



# Housing Working Group

July 16, 2024

[WWW.SCAG.CA.GOV](http://WWW.SCAG.CA.GOV)

# Agenda

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- Welcome
- RHNA Reform Report
- Legislative Updates
- HELPR 3.0 Tool
- Project Spotlight: VCOG CEQA Streamlining Project
- Forthcoming HWG Survey
- Wrap-up and Next Steps



# RHNA REFORM REPORT

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**Ma'Ayn Johnson, Housing Manager, SCAG**

# Background

- Requirement of AB 101 (2019) that HCD provide the State Legislature recommendations to improve the RHNA process
- Statewide outreach in 2023, including “Sounding Board”
- SCAG submitted a letter of RHNA reform recommendations in September 2023
- Due December 31, 2023
- Published April 18, 2024
- Addresses issues raised in March 2022 State Auditor’s report
- Ideally implemented prior to the 7<sup>th</sup> RHNA cycle

# Structure

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## Organization of report

- Recommendations to Legislature
- Policy considerations
- Future HCD Efforts
- Appendix

## Topic areas

- Regional Housing Needs Determination process
- Methodology/Appeals/Allocation process
- RTP/SCS Consistency and Growth Forecasts

# Regional Housing Need Determination process

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- Accounting for homelessness
- Closer tie to DOF HH projections
- Group quarter populations/range of housing types
- Comparable regions
- Furthering the five objectives
- Adjust income distribution
- Cost-burden and overcrowding
- Vacancy rate
- Refine jobs/housing determination
- Short-term rentals

# Methodology/Appeals/Allocation process

- Revise methodology factors for clarity
- Revise local data survey requirements
- Refine appeals process for clarity
- Promoting equitable public participation
- Explore unit loss due to state of emergency
- Streamline and clarify statute language

# Improve RHNA and RTP/SCS alignment

## Recommendations for Statutory Changes

- Move up the date of the RHND by one year
- RTP/SCS household projection should include both projected population and existing population



# RTP/SCS Consistency and Growth Forecasts

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## Recommendations for Statutory Changes

- Clarify that RTP/SCS forecasted growth pattern must also be consistent with RHNA, which would further the five RHNA objectives
- Clarify what should occur if the RTP/SCS forecasted development pattern does not further the statutory objectives of RHNA

# AB 3093 (Ward), Amended early May 2024

Intended to account for housing needs for homelessness in RHNA and housing elements, as recommended by the HCD report

- Would create a total of 6 income categories for RHNA and housing elements
- Addition of:
  - Acutely low income (0-15%)
  - Extremely low income (15-30%)
- Specifies acutely low and extremely low income households as a special housing need in housing elements
- Requires COG to provide data regarding housing needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness



**THANK YOU**

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# LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

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**Mike Dietz, Housing Planning Supervisor, SCAG**

## AB 3093 (Ward)

- Would create two new income levels for RHNA



- Intent is to ensure housing-insecure (including homeless) populations are accounted with RHNA
- Would require COGs to provide data on housing needs of homeless populations

## **AB 2485 (Carrillo)**

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- Would require HCD to publish its data sources, assumptions, and determinations for RHND online
- Would require HCD to convene a panel of experts to consult for RHND
- Intent is to promote transparency and accuracy in RHNA process
- Was revised to begin in the 8th and subsequent RHNA cycles

## **AB 2597 (Ward)**

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- Would bifurcate RHNA deadlines for LA County jurisdictions and other SCAG jurisdictions:
  - LA County jurisdictions: 89
  - Other SCAG jurisdictions: 108
- Non-LA County jurisdictions would get more time compared to existing process; no one would lose time
- Would also significantly reduce time to appeal draft allocation and time for COGs to process appeals
- Intent is to speed up appeals process and help flatten the “SCAG Spike”



