



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
EXECUTIVE/ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (EAC)
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2026**

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES IS A SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE/ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (EAC). AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE ACTUAL MEETING IS AVAILABLE AT: <http://scag.iqm2.com/Citizens/>.

The Executive/Administration Committee (EAC) 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. Ray Marquez, 1st Vice President	<i>Chino Hills</i>	District 10
Hon. Jenny Crosswhite, 2nd Vice President	<i>Santa Paula</i>	District 47
Sup. Curt Hagman, Imm. Past President		San Bernardino County
Hon. David J. Shapiro, Chair CEHD	<i>Calabasas</i>	District 44
Hon. Rocky Rhodes, Vice Chair CEHD	<i>Simi Valley</i>	District 46
Hon. Daniel Ramos, Vice Chair EEC	<i>Adelanto</i>	District 65
Hon. Mike Judge, Chair, TC	<i>VCTC</i>	Ventura County
Hon. Thomas Wong, Vice Chair, TC	<i>Monterey Park</i>	District 34
Hon. Patricia Lock Dawson, Chair LCMC	<i>Riverside</i>	District 68
Hon. Margaret Finlay, Vice Chair LCMC	<i>Duarte</i>	District 35
Hon. Mike Goodsell, President’s Appt.	<i>ICTC</i>	Holtville
Hon. Jan Harnik, President’s Appt.	<i>RCTC</i>	Riverside
Hon. Lucy Dunn		Business Representative

Members Not Present

Hon. Cindy Allen, President	<i>Long Beach</i>	District 30
Hon. Rick Denison, Chair EED	<i>Yucca Valley</i>	District 11
Hon. Wendy Bucknum	<i>Mission Viejo</i>	District 13
Hon. Karen Bass, President’s Appt.	<i>Los Angeles</i>	Member-At-Large
Hon. Andrew Masiel, Sr.	<i>Pechanga Dev. Corp.</i>	TGRP Representative

Staff Present

- Kome Ajise, Executive Director
- Darin Chidsey, Chief Operating Officer
- Cindy Giraldo, Chief Financial Officer
- Sarah Jepson, Chief Planning Officer
- Javiera Cartagena, Chief Government and Public Affairs Officer

Carmen Flores, Chief Human Resources Officer
Ruben Duran, Board Counsel
Jeffery Elder, Chief Counsel/Director of Legal Services
Maggie Aguilar, Clerk of the Board
Cecilia Pulido, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

First Vice President Ray Marquez called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. and asked Regional Council Member Michael Goodsell, ICTC, to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

First Vice President Marquez opened the Public Comment Period.

Board Counsel Ruben Duran acknowledged there were no written public comments received.

Seeing no public comment speakers, First Vice President Marquez closed the Public Comment Period.

REVIEW AND PRIORITIZE AGENDA ITEMS

There was no prioritization of agenda items.

ACTION ITEM

1. Transit Funding for 2026 FIFA World Cup

There were no public comments on Item 1.

Kome Ajise, Executive Director, explained this item was an approval to assign \$9.6 million in one-time federal funding to support transit services for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. He noted that Congress had set aside \$100 million nationwide to help host regions pay for extra transit needed during the event. These funds were distributed to large urban areas with World Cup stadiums rather than to individual transit agencies. He explained that under this process, the Los Angeles–Long Beach–Anaheim area received \$9.6 million, and SCAG was responsible for managing how the funds were assigned. He shared SCAG worked with LA Metro, which had been leading regional planning for World Cup transit since 2024. He stated Metro created a World Cup Regional Task Force and developed plans for enhanced transit service. Since Metro would be the main transit provider during the event, assigning the full amount to Metro allowed the funding to be handled through one grant, which simplified administration and helped meet federal deadlines. He explained Metro would also reimburse other participating transit agencies for eligible services through a regional agreement. Mr. Ajise explained the request was for the committee to approve allocating the entire \$9.6 million to Metro. He stated

this was one-time funding and did not affect regular federal transit funding for agencies in the region. Mr. Ajise also mentioned Metro leadership was present to answer questions.

