data guidance, respond to data requests, and provide technical assistance.

The use of SCAG tools is not mandatory and is advisory only. Use of the tools is at the discretion of subregions and local jurisdictions. SCAG will consider providing guidance and training on additional tools based on further discussions with subregional partners.

(11) Resources and technical assistance

SCAG will assist the subregions by making available technical tools as described above. SCAG staff can participate in subregional workshops, meetings, and other processes at the request of the subregion, and pending funding and availability. Further, SCAG will prepare materials for its own process in developing the regional SCS and will make these materials available to subregions.

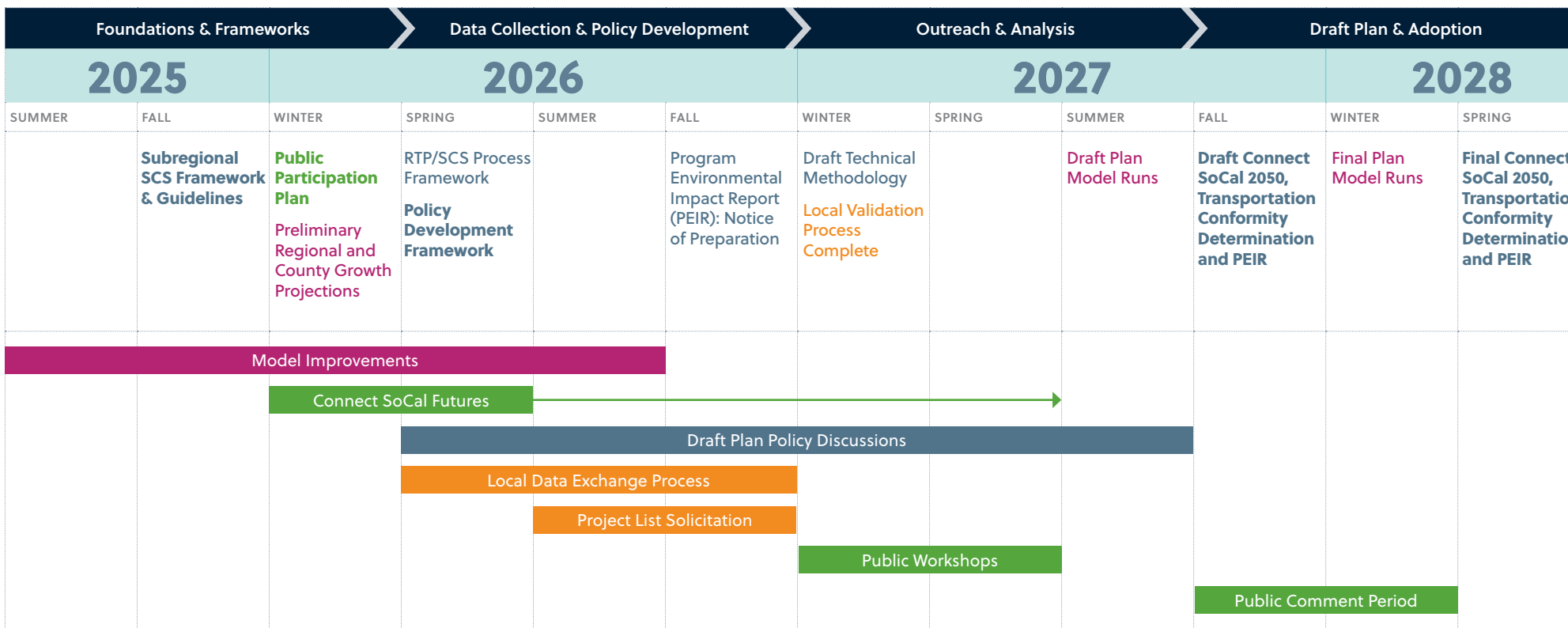
D. Milestones/Schedule

- Deadline for subregions to communicate intent to prepare a subregional SCS – January 30, 2026
- SCAG and Subregional Council of Governments establish Memorandum of Understanding – Early 2026
- Subregional SCS development – Early 2026 through Fall 2026
- Draft dataset delivery to SCAG – Summer 2026
- Final dataset delivery to SCAG – Fall 2026
- Draft subregional SCS to be incorporated into regional SCS – Winter 2027
- Release Draft 2028 RTP/SCS for public review – Fall 2027
- Regional Council adopts 2028 RTP/SCS – Spring 2028

For more context on the process schedule and milestones, refer to the attached Appendix A. Further detailed milestones will be incorporated into the MOU between SCAG and the subregion.



Connect SoCal 2050 Preliminary Milestones*



Milestones Color Key:

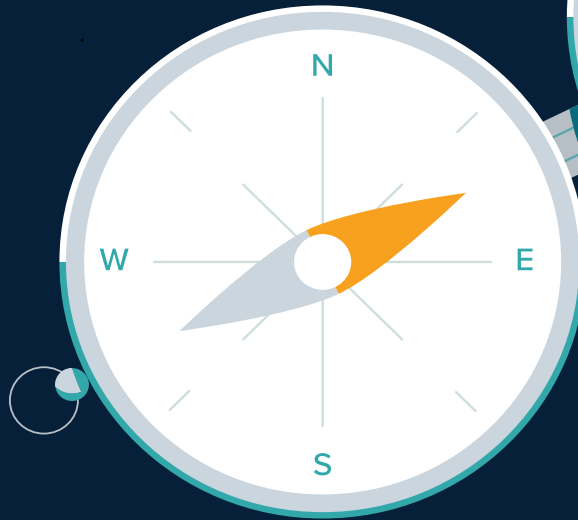
Plan Foundation and Elements
 Local Agency Input Process
 Modeling/Forecast
 Outreach and Engagement

Bold = Action Item

* Draft - Subject to Change

Connect SoCal 2050: Subregional SCS Framework and Guidelines

September 4, 2025



The Southern California Association
of Governments' 2028-2050
Regional Transportation Plan/
Sustainable Communities Strategy

1

Senate Bill 375 Provisions for Subregions



- Allows for the development of subregional SCSs:
 - "a subregional council of governments and the county transportation commission may work together to propose the sustainable communities strategy and an alternative planning strategy, if one is prepared pursuant to subparagraph (I), for that subregional area." Govt. Code §65080(b)(2)(D)
- SCAG's "Framework and Guidelines" outlines the expectations and process

The SCS must...



Forecast for future population, employment, housing



Include GHG reduction strategies



Report performance measures

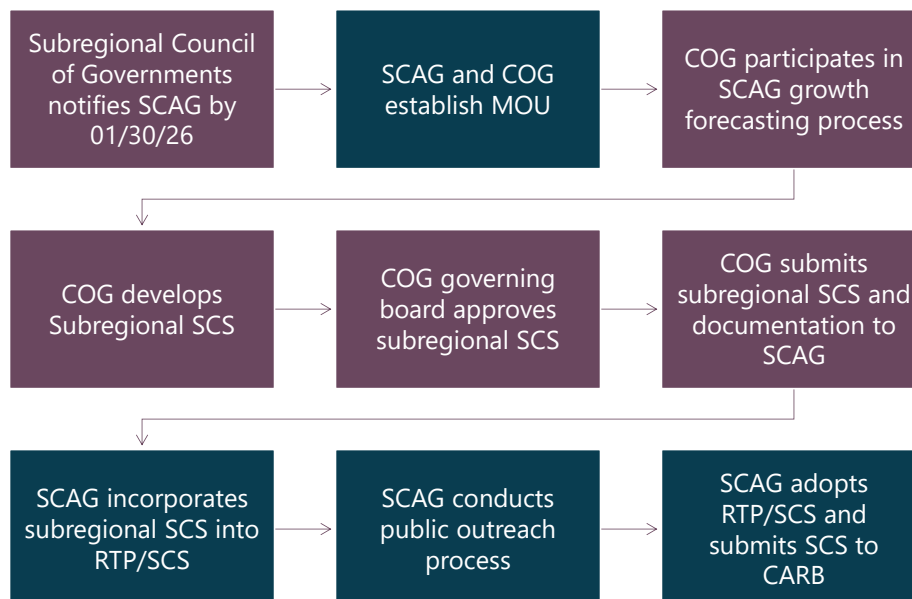


Be developed in consultation with key stakeholders and the public

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

3

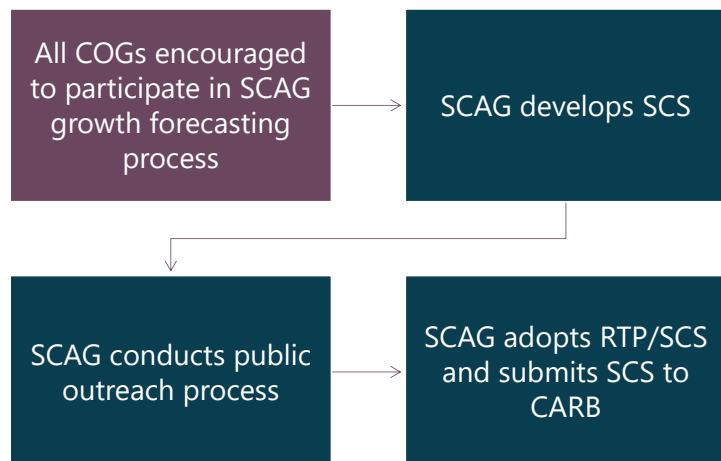
How Would Subregional Delegation Work?