# HELPR 3.0 TOOL

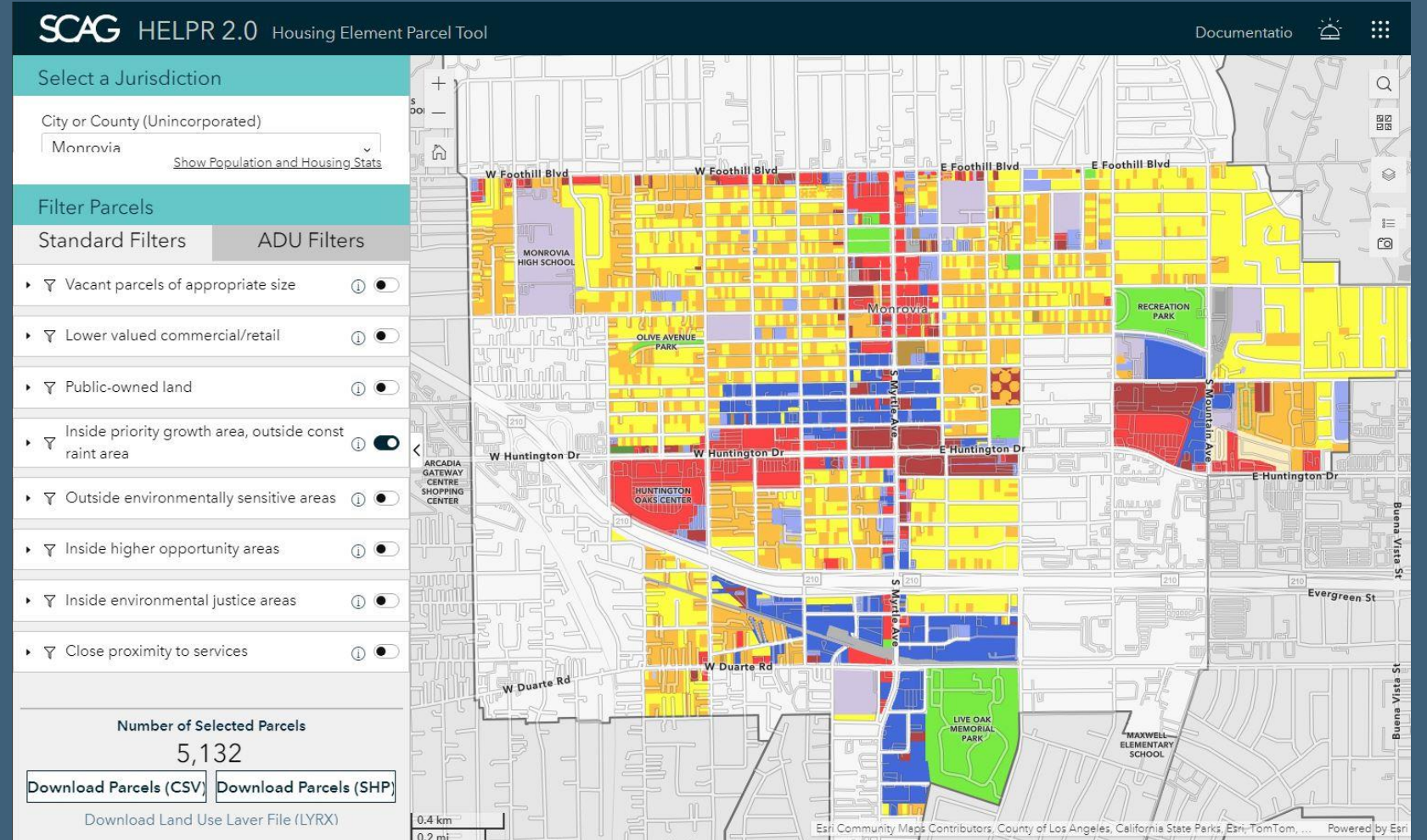
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Echo Zheng, PhD, Assistant Regional Planner, SCAG



# HELPR 2.0

- Assists with understanding:
  - Local land use
  - Site opportunities
  - Site constraints
- Based on parcel-level land use data and other SCAG data



# Overview of Updates to HELPR 3.0

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- Main Idea: Update for CSC24, 'evergreen' tool beyond just HE6
- Update with Connect SoCal 2024 information
- Refine/clarify some of the concepts embedded in HELPR2
- Exploring minor additional app dev features