Regional Council Members expressed concern over how the funds would be utilized and expressed concern for ridership safety. Additionally, members wanted to know what kind of reporting they would see post-World Cup to learn how everything worked out.

Conan Cheung, LA Metro Chief Operations Officer, addressed member concerns and shared how Metro was preparing transit services for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. He explained the effort was part of a \$25 million Metro program supporting the eight matches being held in Los Angeles County. He stated Metro would increase service on its rail system using its own funding, separate from the federal funds discussed earlier. He stated the federal funding would mainly support partnerships with about 12 regional transit providers, including agencies within and outside LA County, such as Riverside Transit, Omnitrans, and OCTA. He stated funding would also support accessible transit services. Furthermore, he shared that during the event, Metro planned to operate about 300 additional buses—around 100 from Metro, 100 from regional partners, and 100 contracted buses. These buses will provide direct service from park-and-ride locations and major hubs like Union Station and LAX straight to the stadium, creating a special transit network for World Cup attendees. Metro is also improving stations by focusing on cleanliness, safety, and security. This included upgraded security operations, coordination with local and county law enforcement, and staffing emergency operations centers across the region, including at SoFi Stadium and nearby cities. He also shared that to make paying for transit easier, Metro was expanding contactless payment options, allowing riders to pay with credit or debit cards (including international cards), Apple Wallet, the TAP app, or traditional TAP cards. He indicated that special commemorative TAP cards would also be available. Lastly, he shared that the goal overall was to make transit during the World Cup safe, reliable, and easy to use for residents and visitors alike.

A MOTION was made (Ramos) to recommend that the Regional Council approve staff's recommendation to submit a split letter to the Federal Transit Administration, assigning 100 percent of the Los Angeles – Long Beach – Anaheim Urbanized Area FY 2026 World Cup Formula Funding Apportionment to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority as the recipient agency. Motion was SECONDED (Finlay) and passed by the following votes:

AYES: Crosswhite, Finlay, Goodsell, Hagman, Harnik, Judge, Lock Dawson, Marquez, Ramos, Rhodes, Shapiro, and Wong (12)

NOES: None (0)

ABSTAIN: None (0)

CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no public comments on the Consent Calendar.

Approval Items

2. Minutes of the Meeting – March 4, 2026
3. Resolution No. 26-680-1 Approving Amendment 3 to the FY 2025-26 Comprehensive Budget, including the Overall Work Program (OWP)

Receive and File

4. Purchase Orders, Contracts and Contract Amendments below Regional Council Approval Threshold
5. CFO Monthly Report

A MOTION was made (Finlay) to approve Consent Calendar Items 2 and 3 and Receive and File Items 4 and 5. Motion was SECONDED (Goodsell) and passed by the following votes:

AYES: Crosswhite, Finlay, Goodsell, Hagman, Harnik, Judge, Lock Dawson, Marquez, Ramos, Rhodes, Shapiro, and Wong (12)

NOES: None (0)

ABSTAIN: None (0)

INFORMATION ITEM

6. SCAG Fiscal Year 2025-26 Vacancies, Recruitment, and Retention Efforts

Carmen Flores, Chief Human Resources Officer, presented an annual workforce update required by state law, sharing information on staffing levels, hiring, and employee retention ahead of the FY27 budget. She reported that SCAG's workforce remains stable and engaged. As of March 12, 2026, SCAG had 19 vacancies out of 244 positions, a 7.8% vacancy rate, which she described as manageable. Employee turnover was low at 2.7% this fiscal year, down significantly from last year, and retention remained strong at 95.4%. During FY26, SCAG launched 14 recruitments, conducted 67 interviews, hired 16 employees, and continues to face hiring challenges for specialized roles due to a competitive job market. She shared that in order to address this, SCAG was investing in long-term talent development through a junior planner program and an intern program, positioning the agency as an employer of choice. Ms. Flores also noted that a recent compensation study showed SCAG salaries and health contributions lagged behind comparable agencies, which affected recruitment and retention. She stated the FY27 draft budget included steps to improve salary alignment, with future adjustments subject to board approval. She noted that beyond pay, SCAG continued to focus on the employee experience through onboarding, mentoring, training, and regular employee feedback. She concluded that while recruitment challenges exist, they are being actively managed, and SCAG's workforce remained stable, high-performing, and well-supported.

