

CONNECT SOCIAL UPDATE

SCAG recently completed the public outreach phase of Connect SoCal – the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. The agency held a series of 29 public outreach events across the region (28 open-house workshops and one telephone town hall meeting) to share information and get input on how residents travel and their preferences. The workshops drew more than 550 attendees and the telephone town hall had approximately 700 callers stay on the line for the full hour to learn more about Connect SoCal and get answers to a wide range of questions from SCAG Executive Director Kome Ajise (you can listen to a recording of the tele-town hall [here](#)). SCAG also solicited input online, promoting the Connect SoCal survey across multiple channels including social media and radio ads, street teams and partnerships with community-based organizations in each county in the region. The survey was answered by approximately 4,000 people, giving the agency a substantial pool of data for staff to analyze.

SCAG staff also recently completed a series of targeted outreach meetings focused on the Connect SoCal Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). An environmental report that will analyze the potential environmental impacts of the Connect SoCal plan, the PEIR considers at big-picture regional policy solutions and provides a foundation for further environmental review at the local level. The meeting provided an opportunity for representatives of county transportation commissions, councils of governments, and state agencies to share any comments and concerns about the development of the PEIR. Staff presented an overview of the scope of the Connect SoCal PEIR, which was followed by an in-depth discussion. Comments received from the stakeholder meetings will assist SCAG in identifying key areas of concern and guide the drafting of the Connect SoCal PEIR.

A joint meeting of SCAG's Regional Planning Working Groups, which bring together stakeholders to help inform the development of our major transportation and land use plans, is scheduled for Aug. 15, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., at SCAG's main office in downtown Los Angeles. SCAG's seven Regional Planning Working Groups each focus on a specific planning issue or transportation mode and allow interested parties from across industries and sub-regions to have a direct pipeline into SCAG's planning process. Feedback from these meetings will inform the policies, strategies and investments included in Connect SoCal. This meeting will provide updates on the progress of Connect SoCal and members of the working groups will summarize the outcomes of their meetings thus far and outline the next steps in the plan development process. Directly following the joint meeting, the Environmental Justice Working Group will have a meeting of their own from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

All working group meetings are open to the public – if you are interested in attending, in person or via web streaming, [RSVP here](#) (videoconferencing options via [SCAG's regional offices](#) will be provided upon request). For details on other upcoming meetings and to learn more about our Regional Planning Working Groups, visit the [SCAG website](#). You can find the latest details on the plan's development at [ConnectSoCal.org](#).

DEMOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP ADDRESSED CHALLENGES FOR 2020 CENSUS AND LONG-RANGE PLANNING

Thank you to our event speakers and everyone who joined us for the 30th Annual Demographic Workshop on Tuesday, June 11, at the University of Southern California! The event, co-hosted by SCAG and the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy, brought together nearly 200 people representing more than 80 different organizations. The event theme, "Make it Count: The Impact of Census 2020 and Connect SoCal on Our Future," encompassed a range of discussions that provided new research findings and expert insights on the region's slowing population growth, increasingly dire housing shortage and long-range planning efforts to address such challenges.

Audience members also heard from James T. Christy, Assistant Director for Field Operations at the United States Census Bureau, who gave a keynote address that illuminated the tremendous effort going into the upcoming 2020 Census, and how they've prepared to tackle its unique challenges. Other highlights included a roundtable discussion session that fostered substantive conversations on topics including the 2020 Census, the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, trends in population growth and more. Many thanks to our key

program partners: the United States Census Bureau, the California Department of Finance's Demographic Research Unit and the California Department of Housing and Community Development. To view presentations and photos from the event, visit the [SCAG website](#).

REGION-WIDE TRAFFIC SAFETY WORKSHOPS COMING IN AUGUST

Take action to create safer streets by joining SCAG at a traffic safety workshop this August. Four workshops will be held at locations across the region, offering attendees the opportunity to hear from traffic safety experts and learn proven tactics for reducing traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries.

The program will feature expert panels and highlight successful strategies for improving traffic safety, centering on the "four E's" of building safer streets: education, enforcement, engineering and evaluation. SCAG will also provide a menu of free resources for partners to use, including safety signage, programming modules and a kit of parts for temporary safety infrastructure demonstrations.

Any local government or public agency staff in a position to move traffic safety initiatives forward, including city planners, public works directors, local law enforcement officers and traffic engineers are invited to attend. Select a workshop near you and [register online here](#). Please direct any questions to Hina Chanchlani at chanchlani@scag.ca.gov.

SCAG PARTICIPATION STRONG AT 2019 ESRI USER CONFERENCE

As part of the agency's ongoing efforts to enhance data-driven decision-making across Southern California, SCAG hosted a [special workshop](#) at the [2019 Esri User Conference](#) in San Diego, , sharing new data resources with local cities and counties from across the region. The hour-long session primarily focused on three of SCAG's latest data programs: the Future Communities Initiative, the Aerial Imagery Consortium and the Regional Data Platform. In addition to providing information about these projects, the session also served to collect feedback from the local jurisdictions in attendance about how SCAG's data programs can be designed and adjusted to best serve their needs

Drawing approximately 120 attendees representing over 30 jurisdictions, the session garnered significant positive feedback. Those in attendance came from various levels across the fields of planning and governance, including: planning directors, economic development directors, military officers that specialize in GIS and geospatial analysis, water districts, representatives for indigenous groups and more. The session wrapped up with an overview of results from surveys on the [Aerial Imagery Consortium](#) and [Regional Data Needs](#). Overall findings indicate that most local agencies support SCAG taking a leadership role in championing open data in the region. The surveys also provided insight into how cities and counties in the region are currently using aerial imagery, and how that can be built upon in the future. Both surveys are still active, so if you haven't already, please you can share your own input on our Aerial Imagery Consortium and your Regional Data Needs. If you have any questions about this workshop or SCAG's data services, please contact Kimberly Clark at GISdata@scag.ca.gov.