# Insert Web Page

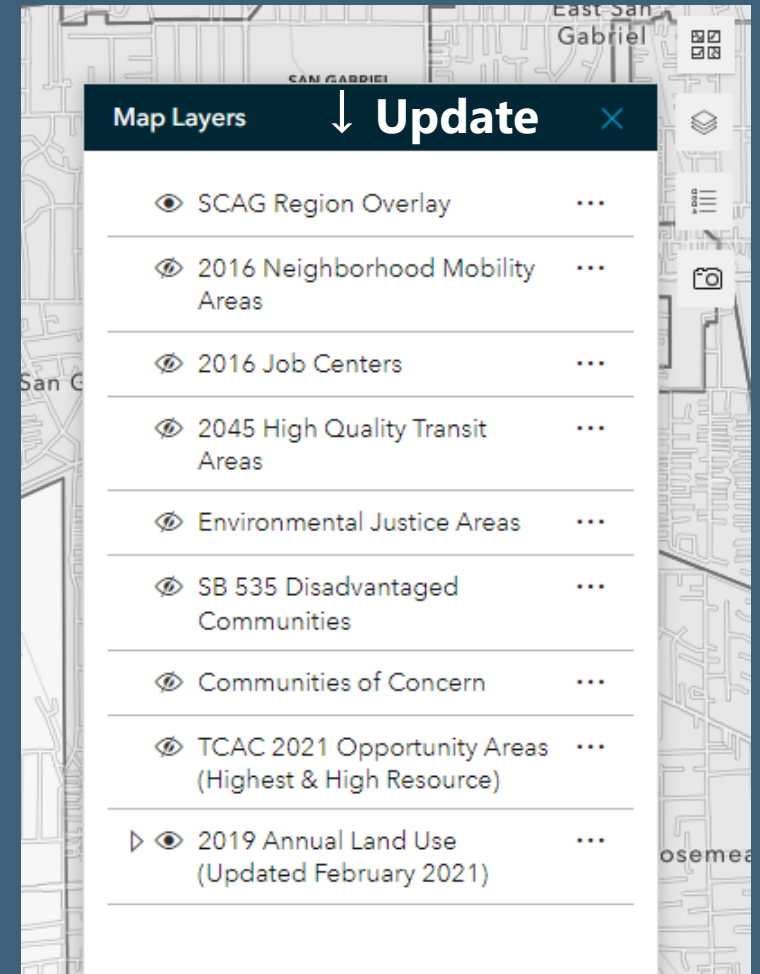
This app allows you to insert secure web pages starting with `https://` into the slide deck. Non-secure web pages are not supported for security reasons.

Please enter the URL below.

Note: Many popular websites allow secure access. Please click on the preview button to ensure the web page is accessible.

# HELPR 3.0

- Main idea: update for CSC24, into an 'evergreen' tool beyond HE6
  - HELPR now will be **H**ousing, **E**nvironment, and **L**and use **PaR**cel tool
- Update with Connect SoCal 2024 information
  - Underlying parcel data
  - New overlay layers
  - New filters to match the plan
    - PDAs and GRRAs
    - Priority population areas (e.g., Priority Equity Communities)



# HELPR 3.0 (cont.)

- Refine/clarify concepts embedded in HELPR2
  - Physical attributes → size, slope
  - Redevelopment potential → IL ratio, year built, w/wo specific plan
  - Travel and destinations → proximity to various types of everyday destinations, accessibility of jobs, VMT measures
- Exploring minor additional app development features

The screenshot displays the 'Filter Parcels' application interface. It features a teal header with the title 'Filter Parcels' and two tabs: 'Standard Filters' and 'ADU Filters'. The 'ADU Filters' tab is active. Below the tabs, there are three filter categories, each with a dropdown arrow, a filter icon, and an information icon. The first filter is 'Vacant parcels of appropriate size', which is currently active (indicated by a black circle). It includes a dropdown for 'Existing land use is of type' with '4 Selected' shown, and a range input for 'Acreage is between' with '0.5' and '10' entered. The second filter is 'Lower valued commercial/retail', also active, with a dropdown for 'Existing land use is of type' showing '6 Selected' and a text input for 'Ratio of improvement assessed value to land assessed value is less than' with '1' entered. The third filter is 'Public-owned land', which is currently inactive (indicated by a grey circle). A fourth filter, 'Inside priority growth area - outside constraint area', is partially visible at the bottom.

# Questions & suggestions

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- HELPR 3.0 is planning to be released in Fall 2024
- We solicited input from SCAG's TWG in Spring 2024
  - What filters work and how can they be improved?
  - How to make the tool user-friendly?
  - How to improve the tool to better serve our stakeholders?



# THANK YOU!

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For more information, please visit:

**<https://scag.ca.gov/connect-socal>**

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(213) 630-1505



# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: VCOG CEQA STREAMLINING PROJECT

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- **Andrew Kent, Program Manager, Transportation Data & Services, Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC)**
- **Caitlin Brooks, Program Manager, Transportation Planning, Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC)**





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VENTURA COUNCIL  
OF GOVERNMENTS

## Ventura County Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Adaptive Mitigation Program (AMP) for CEQA Streamlining



# REAP Project

Funded by State Department of Housing and Community Development Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grant via SCAG.