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

4

What if Subregions Don't Delegate?



- COGs and stakeholders engaged through working groups and Executive Directors meetings
- Data and tools available regardless of subregional SCS delegation

Next Steps



January 30, 2026

**Deadline for
Subregions to notify
SCAG**

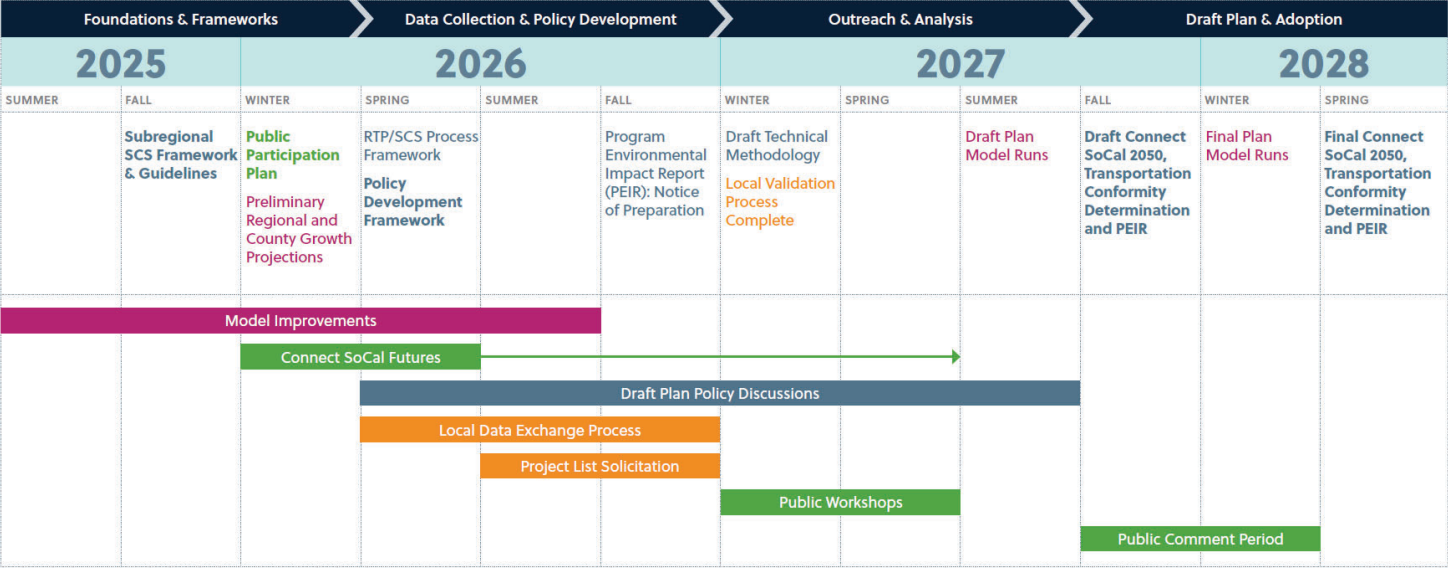
February 2026

**SCAG and COG staff
develop MOU**

Spring 2026

**SCAG and COG
approve MOU**

Connect SoCal Preliminary Milestones*



Milestones Color Key:

- Plan Foundation and Elements
- Local Agency Input Process
- Modeling/Forecast
- Outreach and Engagement

Bold = Action Item

* Draft - Subject to Change

THANK YOU!

For more information, please contact:

ConnectSoCal@scag.ca.gov





AGENDA ITEM 4

REPORT

Southern California Association of Governments
September 4, 2025

To: Energy and Environment Committee (EEC)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
APPROVAL

From: Ryan Wolfe, Manager for Sustainable and Resilient Development
213-630-1527, wolfe@scag.ca.gov

Subject: Energy and Environment Committee Outlook and Future Agenda

Kome Ajise

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Information Only – No Action Required

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following Strategic Priority 1: Establish and implement a regional vision for a sustainable future. 2: Be a cohesive and influential voice for the region. 3: Spur innovation and action through leadership in research, analysis and information sharing. 5: Secure and optimize diverse funding sources to support regional priorities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In April 2024, SCAG's Regional Council adopted the 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Connect SoCal 2024. Following adoption of Connect SoCal 2024, staff developed a 12-month EEC Outlook to carry forward the policy priorities and Implementation Strategies of Connect SoCal 2024. For FY2026, the EEC Outlook reflects outcomes of the 2025 Executive Administration Committee (EAC) Retreat and discussions with the EEC Chair and Vice Chair. The Committee Outlook and Future Agenda Items will be updated monthly as a receive and file item and can be pulled by the Chair for discussion at the request of members for input and modifications.

BACKGROUND:

The work of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and the leadership from the agency's Policy Committees and Regional Council is driven by SCAG's legally mandated duties as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Southern California, the long-range Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), Connect SoCal 2024 as well as, the agency Strategic Plan approved by the Executive Administrative Committee on May 1, 2024¹.

Energy and Environment (EEC) Committee Outlook and Framework

¹ SCAG 2024 Strategic Plan: <https://scag.iqm2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=1&ID=2497&Inline=True>

The Policy Committees help to further the implementation of Connect SoCal by advising on policy, research or resource programs. The Policy Committees will also be informed and advise on broader regional leadership items as needed.

In addition, as appropriate within the scope of each Policy Committee, the 2026 Presidential Priorities are incorporated in the Outlook.

- Clean Transportation Technology
- Housing Production
- Regional planning in support of the 2028 Olympic & Paralympic Games

The topics and panels covered may change based on speaker availability, progress on the targeted programs, and other requests from the Committee Chair and Vice Chair as well as members. To request future agenda items, Policy Committee members may request that the agenda item be pulled for discussion, or they may send a request directly to the Chair or committee staff for consideration and reporting out at the next meeting. Agenda items that are recommended by Policy Committee members will be discussed with the Chair and Vice Chair to assess relevance to the EEC Policy Committee and the considerations noted above.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. September 2025 EEC Agenda Outlook

Energy and Environment Committee

The Energy & Environment Committee (EEC) shall study and provide policy recommendations to the Regional Council relative to challenges and opportunities, programs and other matters, which pertain to the regional issues of energy and the environment. EEC shall also be responsible for reviewing and providing policy recommendations to the Regional Council on matters pertaining to environmental compliance.

Community, Economic & Human Development Committee

- The Community, Economic and Human Development Committee (CEHD) shall study and provide policy recommendations to the Regional Council relative to challenges and opportunities, programs and other matters which pertain to the regional issues of community, economic and human development, housing and growth. CEHD shall also receive information regarding projects, plans and programs of regional significance for determinations of consistency and conformity with applicable regional plans.*

Transportation Committee

- *The Transportation Committee (TC) shall study and provide policy recommendations to the Regional Council relative to challenges and opportunities, programs and other matters, which pertain to the regional issues of mobility and accessibility, including, but not limited to all modes of surface transportation, transportation system preservation and system management, regional aviation, regional goods movement, transportation finance, as well as transportation control measures.*

EEC Committee Agenda Outlook for FY2026

Anticipated major actions and information items. Does not include all Receive/File and Program Updates

Date	Agenda Items
Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural and Agricultural Lands Study Overview • Ecosystem Services • Connect SoCal: Subregional SCS Strategy Framework • Innovative Clean Transit Study*
Oct	No Meetings
Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme Heat Strategies • Green Stormwater Infrastructure • Connect SoCal Implementation
Dec	Joint Policy Committee Meeting: Economic Update
Jan	No Meetings
Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle-to-Grid Technologies* • Nature-Based Strategies: Flooding and Wildfires

