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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

TO: Interested Agencies, Organizations and Individuals

SUBJECT: Public Notice of Availability of a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy¹

DATE: December 4, 2015

LEAD AGENCY: Southern California Association of Governments
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The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), as Lead Agency, has prepared a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) (SCH#2015031035) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed 2016–2040 Regional Transportation Plan /Sustainable Communities Strategy (“2016 RTP/SCS,” “Plan” or “Project”). The Draft PEIR serves as a programmatic document that conducts a region-wide assessment of potential significant environmental effects of the proposed 2016 RTP/SCS.

The 2016 RTP/SCS is a long-range regional transportation plan that provides a blueprint for the region to achieve coordinated regional land use strategies and transportation investments for more than a 20-year period. The 2016 RTP/SCS seeks to improve mobility, promote sustainability, facilitate economic development and preserve the quality of life for the residents in the region. The SCAG region is comprised of six counties: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura. For more information on the proposed 2016 RTP/SCS, please visit: <http://scagrtpscscs.net/Pages/Draft2016PEIR.aspx>.

The **Proposed 2016 RTP/SCS** provides land use and transportation strategies to help achieve a coordinated balance of land uses and transportation investments. The 2016 RTP/SCS envisions future regional growth that is well coordinated with the transportation system improvements, as well as anticipates new transportation projects planned for the region. The 2016 RTP/SCS also incorporates best practices for increasing transportation choices and transportation infrastructure expenditures; reducing dependence on single-occupant automobiles; and encouraging future new growth in walkable, mixed-use communities and in high quality transit areas (HQTAs), where feasible. The 2016 RTP/SCS is intended to achieve a range of benefits, including: reducing vehicle trip length and land consumption; improving air quality and physical fitness; increasing shared mobility, jobs/housing balance, and natural habitat preservation; enhanced water and energy conservation and access to the Cap and Trade resources. The following alternatives are addressed:

1. The **No Project Alternative** is required by Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines and assumes that the proposed Project would not be implemented. The No Project Alternative evaluates “what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on

¹ This Notice of Availability (NOA) replaces the previous notice prepared by SCAG on or about December 4, 2015 to correct the form of the NOA. There is no change in the content of the notice.

current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services” (CEQA Section 15126.6[e][2]). The No Project Alternative includes those transportation projects that are included in the first year of the previously conforming transportation plan and/or transportation improvement program (TIP), or have completed environmental review by December 2014. The No Project Alternative also includes “exempt projects” such as safety projects and certain mass transit projects, transportation control measures (“TCMs”) that are included in the approved State Implementation Plan, and project phases that were authorized by the Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration prior to expiration of SCAG’s conformity finding for the last 2012-2035 RTP/SCS. These reasonably foreseeable projects fulfill the CEQA definition of the No Project Alternative.

2. The **2012 RTP/SCS Updated with Local Input Alternative** retains transportation investments and land use strategies of the adopted 2012-2035 RTP/SCS, updated to reflect the most recent local input growth estimates in the region. This Alternative considers continued implementation of the adopted 2012-2035 RTP/SCS and includes all of the modifications and projects in the adopted 2012-2035 RTP/SCS, as last amended in September 2014. This Alternative does not include land use strategies included within the proposed 2016 RTP/SCS.
3. The **Intensified Land Use Alternative** builds on the land use strategies in the 2016 RTP/SCS and goes further. This Alternative focuses on analyzing more intensified land use patterns aimed at further reducing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas and criteria pollutant emissions to improve mobility, sustainability, and economy. It includes more mixed-use and infill development, increased densities in HQTAs, livable corridors, and neighborhood mobility areas, new technology innovations and enhancement, and/or additional transit and active transportation strategies than the 2016 RTP/SCS.

The Draft PEIR serves as a programmatic document that conducts a region-wide assessment of potential significant environmental effects of the 2016 RTP/SCS. The PEIR provides an opportunity to inform decision-makers and the public about these effects. The PEIR must evaluate region-wide, potential significant environmental effects, including direct and indirect effects, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts of the 2016 RTP/SCS at a programmatic level.

The Draft PEIR discusses significant impacts to the following issue areas: Aesthetics; Agriculture and Forestry Resources; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Energy; Geology and Soils; Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use and Planning; Mineral Resources; Noise; Population, Housing, and Employment; Public Services; Recreation; Transportation, Traffic, and Safety; and Utilities and Service Systems.

The Draft PEIR is available on SCAG’s website, at: <http://scagrtpscsc.net/Pages/Draft2016PEIR.aspx>. Hard copies of the Draft PEIR are available for review at SCAG’s office in Main Office (Los Angeles office, see above). CDs are available at major libraries in the region (contact SCAG for specific locations). Hard copies and CDs are also available upon request by contacting SCAG (see below).

The Draft PEIR is available for a **60-day public review and comment period**, which begins **December 4, 2015 and ends February 1, 2016**. **Written comments will be accepted until the close of business or no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 1, 2016**. Please direct written comments to **Ms. Lijin Sun, Senior Regional Planner**, to the address shown above. Comments may also be submitted electronically to 2016PEIR@scag.ca.gov.

Two Draft PEIR public workshops, each providing the same information, will be held at SCAG’s Main Office (Los Angeles office, see above), Board Room, Tuesday, January 19, 2016, at 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., and at 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Videoconferencing will also be available from SCAG’s regional offices.

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