Managed By



Consultants



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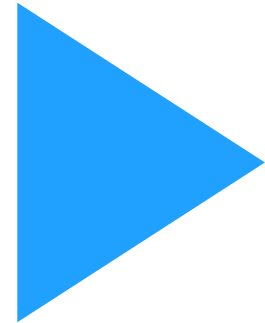
# Presentation



1. Ventura County CEQA VMT AMP
2. Affordable Housing as VMT Mitigation
3. Capacity Building and Communication

# 1 Ventura County CEQA VMT AMP

- Achieve REAP goals while streamlining CEQA for Housing Development in Ventura County (especially affordable housing)
  - Accelerate infill development that facilitates housing supply, choice, and affordability
  - Affirmatively further fair housing
  - Reduce VMT



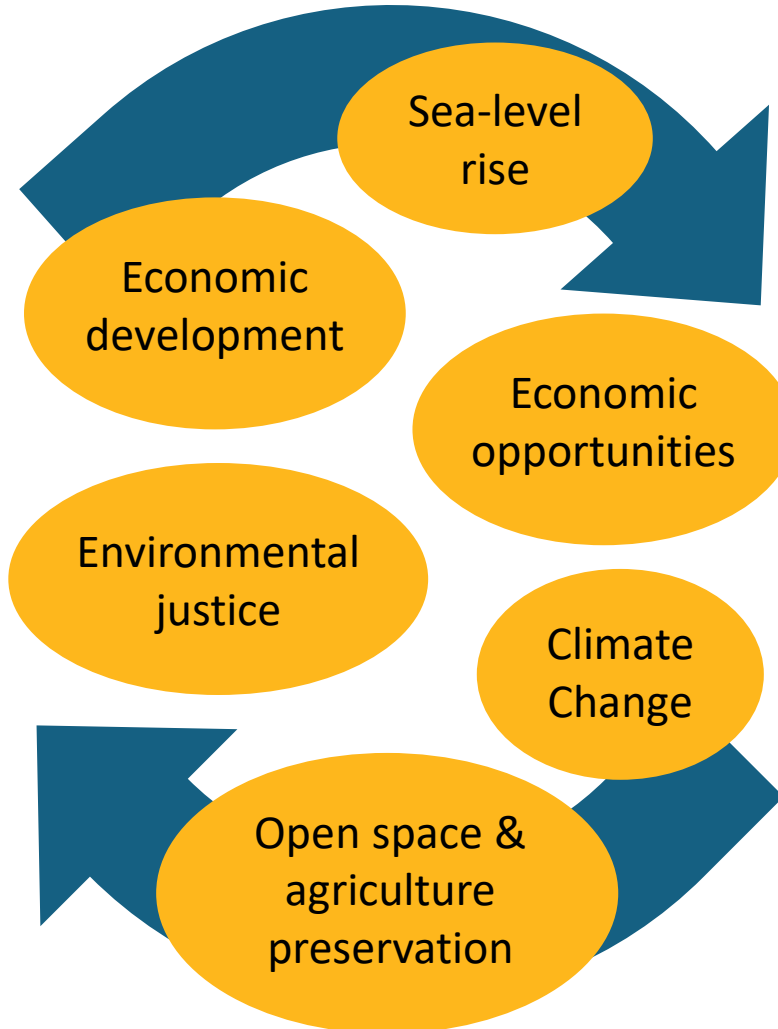
# Challenges Facing Ventura County



## TRANSPORTATION

- Public transit system
- Traffic congestion
- Traffic safety
- High GHG emissions
- Roadway infrastructure costs

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## HOUSING

- Housing affordability
- Aging population
- Disparity of housing needs and supply
- Parking

# CEQA Adaptive Mitigation Program



## Multifaceted, Capacity Building Tools for the County's Lead Agencies

- How to assess VMT
  - Where development would have low VMT
- What strategies can lower VMT
  - Mitigation options
  - A mechanism for fair share (partial) mitigation
- Mitigation monitoring
- Capacity building

# CEQA Streamlining

Address VMT earlier = More streamlined process (time and \$)

Outcome

Avoid

Minimize  
Rectify

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VMT Reduction Strategies

- Onsite / Project-Level Element
- Project Site Mitigation
- Lead Agency Developed Mitigation
- Multi-jurisdictional Transportation Investment

Increasing Scale of Strategy

# CEQA Streamlining Roles – Lead Agencies



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## RHNA and Housing Element allocation to Low VMT Areas

- 75% of future housing allocated in HQTAs or areas below 85% of current VMT

## Define VMT Thresholds for CEQA review

- Can develop their own or rely on State Guidance for 85% of baseline VMT

## Define Set of Multimodal Infrastructure Projects that can be funded as mitigation of development projects

- Type to Reduce VMT - Nexus Requirement
- Funds Not Previously Committed - Additionality Requirement



# CEQA Streamlining Roles – Project Proponents



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## Review of Project Area VMT as part of due diligence