CFO REPORT

Cindy Giraldo, Chief Financial Officer, thanked the members for their support of Budget Amendment 3. She stated this would be their last budget amendment for fiscal year 26, with the approval of fiscal year 27 budget scheduled for the following month. She stated that the 30-day public comment period for the overall work program came to an end on April 6. She stated they had received one comment, which was addressed and did not result in any change to the draft document that was presented to them. Additionally, she reported they had their first fiscal year 28 budget meeting as staff the day before. Lastly, she concluded her report with a brief update on SCAG's ERP project. She stated the RFP closed on March 18 and that they were really pleased with the response they got. She stated they received a total of 14 proposals and of those, 11 advanced on to the proposal review committee. She stated they would continue to keep them appraised as this important project moves forward.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

First Vice President Marquez reported that President Cindy Allen led a SCAG delegation to Sacramento on March 16–17 for the agency's annual Sacramento Summit, which focused on advancing SCAG's two sponsor bills, SB 1087 and AB 2002. He indicated that SB 1087 seeks to modernize the framework established under SB 375 (2009) governing Sustainable Communities Strategies, while AB 2002 would codify the 2019 Regional Early Action Planning program (REAP 1.0), which supported RHNA implementation, provided direct assistance to jurisdictions, streamlined housing element preparation, facilitated ADU permitting, and advanced fair housing efforts. He noted that the delegation also advocated for a \$125 million one-time state budget allocation to support implementation of the 7th RHNA cycle, expected to be the costliest to date due to new requirements. He shared that over the course of the trip, SCAG representatives met with more than 39 legislators and legislative staff. Additionally, First Vice President Marquez reported that President Allen recently joined a California Assembly delegation on a trip to Japan focused on strengthening ties between California and Asia. He stated that during the visit the group met with U.S. Embassy officials and members of Japan's national government to discuss shared priorities such as agriculture, energy, technology, innovation, and supply chains. He stated the trip also highlighted the value of building strong relationships, an area where SCAG had long experience. He also stated Regional Council Second Vice President Jenny Crosswhite also took part in the delegation. Furthermore, First Vice President Marquez stated new details were available for the 2026 Regional Conference and General Assembly, featuring breakout sessions on sustainable communities, transportation, infrastructure, and the future AI-driven economy. The plenary session, titled "The Future of Regions: Innovating Institutions for a New Era," would anchor the program. He stated the event would take place May 6–8 in Palm Desert. He also congratulated Host Committee Chair Jenny Crosswhite, who raised \$436,750, for the General Assembly, setting a new fundraising record. Lastly, First Vice President Marquez shared a few scheduling updates. He stated the Executive Administration Committee retreat was being planned for June 11–12 at the Lake Arrowhead Resort, with more details coming soon. He stated that on Wednesday, May 6, a tour of the new CV Link multi-use path and Aziz Farms would be held in conjunction with the 2026 Regional Conference and General Assembly. He informed members

that invitations had been sent the week before. He explained that because of the tour, the Executive Administration Committee meeting on May 6 would start one hour later, at 4:00 p.m., at the JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort and Spa in Palm Desert.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Ajise shared updates on the early work to begin Connect SoCal 2050, SCAG's next long-term regional transportation and sustainability plan. He reported that the Joint Policy Committee meeting would include a presentation on early activities, data being gathered, and highlights from the 2026 State of the Region report, which looked at current conditions, emerging issues, and future planning needs. He stated the Regional Council was going to be asked to approve guiding principles that allow staff to start gathering input from cities and counties through the Local Data Exchange, the main way local governments share data and growth plans to shape the regional forecast. He stated meetings with jurisdictions would begin later that month and continue through November, with the goal of informing modeling, policies, and draft plans in 2027. Mr. Ajise also reported that SCAG had begun creating required maps showing areas near transit where new housing and development may be encouraged, following recent state guidance. He shared an informational session for affected cities and transit agencies was planned for later that spring, with the maps going to the Regional Council for consideration in June. Furthermore, he reported SCAG was on track to complete the SoCal Greenprint tool in June 2026. He stated this online mapping tool would help users make informed decisions about land use, transportation, and conservation. He stated testing was underway with local governments and other partners, with a public release planned for June, followed by committee presentations and a summer training session. Finally, Mr. Ajise reported on positive news from Sacramento. He shared SB 1087 passed unanimously out of a Senate committee, moving forward legislation that would update California's regional planning law to better align climate, housing, and transportation goals. He reported AB 2002 also passed unanimously in committee and would make a successful regional housing funding program permanent. He stated SCAG staff and regional partners testified in support of both bills, marking an important step in this year's advocacy efforts.