*Presidential Priorities

•Clean Transportation Technology

EEC Committee Agenda Outlook for FY2026

Anticipated major actions and information items. Does not include all Receive/File and Program Updates

Date		Agenda Items
Mar		Joint Policy Committee Meeting: Connect SoCal Policy Framework
Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Resilient Utility InfrastructureIntegrating Resilience into Capital Improvement Plans	
May		General Assembly
Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Climate finance toolsArtificial Intelligence/Data Centers: The Water Energy Nexus	

*Presidential Priorities
•Clean Transportation Technology



AGENDA ITEM 5

REPORT

Southern California Association of Governments
September 4, 2025

To: Energy and Environment Committee (EEC)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
APPROVAL

From: Priscilla Freduah-Agyemang, Senior Regional Planner
(213) 236-1973, agyemang@scag.ca.gov

Subject: Innovative Clean Transit Regional Assessment Study Introduction

Kome Ajise

RECOMMENDED ACTION for EEC:

Information Only – No Action Required

RECOMMENDED ACTION FOR TC:

Receive and File

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following Strategic Priority 1: Establish and implement a regional vision for a sustainable future. 3: Spur innovation and action through leadership in research, analysis and information sharing.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In December 2018, the California Air Resource Board (CARB) adopted the Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) (Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 13 § 2023.1)¹ regulation, which requires all public transit agencies to gradually transition to 100-percent zero-emission bus (ZEB) fleets by 2040. The regulation requires transit agencies to publish ZEB Rollout Plans and has purchase requirements for transit agencies of different sizes by year. SCAG affirmed its commitment to supporting efforts to advance a zero-emission transportation system through its adoption Resolution No. 23-654-5 (April 2023), which established the Clean Transportation Technology Policy, which aims to support the development, commercialization, and deployment of a zero-emission transportation system. SCAG recently kicked off the Innovative Clean Transit Regional Assessment Study, which is intended to ensure transit agencies in the region are supported in their efforts to transition to ZEBs by the 2040 deadline. The Study will assess the efforts of the region's transit operators to develop and implement the ZEB Rollout Plans and evaluate the readiness of the region to transition to zero-emission transit fleets.

BACKGROUND:

¹ California Air Resources Board: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-10/ictfro-Clean-Final_0.pdf

The six-county SCAG region boasts an extensive transit network spanning 33,485 miles of local, express, and bus rapid transit (BRT) routes. As outlined in SCAG’s long-range plan, Connect SoCal 2024, this network is a cornerstone of the region’s mobility ecosystem, providing essential access and connectivity for residents and visitors. Transit also plays a critical role in improving air quality and addressing climate change. According to the California Air Resources Board (CARB), transportation is responsible for approximately 37 percent of the state’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, with passenger vehicles contributing 26 percent. Expanding frequent, reliable, accessible, and affordable transit service is key to increasing ridership and reducing emissions. Recognizing the need to achieve reduced emissions, the SCAG Regional Council adopted Resolution No. 23-654-5 in April 2023, establishing the Clean Transportation Technology Policy. This policy supports the development, commercialization, and deployment of a zero-emission transportation system while maintaining technology neutrality, allowing operators to invest in the technologies best suited to their operational needs. SCAG’s commitment aligns with the State’s efforts to motivate additional emissions reductions via the Innovative Clean Transit regulation.

California Air Resources Board Innovative Clean Transit Regulation

To further motivate emissions reductions, the State has set ambitious goals via the CARB’s Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) regulation (Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 13 § 2023.1), which requires all transit agencies to gradually transition to 100 percent zero-emission bus (ZEB) fleets by 2040. The ICT regulation requires transit agencies publish ZEB Rollout Plans, which are blueprints that demonstrate how agencies plan to achieve a full transition to zero-emission technologies by 2040, while considering the minimum useful life of buses to avoid their early retirements.

ZEBs are defined by the ICT regulation as a bus with zero tailpipe emissions, and it is either a battery electric bus or fuel cell electric bus.² Current technology includes hydrogen fuel cell electric buses (FCEB) and battery electric buses (BEB). The ICT regulation applies to all types of rubber-tire buses, including standard buses, articulated, over-the-road “coach” buses, double-decker, and cutaway buses. The ICT rule applies to all public transit agencies in California that own, operate, lease, or rent buses with gross vehicle weight over 14,000 pounds, including those that contract out the operation to another entity, except for those listed as “Exempt” in **Table 1**. The regulation excludes vehicles that operate on rails, like trolleybuses, and school buses.³

Table 1: ICT Agency Classifications

Agency Size	Requirement
Large Transit Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operates more than 65 buses in annual maximum service in either the South Coast Air Basin or the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. or - Operates in an urbanized area with a population of at least

² ICT: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-10/ictfro-Clean-Final_0.pdf

³ ICT Factsheet: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-10/ICT%20Implementation%20Guidance%20Document%20Final.pdf>

	200,000 and at least 100 buses in annual maximum service
Small Transit Agency	- Recipient or subrecipient of Urbanized Area Formula Program funds under 49 U.S.C. 5307 that has one hundred (100) or fewer vehicles in revenue service and does not operate a rail fixed guideway public transportation system (All other agencies)
Exempt Agencies	- Caltrans, Caltrain, Ferry Operators, School Districts, and operators that provide service that is closed to the general public and only available for a particular clientele

ZEB Purchase Requirements

Beginning January 1, 2023, 25 percent of new bus purchases by large transit agencies in the calendar year were required to be ZEBs, increasing to 50 percent in 2026 and 100 percent in 2029. The purchase requirement for small agencies begins in 2026 and by 2029, all new bus purchases regardless of agency size must be ZEBs. In addition, the ICT regulation requires all California transit agencies, regardless of size, to submit and update bus fleet information annually via the Innovative Clean Transit Reporting Tool.⁴ The bus purchase requirement applies only to the total number of *new* bus purchases in a calendar year. The regulation provides detailed description of what is not considered to be new bus purchase for the purposes of calculating the percent of ZEBs.

Zero Emission Transit Progress and Challenges

Currently, ZEBs make up the largest number of heavy-duty zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) in the SCAG region. When reviewing the number of zero-emission transit vehicles by operator in the SCAG region, LA Metro and the Antelope Valley Transit Authority have the largest fleets, with the latter having the most ZE transit vehicles in the region. The Anaheim Transportation Network, City of Los Angeles, and Foothill Transit also have a considerable number of zero-emission transit vehicles, although to a lesser extent. Other operators in the region have a much smaller number of ZEBs or none at all. Please see Figure 2-21 in Connect SoCal 2024's [Mobility Technical Report](#) for a comparison.

Establishing partnerships with industry stakeholders, such as bus manufacturers, charging infrastructure providers, utilities, and funding agencies is crucial for the region. Collaborative efforts between these entities will play a pivotal role in streamlining the transition to clean technologies, lowering overall costs, and guaranteeing reliable service. Zero-emission infrastructure and its availability will play a pivotal role in the transition to ZEB technology. Reliable and strategically placed charging and hydrogen fueling stations are critical to the successful transition of buses in the region to zero-emission technology. Implementing this infrastructure necessitates a robust power grid that can handle the increased energy demand. This is where close coordination with utilities becomes crucial. The transformation of the transit fleet to zero-emission technology will inevitably

⁴ CARB: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/innovative-clean-transit/reporting-tool-data>

increase the demand for electricity, thus potentially challenging the local grid's capacity. Transit operators and other stakeholders will need to work with utility providers to understand the timing and scale of this additional demand, and to identify any grid enhancements required to support this transition. It may also require that transit operators coordinate to share strategically placed resources.

The transition to zero-emission bus technology is a significant undertaking, made particularly challenging by the higher upfront costs of these clean transit options and their respective infrastructure. This transition would not be possible without substantial support from local, state, and federal funding. To offset initial expenses such as bus procurement and charging infrastructure installation, regional partners will need to actively seek federal and state funding opportunities, at times coordinating across agencies. Funding pilot projects can also provide hands-on experience and highlight potential challenges before a full-scale deployment is undertaken. Furthermore, identifying funding for equipping staff with necessary training on the operation and maintenance of zero-emission buses and related infrastructure is critical.

Innovative Clean Transit Regional Assessment Study

SCAG's Innovative Clean Transit Regional Assessment Study (Study) is meant to support the region in its efforts to transition to ZEBs by 2040 by assessing the efforts of the region's transit operators to develop and implement ZEB Rollout Plans, evaluating the readiness of the region to transition to zero-emission transit fleets and the ongoing efforts aimed at transitioning to clean transit solutions throughout the region.