- Determine VMT Characteristics and need for Project Elements to reduce VMT

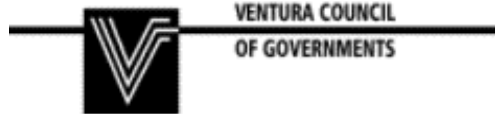
## Develop Projects to Avoid VMT Impacts

- Focus on low VMT areas
- Mixed-Use, Affordable Housing, On-Site elements to reduce vehicle use (e.g. bicycle parking)
- Take credit for VMT-reducing elements

## Include VMT Reduction in Early Discussions with Lead Agencies

- Feasible VMT reducing elements

# CEQA Streamlining Roles – VCTC and VCOG



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## Continue to Provide Technical Analysis

- Maintain Travel Demand Model (VCTM) for the best quantitative VMT data source

## Refine CEQA AMP as a Regional Standard of CEQA Transportation Assessment

- Work with all parties to improve tools and processes

## Provide Capacity and Support to Lead Agencies

## Develop Regional Options for Avoidance/Mitigation

- Feasible regional mitigation options

# CEQA Streamlining Roles – Stakeholders



## Develop Avoidance and Mitigation Options

- Mechanisms for funding transit or affordable housing as VMT reduction strategies

## Participate the in the Process

- Help guide the next steps towards sustainable development

## 2 Affordable Housing as CEQA Mitigation

- Recommendations of VMT assessment for affordable housing
  - Numerous mechanisms for streamlining/screening
  - Cities tend to use a few common approaches
- Mechanism(s) for affordable housing funding for CEQA mitigation for VMT impacts
  - Caltrans Mitigation Playbook
  - Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program
  - How to take appropriate credit with concern for....additionality, double counting, proportionality, feasibility, consistency, substantial evidence.

# 2 Affordable Housing as CEQA Mitigation

- Justifiable Nexus between VMT mitigation and affordable housing
- Quantify the \$/VMT to create a path for mitigation
- Example of quantification - Ventura Area Housing Trust
  - \$28 M of funding for 1,200 affordable workforce housing units = \$23.5 K per housing unit
  - \$23.5 K per housing Unit / 50 daily VMT per affordable housing unit = ~\$500 per daily VMT
- Per Caltrans SB 743 Playbook – can take “credit” for as long as:
  - Meets the requirements of CEQA (e.g. is enforceable, etc.)
  - There is a mechanism in place to prevent “double counting” of the mitigation “credit.”
  - With these assurances, a project can take the full mitigation credit of a housing development if it could be shown that “but for” the contribution, the housing project would not have been developed.

# 3 Capacity Building and Communication

- Interviews of CEQA lead agencies, common themes:
  - Need to provide guidance on CEQA exemptions and streamlining opportunities can be applied to a variety of project types
  - Not clear understanding of VMT by general public and some decisionmakers
  - Providing examples of how the Adaptive Mitigation Program guidance can be applied would increase its use
  - VCOG/VCTC input, support, and peer review can drive the adoption of VMT guidance and thresholds at the local level
  - The development of a Countywide VMT analysis tool for individual projects

# 3 Capacity Building and Communication

- Bottom Line:
  - Most Agencies have limited staff and limited capacity for CEQA administration, therefore assistance and the resources from peer agencies, the County, and regional agencies is important.

# 3 Capacity Building and Communication

- Story Campaign
  - Clear
  - Consistent
  - Multiple media (digital, fact sheet, presentation, branding, etc.)
- Abridged version on following 10 slides