There were no public comments for the CFO report, President's report, or the Executive Director's report.

CLOSED SESSION

Public Employee Performance Evaluation

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)

Title: Executive Director

Conference with Labor Negotiators

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54957.6

Agency designated representatives: Ruben Duran, Board Counsel

Unrepresented employee: Executive Director

There were no public comments for closed session. Seeing none, the public comment period was closed.

First Vice President Marquez recessed the EAC into Closed Session.

REPORT OF CLOSED SESSION ACTIONS

First Vice President Marquez reconvened the meeting of the EAC.

Board Counsel Duran announced the EAC had just completed its closed session during which it conducted its annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director. He stated it was a very positive performance evaluation. He reported the EAC also directed him, as its labor negotiator, to take terms to Mr. Ajise for an adjustment to his employment agreement, to which he had preliminary agreed to. Lastly, he stated they would work together with staff to prepare an item for the next available open session.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no future agenda items.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, First Vice President Marquez adjourned the Meeting of the Executive/Administration Committee at 5:10 p.m.

[MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE EAC]

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Executive / Administration Committee Attendance Report

2025-26																	Total Mtgs Attended To Date
MEMBERS	CITY	Representing	5-Jun	19-Jun	20-Jun	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	
Hon. Cindy Allen, President, Chair	Long Beach	District 30	1	1	1	1		1	0	1	1		1	1	0		9
Hon. Ray Marquez, 1st Vice Chair	Chino Hills	District 10	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1		11
Hon. Jenny Crosswhite, 2nd Vice Chair	Santa Paula	District 47	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1		11
Hon. Curt Hagman, Imm. Past President		San Bernardino County	1	0	0	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1		9
Hon. David J. Shapiro, Chair, CEHD	Calabasas	District 44	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1		11
Hon. Rocky Rhodes, Vice Chair, CEHD	Simi Valley	District 46	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1		11
Hon. Rick Denison, Chair, EEC	Yucca Valley	District 11	1	1	0	0		0	1	1	0		1	1	0		6
Hon. Daniel Ramos, Vice Chair, EEC	Adelanto	District 65	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1		11
Hon. Mike T. Judge, Chair, TC		VCTC	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1		11
Hon. Thomas Wong, Vice Chair, TC	Monterey Park	District 34	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1		11
Hon. Patricia Lock Dawson, Chair, LCMC	Riverside	District 68	1	0	0	1		1	1	0	1		0	1	1		7
Hon. Margaret Finlay, Vice Chair, LCMC	Duarte	District 35	0	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	0	1		9
Hon. Karen Bass, President's Appt.	Los Angeles	Member-At-Large	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	0	0		0
Hon. Wendy Bucknum, President's Appt.	Mission Viejo	District 13	1	1	0	1		1	1	0	1		1	1	0		8
Hon. Mike Goodsell, President's Appt.		ICTC	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1		11
Hon. Jan Harnik, President's Appt.		RCTC	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	0		1	1	1		10
Hon. Andrew Masiel, Sr.	Pechanga Dev. Corporation	Tribal Government Regional Planning Board	1	0	0	0		0	1	1	0		1	1	0		5
Ms. Lucy Dunn, Ex-Officio Member	Lucy Dunn Strategic Issues Mar	Business Representative	1	1	1	0		0	1	0	1		1	1	1		8
			16	14	12	14	0	14	16	14	14	0	16	16	13	0	159