TOOLBOX TRAINING ON AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION GRANTS

SCAG's popular Toolbox Training series returned on June 26 with a workshop and webinar about grant funding opportunities for agricultural conservation planning. The training, which was FREE for staff of SCAG-member local governments and other SCAG partners in the region, was a partnership with the California Department of Conservation, which recently announced new grants for local and regional planning through its [Working Lands and Riparian Corridors Program](#), funded by Proposition 68. The funding supports the integration of agricultural lands into local and regional plans such as climate action plans, sustainable communities strategies and general plans. Department of Conservation staff discussed the grant program, introduced their TerraCount scenario planning tool and provided technical support on the application process. For any questions, please contact India Brookover at brookover@scag.ca.gov. Future events on other exciting topics will be announced via email and [SCAG Sustainability Program website](#).

STATE'S HOUSING TRAILER BILL AWAITS THE GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE

On July 5, the California State Legislature finalized the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 101, the budget trailer bill having to do with housing development and financing. The legislation provides one-time funding opportunities for cities and counties related to housing production and homelessness initiatives. Local jurisdictions will receive funding based on population formulas outlined in the bill. Just as importantly, SCAG and other councils of governments are also eligible to receive funding through the legislation, specifically to address the 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and other planning activities that promote housing production. AB 101 awaits the Governor's signature.

RELEASE OF I-105 CORRIDOR SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

In June 2019, SCAG's Transportation Committee approved finalizing the I-105 Corridor Sustainability Study. The goal of the study was to identify a comprehensive set of multi-modal solutions to reduce congestion and improve safety and mobility along the I-105 Corridor. The results of this study included a detailed assessment of the corridor conditions, a list of projects to improve future corridor conditions and a framework for evaluating the potential improvements. The final report is now available at: scag.ca.gov/105CorridorStudy. As background, SCAG was awarded a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant in FY 16-17 to examine the I-105 corridor and to assess further multi-modal potential. Since then, SCAG has worked collaboratively with key stakeholders, including Caltrans, Metro, South Bay Cities Council of Governments, Gateway Cities Council of Governments, as well as the cities along the I-105 Corridor in completing this study. Questions or comments related to this study to Naresh Amatya at amatya@scag.ca.gov.

JOINT SCAG/ICTC TRAFFIC ANALYSIS PROJECT COMPLETED

In June, SCAG and the Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC) completed the Calexico West Port-of-Entry Traffic Circulation Plan. Working closely with regional, state, national, and international (i.e., Mexico) partners and stakeholders, SCAG and ICTC conducted a study to assist the City of Calexico with daily traffic management as a result of the Phase 1 expansion and reconfiguration of the Calexico West Port-of-Entry. With SCAG as the lead applicant, ICTC was awarded a Caltrans State Planning and Research grant to analyze traffic conditions related to the opening of the border crossing. The goal of the project was to provide traffic circulation strategies to promote more efficient mobility for border travel. The study also focused on appropriate and feasible reductions in traffic delay and the need for traffic control staff.

The project began in April 2018, and during its development, provided an opportunity to conduct broad community outreach. In July 2018, the new Calexico West Port-of-Entry southbound access point was opened, followed by the opening of the northbound access point in September 2018. The final component of the project included considerations for the opening of Cesar Chavez Boulevard following a widening project in the City of Calexico. During the development of the plan, the team conducted five technical working group meetings and three full-day community outreach workshops. On June 28, the ICTC Board approved and accepted the final study report. The City of Calexico will be able to use the findings from the project to make further adjustments to the traffic recommendations to accommodate the flow of goods and people through the port-of-entry and the adjacent border area. The project was completed successfully, on-time, and within budget.

MAJOR SOUTH COAST AIR PLANS ARE RECEIVING PROPOSED APPROVAL BY U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

On June 17, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published a proposed rule in the Federal Register to approve several ozone air quality implementation plans in the 2016 South Coast Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). As reported previously, SCAG prepared the regional transportation strategy and control measures portion of the 2016 AQMP. If the rule is finalized as proposed, the South Coast region would fulfill all air quality planning requirements with the exception of one element under conditional approval for the 1979, 1997, and 2008 ozone national ambient air quality standards. Failure to meet the required federal air quality planning requirement could lead to serious consequences that impact regional transportation plan, program, and projects. In addition, upon final approval, the new ozone transportation conformity budgets in the ozone plans will apply to SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan, Federal Transportation Improvement Program, and their amendments. For additional information about the proposed rule, see the Federal Register Notice at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-06-17/pdf/2019-12176.pdf>.

EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE RETREAT

From July 17-19, SCAG's Executive Administrative Committee held a retreat in the City of Big Bear Lake to discuss priorities and strategic initiatives for the agency for 2019-2020, progress on Connect SoCal – the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy and the 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment and associated issues of importance to both of the aforementioned planning initiatives such as housing availability and affordability, transportation affordability, and displacement, and state funding opportunities for both transportation and housing. Another topic that came up was the unique position of SCAG as a regional convener or voice with some indicating that the agency is well-positioned to serve a greater role in housing as a regional repository for best practices in terms of local initiatives and actions (e.g., reduced development fees, simplified permitting processes, etc.) that can reduce the cost of building, but also to help develop a coalition of the willing to tackle the housing crisis.