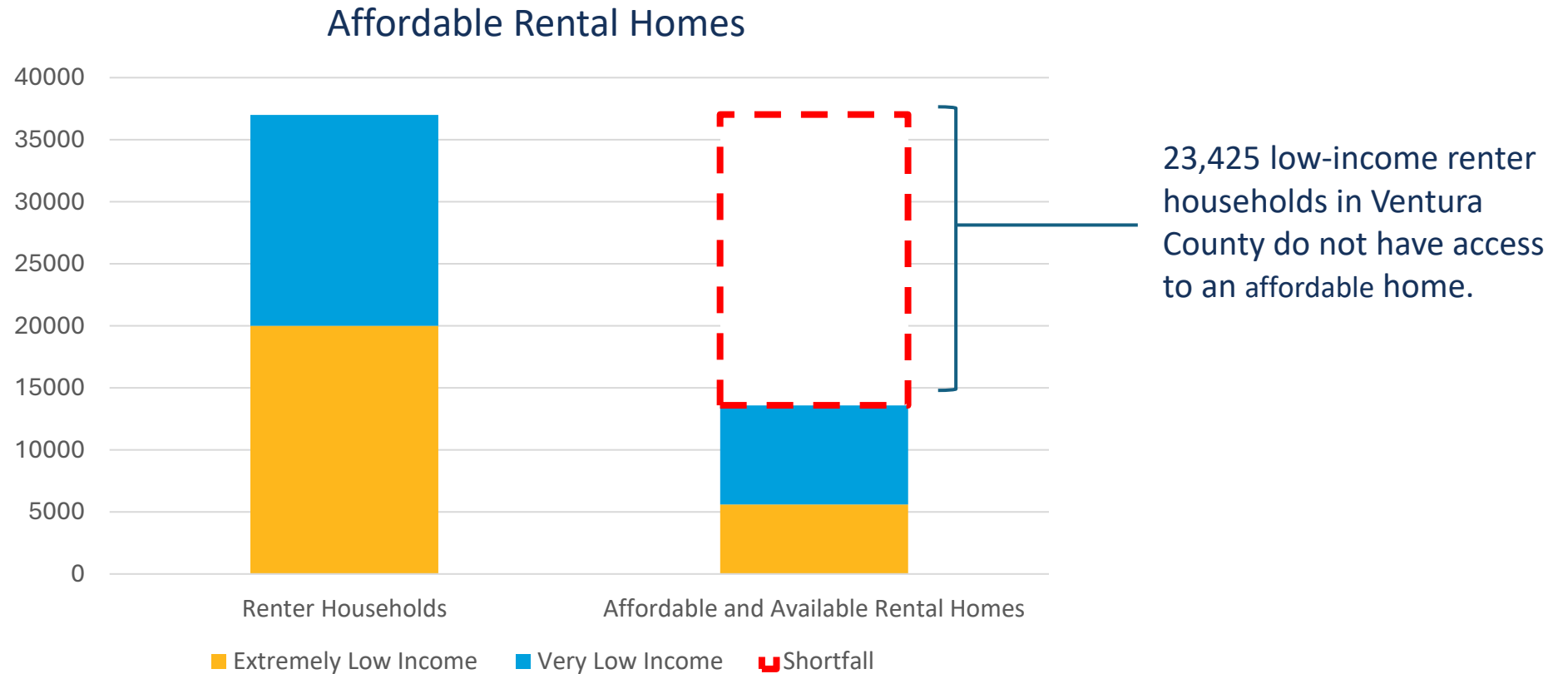


# Ventura County Today

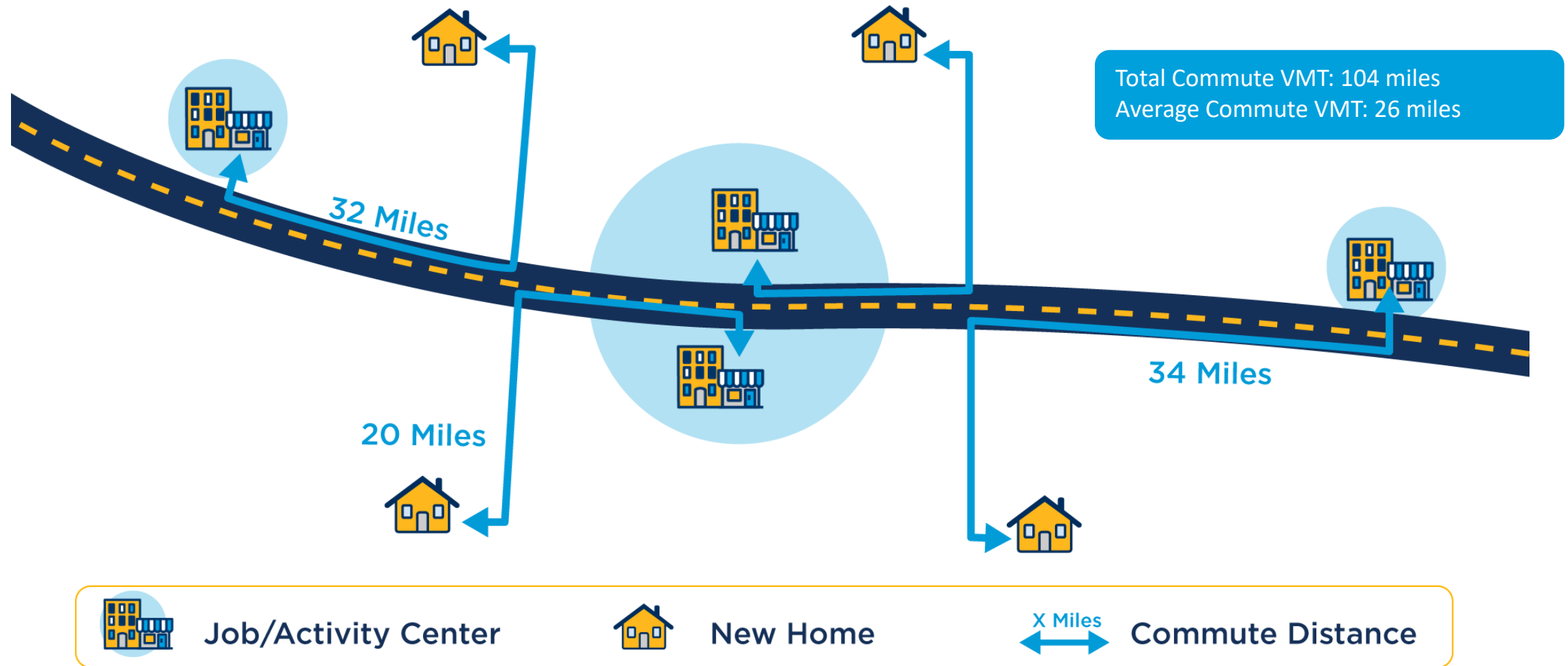


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# Housing Production Needs



# Four New Homes – How Location Effects VMT (Spread Out Development)



# Seven New Houses – How Location Affects VMT (Infill Development)



 Job/Activity Center       New Home       X Miles Commute Distance