The Study's key objectives include:

- Assessing the ongoing efforts aimed at transitioning to clean transit solutions throughout the region, including evaluations of existing fleets and supporting infrastructure.
- Identifying any existing gaps within ZEB Rollout Plans and exploring avenues for improvement and enhancement.
- Exploring opportunities for enhanced coordination across agencies to streamline efforts and maximize effectiveness.
- Identifying potential roles for SCAG to play in facilitating the transition to clean transit, including exploring opportunities for assistance through funding sources administered by SCAG.

Study Summary and Schedule

The Study kicked off in June 2025 and is expected to continue until June 30, 2026. Key tasks and deliverables are detailed in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Study Tasks and Key Deliverables

Task	Key Deliverables
Stakeholder Engagement	- Outreach and engagement to Established Groups (SCAG Policy Committees (Transportation Committee, Energy and Environment, and Regional Transit Technical Advisory Committee)
Project Research	- Best practices - Review of Existing Conditions - Readiness, Challenges and Opportunities
Implementation Action Plan	- Goals and Objective Setting - Zero Emission Transit Vehicle Deployment Toolkit - Implementation Action Plan
Final Report	

Stakeholder Engagement

SCAG staff will seek feedback from SCAG’s policy committees and the Regional Transit Technical Advisory Committee throughout the Study. This engagement will begin with reviewing the goals and objectives of the Study. In addition, the project team will assemble a list of transit agencies, bus manufacturers, charging infrastructure manufacturers, and utility providers, and reach out to them to understand the ZEB market, review best practices and existing conditions and challenges. Targeted outreach may be conducted through surveys and one-on-one meetings. Feedback shared via this targeted outreach will help shape the implementation action plan and the final report.

Next Steps

SCAG staff will continue to share study updates with the Transportation Committee, the Energy and Environment Committee, and the Regional Transit Technical Advisory Committee throughout the duration of the Study, which is anticipated to conclude in summer 2026.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Work associated with this item is included in Fiscal Year 2026 Overall Work Program 140.0121.10.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. PowerPoint Presentation - ICT EEC



Innovative Clean Transit Regional Assessment

September 4, 2025

WWW.SCAG.CA.GOV

1

Background

- Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) Regulation, 2018 (Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 13 § 2023.1)
 - California Air Resources Board
- Two Primary Requirements
 1. Transit agencies to publish a ZEB rollout plan.
 2. ZEB purchase requirements for transit agencies of different sizes by year



Attachment: PowerPoint Presentation - ICT EEC (Innovative Clean Transit Regional Assessment Study)

Background

- ICT Classifications:

Agency Size	Requirement
Large Transit Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operates more than 65 buses in annual maximum service in either the South Coast Air Basin or the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. Or Operates in an urbanized area with a population of at least 200,000 and at least 100 buses in annual maximum service
Small Transit Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recipient or subrecipient of Urbanized Area Formula Program funds under 49 U.S.C. 5307 that has one hundred (100) or fewer vehicles in revenue service and does not operate a rail fixed guideway public transportation system (All other agencies)
Exempt Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caltrans, Caltrain, Ferry Operators, School Districts, and operators that provide service that is closed to the general public and only available for a particular clientele

Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Rollout Plans

- ZEB Adoption Schedule

Agency Size	Rollout Plan Adoption Deadline
Large Transit Agency	July 1, 2020
Small Transit Agency	July 1, 2023
Joint Groups	Deadline based on the size of the largest agency in the group

Connect SoCal 2024

Mobility Goal:

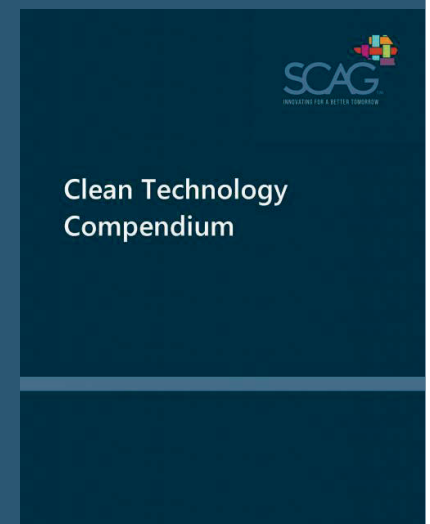
- **Build and maintain an integrated multimodal transportation network**
 - Support investments that are well-maintained and operated, coordinated, resilient and result in improved safety, improved air quality and minimized greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Ensure that reliable, accessible, affordable, and appealing travel options are readily available, while striving to enhance equity in the offerings in high-need communities.
 - Support planning for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds



5

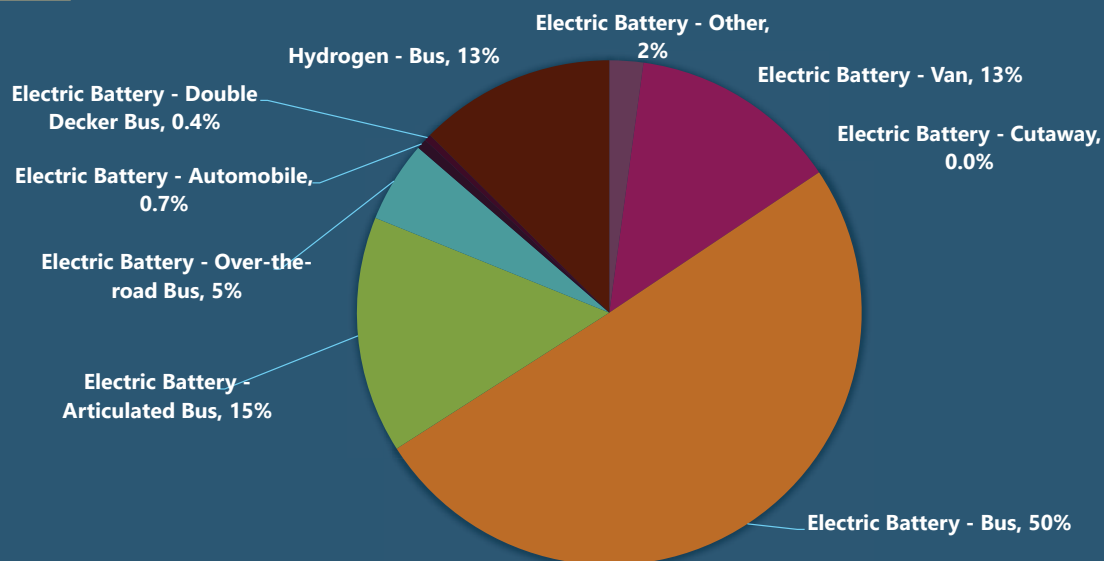
Clean Technology Compendium

- Completed in September 2023
- In-depth look at **zero- and near-zero emission transportation technologies**, including charging and fueling infrastructure and other supporting products.
- Highlights essential features, identifies knowledge gaps, and suggests strategies for the deployment of clean technologies.
- **Serves as a resource** to public agencies in formulating policies that encourage the adoption of these technologies
- Provides stakeholders with information necessary to make decisions that align with sustainability objectives.
 - SCAG conducted a **Clean Technology Survey** to clean vehicle tech vendors to inform the Clean Technology Compendium, filling key information gaps.



