



2026 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public Participation Plan Overview

SCAG is the nation's largest MPO and represents one of the most multi-faceted areas in the world, which is home to nearly 19 million people throughout 197 local jurisdictions. SCAG is governed by the Regional Council, a board of 86 elected officials who represent districts across the region.

Public participation is fundamental to SCAG's mission because understanding the needs of local governments, stakeholders, and the public strengthens planning processes. In many ways, SCAG's success relies on meaningful participation.

As the voice and visioner for the Southern California region, SCAG's work must reflect the multitude of voices, interests, and resources that play a part in the region's systems. Engaging broadly and considering input is essential for effectively balancing numerous factors and is essential to the success of such large-scale efforts for which SCAG is responsible, including the following major activities:

- Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (Connect SoCal, RTP/SCS)
- Program Environmental Impact Report for Connect SoCal (Connect SoCal PEIR)
- Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP)
- Southern California's Transportation Overall Work Program (OWP)
- Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

This Public Participation Plan (PPP) outlines SCAG's vision and commitments to representative, accessible, and effective engagement in the development of its plans, programs, and initiatives. This plan defines audience categories, methodology for conducting participation efforts, summarizes communication activities, and describes SCAG's measures and processes for evaluating public and stakeholder participation.



SCAG Public Participation Standards

The 2026 Update to SCAG's Public Participation Plan coalesces participation approaches into "SCAG's Participation Standards," a methodology for participation in alignment with SCAG's 2024 Strategic Plan. Specifically, this PPP aligns under Strategic Priority 2 of that plan, which is to "Be a cohesive and influential voice for the region" and corresponding, Objective 2.1, which is to "Build a deep understanding of the needs of all our communities and stakeholders to inform our work."

The 2026 Draft Public Participation Plan outlines SCAG's Participation Standards, which are rooted in strategic priorities, legal requirements, and recognition that meaningful public input leads to better planning outcomes:

- **Representative input:** SCAG will pursue public and stakeholder input that reflects the diversity of the region and is tailored to the specific needs and goals of each program or planning effort.
- **Federal and state compliance:** All engagement activities are structured to comply with federal and state mandates for public involvement, interagency coordination, and transparency.
- **Communication best practices:** SCAG is committed to communication that encourages understanding of its content across various audiences.

Participation by Audience

The document also organizes SCAG's multitude of audiences into three broad categories to guide planning and execution of participation efforts. These categories are:

- **Public entities**, including municipalities, local government entities, state political subdivisions, and federally recognized tribal governments are part of SCAG's General Assembly, Regional Council and policy committees, as well as other ad-hoc committees that shape SCAG's work. These include entities such as ports, transit operators, public utilities, air districts, and any other government agencies that oversee or manage critical infrastructure and resources in Southern California.
- **Stakeholders** include business and industry representatives (freight, real estate, construction, manufacturing, etc.), community-based organizations, non-profit

organizations, and advocacy groups, and other non-government entities that bring critical expertise, represent communities and sectors, and help shape SCAG's policy and program priorities.

- **General Public**, specifically all people who live in Southern California and are stakeholders in regional planning outcomes. As a government agency, transparency is also key, with all public input opportunities open to anyone who responds or seeks them out. SCAG conducts its business openly and transparently, with document and proceedings accessible online and open to the public.

Participation Tactics Toolbox

The 2026 Draft Public Participation Plan also organizes participation activities into a Participation Tactics Toolbox, allowing individual efforts to be tailored to reach different audiences, depending on the goals of the specific participation effort. The numerous tactics that SCAG uses for participation are categorized according to required resources and level of effort:

- **Owned tactics** include platforms controlled by SCAG, which require the least amount of resources and shortest lead times. These tactics tend to reach audiences already connected to SCAG whom it engages with regularly, and are carried out in accordance with its [Title VI Program](#).
- **Partnership tactics** rely on third-party messengers who share SCAG's information at no cost because it aligns with their mission. These tactics help to extend SCAG's reach to these partners' audiences.
- **Paid tactics** involve a monetary cost, making them the most resource intensive category. However, these tactics can reach audiences far beyond SCAG's and its partners' existing networks, and can be an important means of gathering representative input.

Evaluation

SCAG is committed to continuous improvement in its engagement practices and regularly measures the effectiveness of its communication and engagement work. Insights from measurement are used to refine future participation efforts in regional



planning cycles to ensure each round of engagement is effective and aligned with audience preferences and participation standards

PPP Development Process

Prior to adoption by SCAG's Regional Council in February 2026, this Public Participation Plan was reviewed by committees and circulated for public comment.

In September, 2025, SCAG's Legislative Communication/Membership Committee approved the Proposed Draft Public Participation Plan for circulation. This initiated a public comment period that ran between Sept. 22, through Nov. 7, 2025. The draft document was also presented to the Technical Working Group for public comment on November 20, 2025.

Staff reviewed comments and incorporated them into the document where appropriate. The Proposed Final Public Participation Plan was presented to SCAG's Executive/Administration Committee in February, 2026, where it was recommended to the Regional Council for adoption.