# Working Together

New Housing



Access to Multimodal Transportation



Close to Jobs and Services



## Benefits



Reduced Auto Travel



Agricultural Preservation



Reduce GHG



Climate Resiliency



Improve Health

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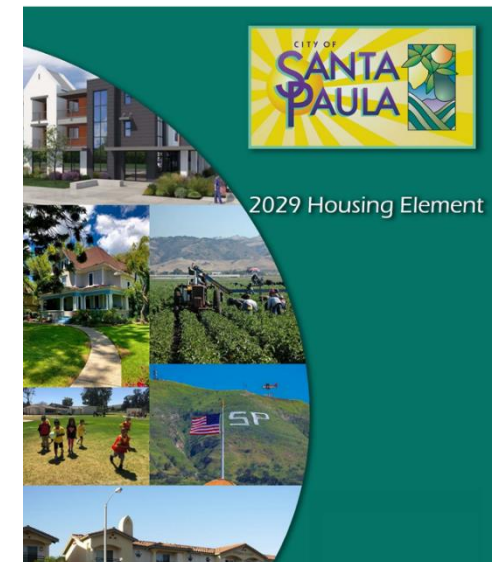
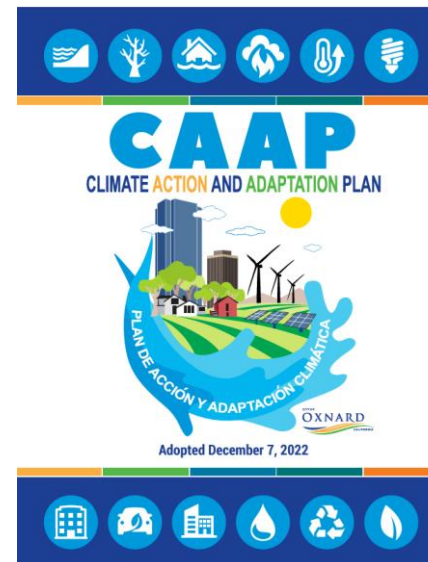
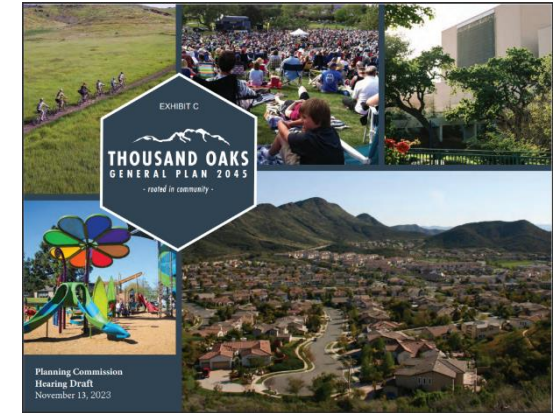