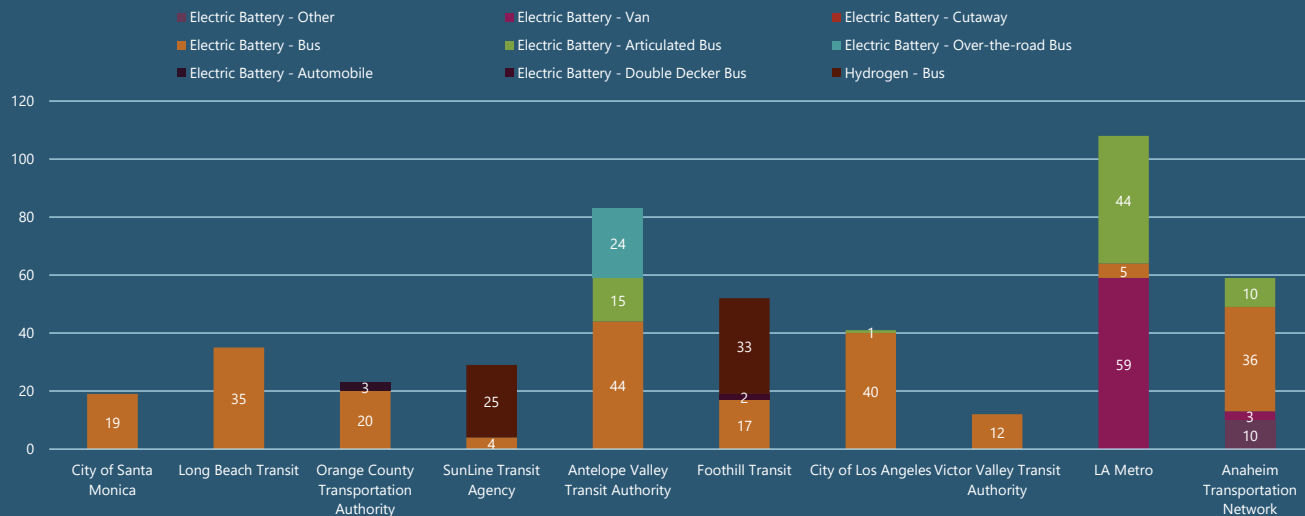
6

SCAG Region: ZEB Proportion



7

SCAG Region: Zero Emission Bus Count by Operator



National Transit Database 2023

8

Zero Emission Bus Examples Across the Region



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS



9

Innovative Clean Transit Regional Assessment

Study Goals:

- Support the region in its efforts to transition to ZEBs by 2040.
- Assess the efforts of the region's transit operators to develop and implement Zero-Emission Bus Rollout Plans.
- Evaluate the readiness of the region to transition to zero-emission transit fleets and the ongoing efforts aimed at transitioning to clean transit solutions throughout the region.



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Innovative Clean Transit Regional Assessment

Study Objectives:

1. Assess the ongoing efforts aimed at transitioning to clean transit solutions throughout the region, including evaluations of existing fleets and supporting infrastructure.
2. Identify any existing gaps within ZEB Rollout Plans and explore avenues for improvement and enhancement.
3. Explore opportunities for enhanced coordination across agencies to streamline efforts and maximize effectiveness.
4. Identify potential roles for SCAG to play in facilitating the transition to clean transit, including exploring opportunities for assistance through funding sources administered by SCAG



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Project Timeline

JUNE 2025

JUNE 2026

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Outreach & Engagement to Established Groups (RTTAC, SCAG TC & EEC)
- Targeted Outreach

PROJECT RESEARCH

- Best Practices
- Existing Conditions
- Readiness, Challenges & Opportunities

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

- Goals & Objective Setting
- Zero-Emission Transit Vehicle Deployment Toolkit
- Implementation Action Plan

FINAL REPORT

Next Steps

- Continue to share updates with the RTTAC, including seeking feedback throughout project duration
- Share updates with SCAG Policy Committees (Transportation and Energy & Environment)



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THANK YOU!

For more information, please visit:

www.scag.ca.gov

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AGENDA ITEM 6

REPORT

Southern California Association of Governments
September 4, 2025

To: Energy & Environment Committee (EEC)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
APPROVAL

From: India Brookover, Senior Regional Planner
(213) 236-1919, brookover@scag.ca.gov

Subject: Natural & Agricultural Lands Benefits Study

Kome Ajise

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Information Only – No Action Required

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following Strategic Priority 3: Spur innovation and action through leadership in research, analysis and information sharing.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Natural and agricultural lands play an important role in local and regional resilience. Many of these lands are critical in cleaning and storing water; reducing the risks from wildfires, flooding, extreme heat, and other related threats; improving air quality; and sequestering carbon. SCAG has initiated the Natural & Agricultural Lands Economic and Resilience Benefits Study to explore the types and range of economic and resilience benefits of natural and agricultural lands. The study will also highlight potential funding strategies to support strategic efforts to preserve, enhance, restore, and maintain natural and agricultural lands.

The study will culminate in a white paper and resource appendix. Farmworker housing will also be explored as a stand-alone study, including an evaluation of existing farmworker housing stock and proximity to workplaces, as well as identification of funding opportunities to increase farmworker housing affordability.

BACKGROUND:

Economic, natural, social, and environmental resilience is a key focus of SCAG's work. Natural and agricultural lands have long been essential for regional and local resilience and will be increasingly important in the future as the impacts of climate change become more pronounced. Natural and agricultural lands provide a range of environmental services, resilience, and economic benefits that are necessary for the region to thrive now and in the future. They:

- Sequester carbon
 - Store and clean water
-

- Clean air
- Can increase resilience to hazards such as wildfires and flooding
- Support recreation, health, and quality of life
- Generate jobs and economic activity through tourism, recreation, and agricultural production

Natural and agricultural lands also play an important role in SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), Connect SoCal 2024, SB 375, and the State's 2022 Scoping Plan. Preserving, enhancing, and restoring these areas helps to lower greenhouse gases by reducing vehicle trips and sequestering carbon.

SB 375 specifically requires the consideration of "resource areas" in the development of Sustainable Communities Strategies; these include farmland, publicly owned parks and open space, conserved natural lands, sensitive habitats, and areas subject to flooding. Connect SoCal 2024 includes an emphasis on safeguarding the region's resources and enabling more sustainable use of energy and water to support climate adaptation, mitigation, and regional resilience and prosperity.

SCAG recently received a Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation (SALC) grant from the California Department of Conservation (DOC) to explore the economic and resilience benefits from natural and agricultural lands in the SCAG region. To fulfill this grant's work plan, SCAG will develop a white paper and resource appendix that will include:

- Exploring the value of a limited range of key ecosystem services as well as resilience and economic benefits provided by the different typologies of natural and agricultural lands in the SCAG region, such as those in the bulleted list above;
- Identifying innovative funding strategies and approaches, including market and incentive-based approaches, that can support efforts to preserve, enhance, and/or restore natural and agricultural lands that provide key ecosystem services and resilience benefits; and
- Providing information and resources to support Regional Advance Mitigation Programs (RAMP).

The study will consist of technical research and engagement with stakeholders that have technical expertise in the ecosystem services, economic, and/or resilience benefits of natural and agricultural lands. Engagement will commence in Fall of 2025 and will continue through the conclusion of the study in 2027.

Farmworker housing will also be explored as a stand-alone study, including an evaluation of existing farmworker housing stock and proximity to workplaces, as well as identification of funding opportunities to increase farmworker housing affordability.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Work associated with this item is included in the FY 2026 Overall Work Program (065.4876.01 Priority Agricultural Lands and 065.4878.01 Natural & Agricultural Lands Policy Development and Implementation.)

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. PowerPoint Presentation - NAL-Ben EEC



Natural & Agricultural Lands Economic and Resilience Benefits Study

Overview

Energy & Environment Committee
September 4th, 2025

WWW.SCAG.CA.GOV

Enhancing Resilience: Connect SoCal

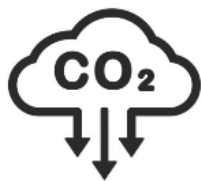


Resilient built, social, economic, and natural systems are necessary for a thriving region, especially when factoring in climate change

Strategic conservation, enhancement, and restoration of natural and ag lands plays an important role in resilient systems



Key services/benefits of natural and agricultural lands include:



Reduced climate emissions:

- Carbon sequestration
- Avoided vehicle miles traveled (VMT)



Resilience and adaptation:

- Water filtration and storage
- Cleaner air
- Hazard risk reduction (ex. wildfires, flooding, etc.)
- Access to open space for recreation
- Local food production, jobs, and tourism

3

Technical study to fill information gaps:



More information on ecosystem services

Informs local jurisdiction policy and planning processes.



More information on resilience to hazards and climate change

Informs strategies to reduce risks from flooding, wildfires, and climate change impacts in the region.



More information on funding and financing

Connects jurisdictions to resources and tools to preserve, enhance, and/or restore important natural and ag lands.



Study will also explore farmworker housing

- Will be a separate, stand-alone study
- Evaluation of existing farmworker housing stock and proximity to workplaces
- Identification of funding opportunities to increase affordability of farmworker housing

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS



Stakeholder process: Fall 2025 – Spring 2027

- Interviews, listening sessions
- Stakeholder Working Groups (3-5)
- Includes targeted stipends for community-based orgs
- Stakeholder feedback will inform the study in all stages



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA A

Attachment: PowerPoint Presentation - NAL-Ben EEC (Natural & Agricultural Lands Benefits Study)

What will this study include?

Technical Analysis

Implementation Support

Assessment of ecosystem services and resilience benefits

- Economic valuation of services and benefits from different typologies of natural and agricultural lands

Baseline analysis of natural and agricultural lands

- Key characteristics and trends (soil and habitat types, crop variety and production value, etc.)

Funding strategies for conservation efforts

- Effective pathways to fund strategic conservation, restoration, and/or enhancement

White Paper and Resource Appendix

- Model policies, summaries of technical analyses, and case studies.



Project Timeline

Research & Technical Analysis

Spring 2025 – Summer 2026

Develop White Paper & Resource Appendix

Summer 2026 – Spring 2027

Webinars & Training

Spring – Summer 2027

Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement



THANK YOU!



AGENDA ITEM 7

REPORT

Southern California Association of Governments
September 4, 2025

To: Energy and Environment Committee (EEC)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
APPROVAL

From: India Brookover, Senior Regional Planner
(213) 236-1919, brookover@scag.ca.gov

Subject: Ecosystem Services Overview and Panel

Kome Ajise

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Information Only – No Action Required

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following Strategic Priority 1: Establish and implement a regional vision for a sustainable future.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

As Southern California faces rising challenges from heat, drought, wildfire, and flooding, resilience is increasingly central to SCAG's work. Natural and agricultural lands provide ecosystem services such as carbon storage, clean water, cleaner air, hazard protection, recreation, and economic activity. These benefits support the SCAG region's quality of life, the economy, and resilience. These lands, and the benefits they confer, are also a focus of Connect SoCal 2024, SB 375, and the State's 2022 Scoping Plan. SB 375 requires that resource areas like farmland, open space, and sensitive habitats be considered in the Connect SoCal process.

This session will feature a presentation and panel discussion on ecosystem services applicable to the SCAG region. Bea Covington, Director of Sustainability and Principal Economist at Greene Economics, will provide an introductory overview of ecosystem services, while Margot Flynn, Soil Hub Coordinator at the Sacramento Valley Resource Conservation District, will present on the role of healthy soils in agriculture.

BACKGROUND:

Natural and agricultural lands play a key role in SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), Connect SoCal 2024, as well as broader state climate policies like SB 375 and the 2022 Scoping Plan. Strategic preservation, enhancement, and restoration of farmland and natural areas safeguard important ecosystems and ecosystem services, reduce greenhouse gases through fewer vehicle trips and carbon sequestration, and contribute to economic growth.

SB 375 specifically requires that resource areas, such as farmland, open space, conserved natural lands, sensitive habitats, and flood-prone areas be considered in sustainable community planning. In line with this, Connect SoCal emphasizes protecting these resources to ensure ecosystem services can support regional quality of life through reliable clean water supplies, reduced energy and water demands, and strengthened regional resilience. Together, these strategies reflect a broader vision for climate adaptation and mitigation that supports both community well-being and a thriving and resilient region.

This item will feature presentations and a panel discussion to provide an overview of Ecosystem Services specific to the SCAG region. Featured on the panel will be:

- **Bea Covington, Director of Sustainability & Principal Economist, Greene Economics:** Bea Covington is a seasoned sustainability leader with deep expertise in ecosystem services, ecosystem markets, and nature-based solutions. She will provide an introductory overview of Ecosystem Services.
- **Margot Flynn, Soil Hub Coordinator, Sacramento Valley Resource Conservation District:** Margot is an agricultural ecologist who has been working in community outreach and on farm research for the last 4 years. In her current role as the Sacramento Valley Soil Hub Coordinator, Margot supports the agricultural programs and staff of nine resource conservation districts (RCDs) in the region and represents the RCDs in strategic county and statewide partnerships supporting natural and working land conservation. Margot will provide a presentation on the ecosystem services of health soils in agriculture.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. PowerPoint Presentation - Ecosystem Services and Expert Panel

Ecosystem Services and Expert Panel

September 4th, 2025

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1

Expert Panel - Ecosystem Services



Bea Covington
Principal Economist



Margot Flynn
Sacramento Valley Soil Hub Coordinator



Ecosystem Services and their Contribution to Resilience in the SCAG Region

SCAG ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE



How Do You Define Resilience?

Agenda

- I. Defining Resilience
- II. Defining Ecosystem Services
- III. How Ecosystem Services Contribute to Resilience
- IV. Ecosystem Services and Projects in the SCAG Region
 - a. Groundwater Recharge
 - b. Urban Health (urban heat island, air quality, etc.)
 - c. Ecotourism
- V. Measuring Ecosystem Service Improvement/Benefit



SCAG defines resilience

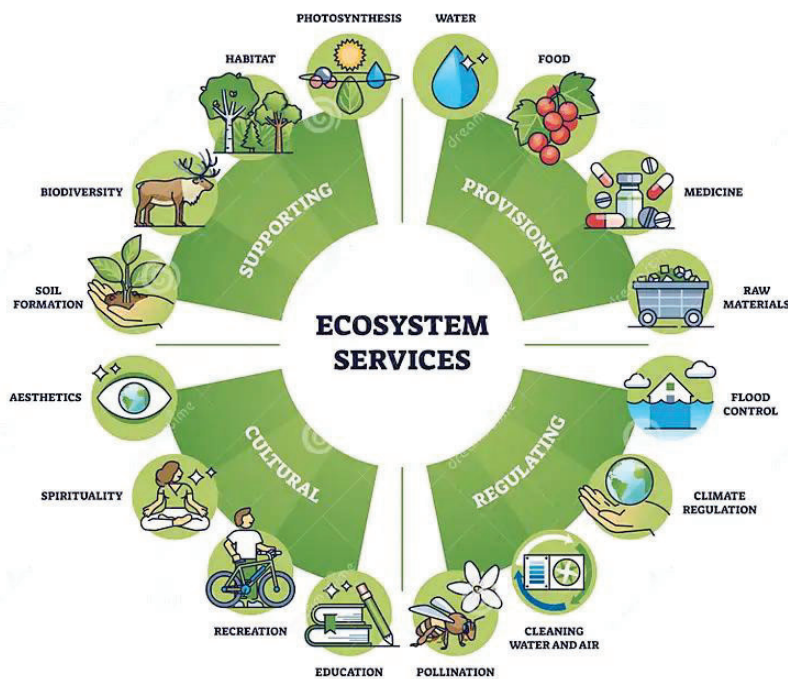
... as the capacity of the SCAG region's built, social, economic, and natural systems to anticipate and effectively respond to changing conditions, acute shocks, and chronic stressors by creating multiple opportunities for a sustainable, thriving, and equitable future. (SCAG. Connect SOCAL 2024, pg. 36.)



Ecosystem Services Categories



Types of Ecosystem Services



Examples of Ecosystem Services in the SCAG Region

Supporting Services:

Provisioning Services:

Regulating Services:

Cultural Services:



Ecosystem Service
Contributions to
Resilience in SCAG
Service Area

Ecosystem Services & Projects in SCAG Region

- Groundwater Recharge
- Urban Health
- Cultural Services



Groundwater Recharge – SCAG Region Example

Seven Oaks Dam Enhanced Recharge Project

Purpose: to enhance groundwater replenishment and strengthen water reliability.

Project Highlights

- 20 new recharge basins
- 1.2 miles improved main channel
- Strengthens partnerships with regional water agencies, enhancing long-term water reliability
- Improves drought resiliency and adaptation to climate change
- Increases groundwater recharge capacity (up to 80,000 acre-feet per year in wet years)
- Secures additional perpetual water rights for Riverside