**What Tools Help Us Achieve an Environment Where Housing and Mobility Work Together?**

# Effective City Plans & Policies Lay the Groundwork

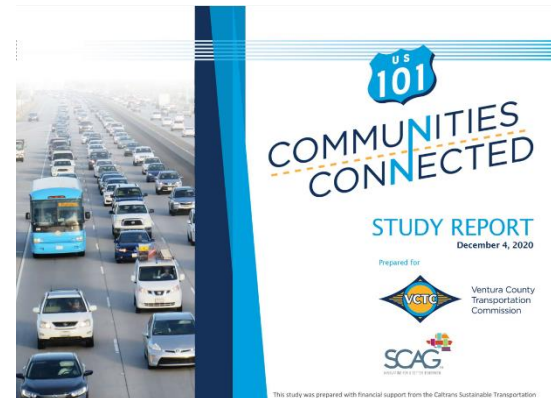
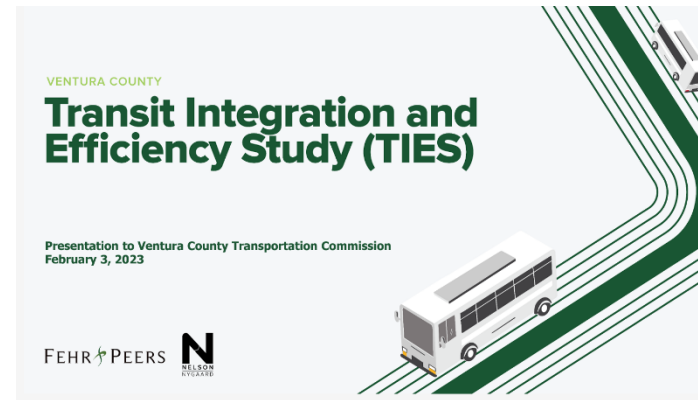
- General Plans
- Housing Elements
- Bicycle Master Plans
- Pedestrian Master Plans
- Climate Action Plans
- Corridor Plans/Specific Plans
- Design Guidelines/Form-based Codes
- Design Standards
- Conditions of Approval

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# Regional Plans & Efforts

- County Comprehensive Transportation Plan
- Transit Integration and Efficiency Study
- VCTC 101 Communities Connected
- Gold Coast Transit District Building Transit Supportive Communities
- Connect So Cal





# What Comes First? Transportation Improvements or New Housing?



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# What Does Working Together Look Like?



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# Resources

- VCTC website [www.goventura.org](http://www.goventura.org)
- VCTC VMT Adaptive Mitigation Program [www.goventura.org/work-with-vctc/vmt-amp](http://www.goventura.org/work-with-vctc/vmt-amp)
  - 101 Connected Communities [www.goventura.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/VCTC\\_US-101\\_CC\\_Final\\_Report\\_12-4-20.pdf](http://www.goventura.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/VCTC_US-101_CC_Final_Report_12-4-20.pdf)
- Office of Planning Research (OPR) <https://opr.ca.gov/>
- SCAG website <https://scag.ca.gov>
  - Go Human <https://scag.ca.gov/go-human>
  - Connect So Cal <https://scag.ca.gov/connect-socal>
- Housing + Transportation Affordability Index <https://htaindex.cnt.org/>

# Thank you!

Amanda Fagan  
afagan@goventura.org





# FORTHCOMING HWG SURVEY

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**Mike Dietz, Housing Planning Supervisor, SCAG**

# Forthcoming HWG Survey

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- Survey to be released within the next few weeks
- Survey will ask about:
  - Topics that people would like to see covered at HWG in the future
  - Approaches that people want to see adopted for future HWG topics
  - Past sessions – what went well and what could be improved
  - Critical challenges in implementing housing-related policies and actions
  - Participation in future HWG meetings
- Survey will be available on SCAG's website
- It will also be distributed to:
  - Past HWG attendees
  - Subregions
  - Anyone who has signed up for our Housing Newsletter
  - SCAG Newsletter recipients



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

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## Announcements - REAP 2.0 Governor's Budget Update

June 22- State legislative leaders announced an agreement on the state budget that retains \$480 million of the original \$510 million for the REAP 2.0 MPO allocation.

\$510 million formula allocations to MPOs → \$480 million

\$246 million = SCAG region's formula share → TBD

- 1 We expect to fund all projects, **with potential for reduced funding awards**
- 2 SCAG will assess final program and project amounts after HCD provides more information on SCAG's formula share



# Announcements – REAP 2.0 Next Steps

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- State Budget was signed into law
- SCAG is pending HCD's final allocation to MPOs
- Grantees will receive notice when the "Stop Work Order" is lifted and they are authorized to proceed
- Ongoing advocacy for a deadline extension

# Announcements – Next HWG Meeting

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- **Save the Date! Next HWG meeting:**
  - Tuesday, October 15, 2024, 10 AM – 12 PM



# THANK YOU!

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For more information, please visit:

[www.scag.ca.gov/housing](http://www.scag.ca.gov/housing)