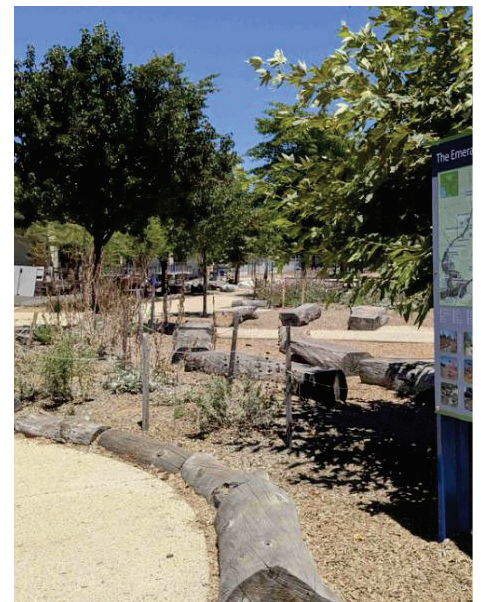
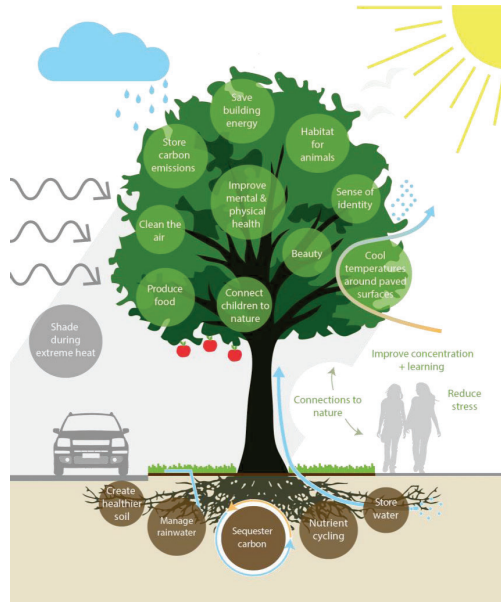
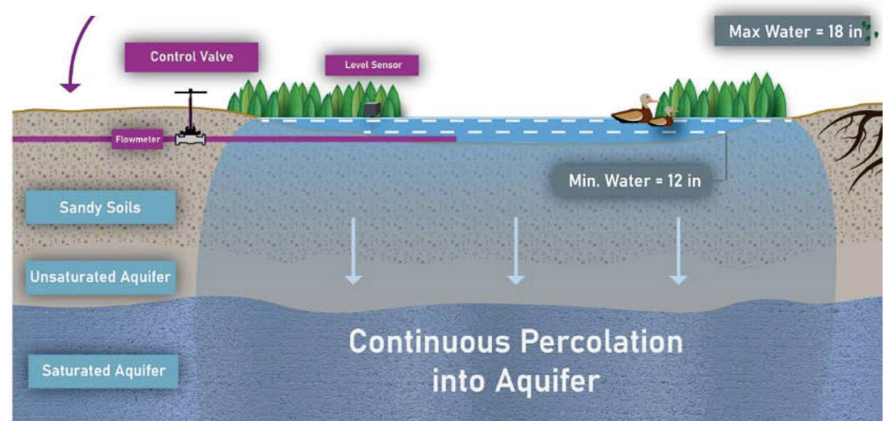


Groundwater Recharge – Florida Example

Groundwater Recharge Wetland Parks in Florida

Purpose:

- Creating groundwater recharge wetland to replenish aquifers and benefit water resources
- Also designed for public enjoyment (trails, bird watching, etc.)



Urban Health and Wellbeing – Urban Greening

URBAN GREENING PROJECT – AMIGOS DE LOS RIOS & EMERALD NECKLACE GROUP

PROJECT LOCATION: ACROSS SAN GABRIEL VALLEY & LOS ANGELES BASIN

Urban Health and Wellbeing – urban wetland

Bowtie Wetland Demonstration

- Transforms a former railyard along the L.A. River into an open space filled with native plants and walking paths

Ecosystem services

- Improving water quality
- Reducing urban heat
- Increasing resilience to drought
- Improving public access
- Supporting native species



Cultural Services

Friends of Big Bear Valley



<https://youtu.be/B4-L2nfGcuE>

Ecotourism promotes travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people

- Ecotourism functions as a cultural ecosystem service (CES) by providing non-material benefits to people, such as recreation, education, and aesthetic appreciation, derived from natural and cultural settings



Measuring Ecosystem Services

Urban Forest Program & Urban Trees Initiative

Urban Forest Program

- Initiative of Earthwatch Institute in partnership with local non-profits and managers to connect people with nature in urban communities through community science

Project Purpose

- Program provides local tree managers with data and new tools to maintain healthy urban forests and track ecosystem services



USC Urban Trees Initiative

- Specialize in data and community-driven projects with experts in geospatial sciences, landscape architecture, air quality, and community engagement

Project Purpose

- To advance climate-resilient urban forestry practices and the equitable distribution of green spaces leveraging university resources and researchers AND community support

Sacramento Valley Resource Conservation Districts

September 4, 2025

Carbon farming and Co-benefits

Margot Flynn M.Sc.
Sacramento Valley Soil Hub Coordinator



Roadmap

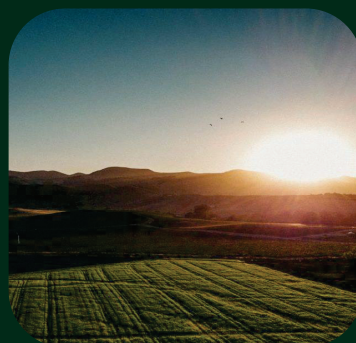
- **RCD Background**
- **What is Carbon Farming?**
- **Co-benefits**
- **Scale and opportunity**



RCD Background

Over 85 years of conservation experience.

RCDs always work with their constituents on a voluntary basis — a key reason they are considered a trusted resource in their communities.



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Statewide Coordinator,
CA Association
of RCDs
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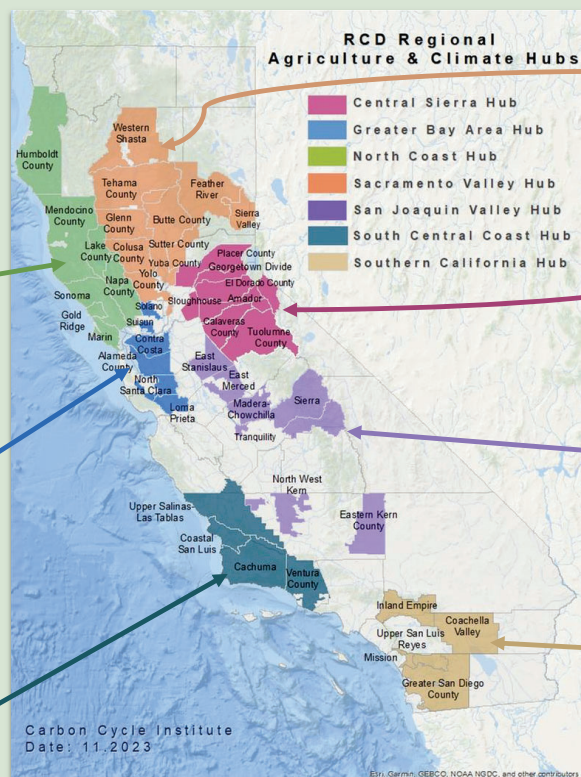
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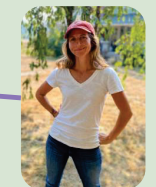
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Soil and Water Hub
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RCDs provide technical assistance to serve producers

Technical
Assistance
Provided by
Resource
Conservation
Districts

PROJECT MANAGEMENT. RCDs manage grant funding, contractors, project logistics, and implementation monitoring and reporting.

IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING. RCDs leverage grant funding from multiple sources to scale project implementation across multiple landownerships and to meet multiple conservation objectives.

DESIGN & ENGINEERING. RCDs ensure projects are designed to meet practice standards and environmental requirements.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE. RCDs serve as lead agencies for CEQA and coordinate permit applications and cultural resource surveys as needed.

DEVELOPING CONSERVATION PLANS. RCDs work with landowners to develop conservation plans as an educational tool and to increase eligibility for state and federal funding.

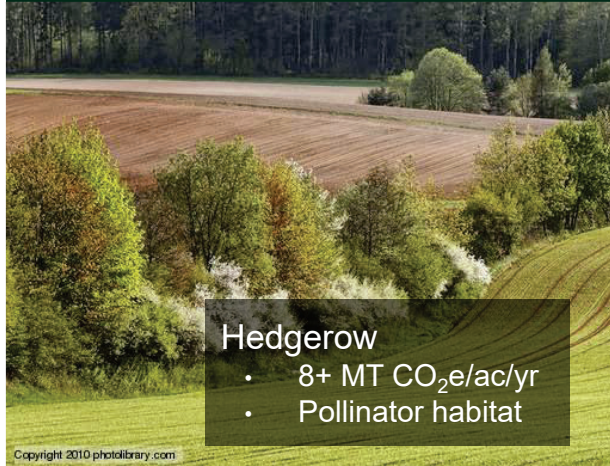
BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND TRUST. RCDs work one-on-one with landowners to assess natural resources concerns, understand each landowner's unique needs and goals, discuss options, and prioritize actions.

What is carbon farming?



Common practices

- **Cover cropping**
- Hedgerows
- Integrated grazing
- Reduced or no-till
- Riparian buffers
- **Composting**



Hedgerow

- 8+ MT CO₂e/ac/yr
- Pollinator habitat



Riparian restoration

- 18+ MT CO₂e/ac/yr
- Diverse bird habitat (69 species/ranch)
- Water quality



PC: National Farmers Union

Copyright 2010 photolibary.com

PC: Yolo County RCD, Carbon Cycle Institute



hedge rows support narrow leaf milkweed which serves as a host plant for monarch butterfly caterpillars.

Appendix 1. All of our hedgerow plantings have been augmented by "pollinator kits" from the Xerces Society to provide a suite of pollinator friendly species, especially milkweed. These milkweeds began attracting monarch butterflies the same year they were planted (photo, right). Four new hedgerows will be installed in fall-winter 2023, also augmented by Xerces pollinator kits.

Table 4 and Figure 5 show all implemented and planned hedgerows and one windbreak (HR7). Once all the hedgerows have been planted at [redacted], the total about of CO₂s sequestered is 16 MT annually and 320 MT CO₂s over twenty years (see Tables 7a-7c).

Windbreak (CPS 380)

Like the surrounding area, [redacted] experiences occasional strong winds, especially between January and September with average wind speeds of more than 6.5 mph. July is typically the windiest month with an average hourly wind speed of 7.1 mph. Intense hot dry north winds in excess of 40 mph are not uncommon in summer months. Narrow leaf milkweed at [redacted] hedgerow

Page 21 of 65

Windbreaks differ from hedgerow plantings primarily in their objective. The objectives of a windbreak is to reduce soil erosion from wind, enhance plant health and productivity by protecting plants from wind-related damage, improve moisture management by reducing transpiration and evaporation losses and improving irrigation efficiency. Like hedgerows, windbreaks can increase carbon storage in biomass and soils.

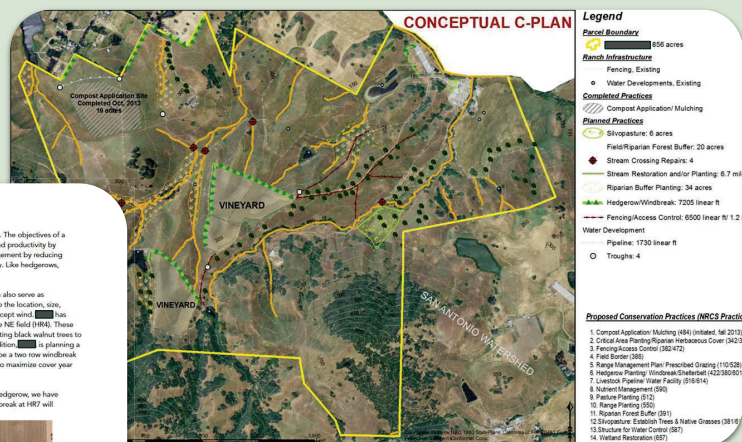
While hedgerows planted for beneficial insects and wildlife habitat can also serve as windbreaks, when planning a windbreak more consideration is given to the location, size, spacing and phenology of the species to maximize their ability to intercept wind. [redacted] has added a fourth row to its 2-3 row hedgerow along the north side of the NE field (H94). These trees (mostly valley oak and coast live oak) are planted in line with existing black walnut trees to widen the hedgerow and when mature, to provide a windbreak. In addition, [redacted] is planning a windbreak/hedgerow on the north side of its NW field (H97). This will be a two row windbreak using native trees and shrubs with an emphasis on evergreen species to maximize cover year round.

Because the greenhouse gas benefits of a windbreak are similar to a hedgerow, we have included the windbreak in our hedgerow calculations. The single windbreak at HR7 will sequester 2 MT CO₂s in one year and 80 MT over twenty years.



Figure 5. Current (green) and planned (pink) hedgerows at [redacted] 2023

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PC: Carbon Cycle Institute

Why should farmers care?

Direct, on-farm agricultural benefits

- Lowered costs (using fewer inputs / less fuel)
- Improved yields
- Improved soil health (long-term farm viability)
- **Increased water holding capacity**

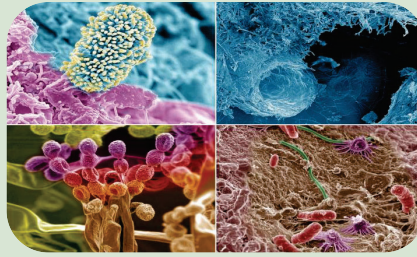
Indirect co-benefits

- Access to funding opportunities and new revenue streams
- **Decreased negative side effects of farming like air and water pollution**
- Long-term viability of farming
- Climate change mitigation

Investing in soil has multiple co-benefits



Food security



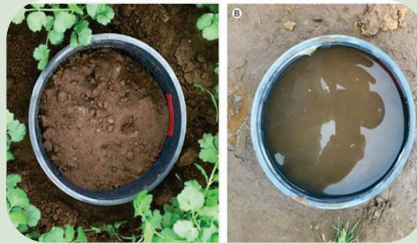
Biodiversity



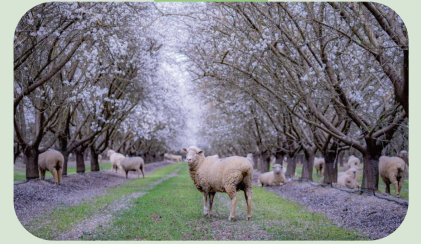
Public health



Climate change mitigation



Water conservation



Profit

Sacramento Valley Resource Conservation Districts

September 4, 2025

Practice case study: **Cover crops**

Photosynthesis by cover crops uses carbon to capture solar energy

Direct benefits

- Soil health (structure, erosion, nutrients)
- **Improved water holding capacity**
- **Improved infiltration**
- Potential for added income

Indirect co-benefits

- **Can reduce pollution (pesticides, nutrients, sediment)**
- Feed pollinators
- **Increase carbon storage in soil**
- 0.24 MT CO₂E per acre per year

Practice case study: **Windbreak**

Photosynthesis by windbreak uses carbon to capture solar energy

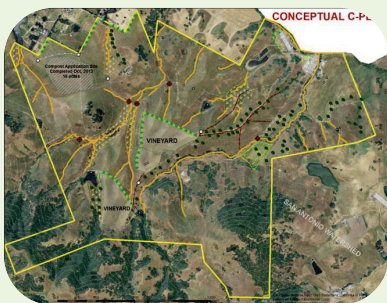
Direct benefits

- Protect cash crop with shelter
- Reduce erosion
- Reduce evapotranspiration **and subsequent water use**

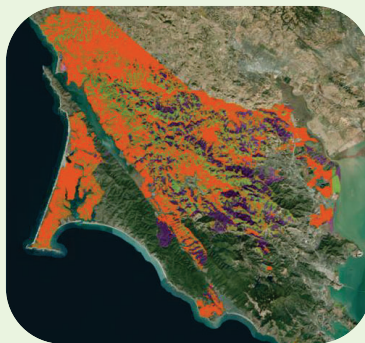
Indirect co-benefits

- **Carbon storage in wood and soil**
- Wildlife habitat
- **8.58 MT CO₂E per linear ft per year**

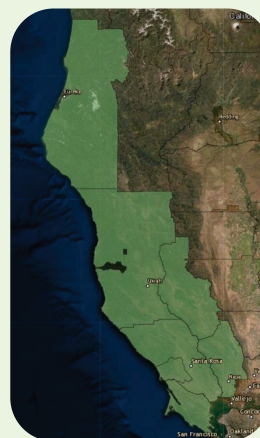
Scaling climate-beneficial agriculture requires investing in local and regional agricultural partnerships



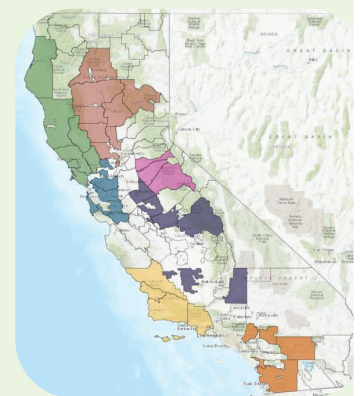
Field and farm level: Carbon farm planning



Landscape and county level: Climate action planning and policy



Regional level: Climate and Ag hubs; **Regional studies and partnerships**



State climate and agriculture policy, state scoping plan

Opportunities for scaling carbon farming

- Seek collaboration with RCDs and producers in climate action planning processes and regional studies
- Find out who can fund and support sustainable working lands in your area
- Be open to partnership to engage with farmers and ranchers as the land stewards that they are



Thank you!



Margot Flynn M.Sc.

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THANK YOU!

For more information, please visit: