Workshop
Regional Advance Mitigation Planning and SoCal Greenprint

October 12, 2022

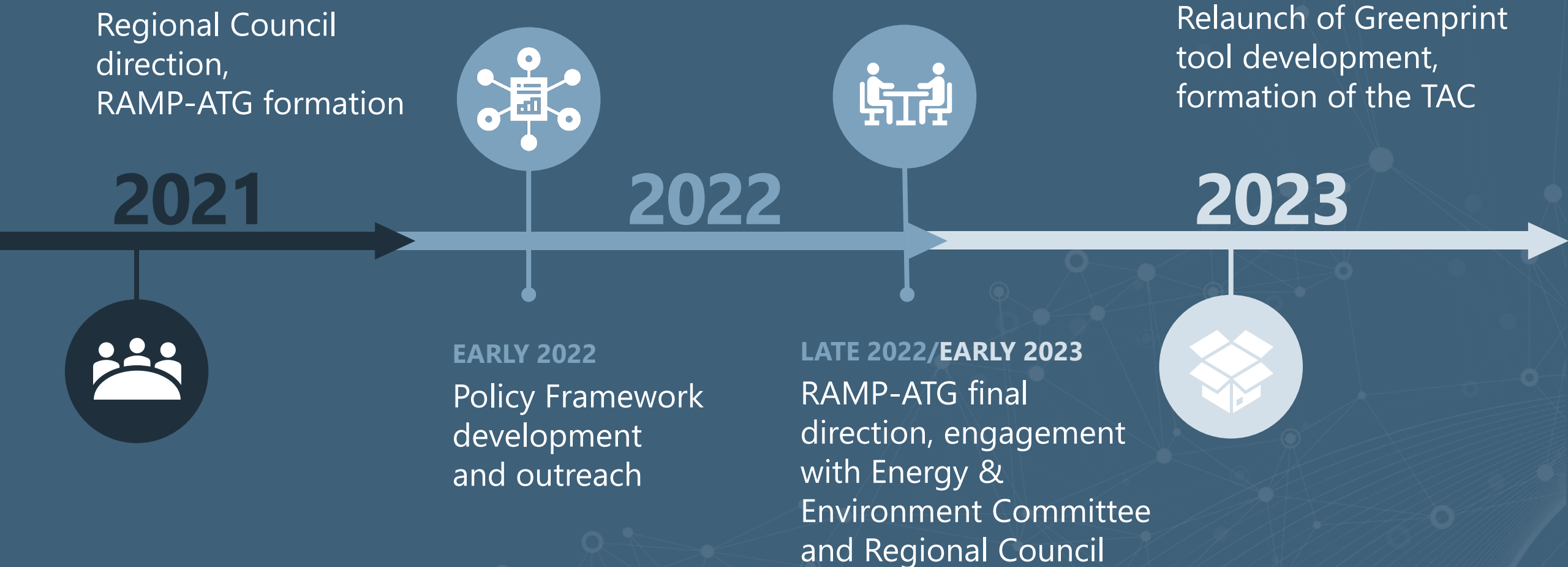**WWW.SCAG.CA.GOV**

Agenda

SCAG™

Who We Are

- SCAG is the nation's **largest metropolitan planning organization**, serving 6 counties, 191 cities and a population of more than 18 million.

- SCAG serves as a **catalyst for a brighter future for Southern California** through visioning, collaboration and planning.

- SCAG has a **critical role in addressing** the housing crisis by driving innovative solutions to overcome barriers to build more housing.

- SCAG **empowers Southern California** jurisdictions with enhanced access to critical data, the sharing of best practices and other resources and tools that lead to regional solutions.

Timeline of this Effort

Regional Council direction, RAMP-ATG formation

Relaunch of Greenprint tool development, formation of the TAC

2021

2022

2023

EARLY 2022

Policy Framework development and outreach

LATE 2022/EARLY 2023

RAMP-ATG final direction, engagement with Energy & Environment Committee and Regional Council

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Goal of this Workshop

Gather input to help us **refine the Draft RAMP Policy Framework** and **development of the planned SoCal Greenprint tool**.

What is RAMP?

Regional Advance Mitigation Planning **(RAMP) is a proven process** for expediting project delivery by **planning for required mitigation to reduce environmental impacts earlier in the planning process and at a wider scale**.

RAMP **allows state and federal agencies to consider** the environmental impacts and mitigation needs of multiple planned infrastructure and development projects in the early stages.

RAMP **allows local project leads to identify and satisfy** those mitigation requirements early in the project planning and environmental review process.

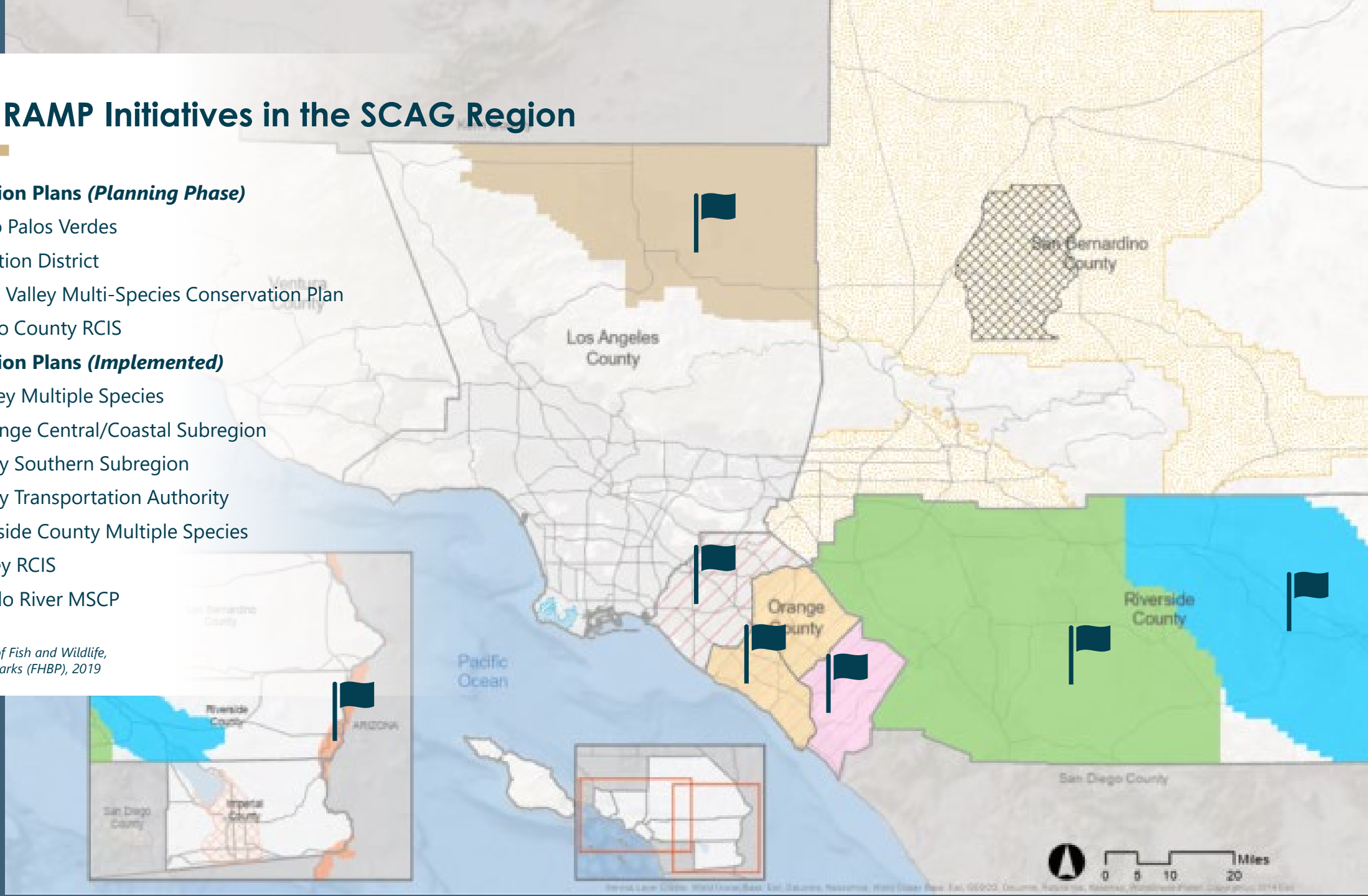# Existing RAMP Initiatives in the SCAG Region

Regional Conservation Plans *(Planning Phase)*
- City of Rancho Palos Verdes
- Imperial Irrigation District
- Town of Apple Valley Multi-Species Conservation Plan
- San Bernardino County RCIS

Regional Conservation Plans *(Implemented)*
- Coachella Valley Multiple Species
- County of Orange Central/Coastal Subregion
- Orange County Southern Subregion
- Orange County Transportation Authority
- Western Riverside County Multiple Species
- Antelope Valley RCIS
- Lower Colorado River MSCP

Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife,
Friends of Harbors, Beach and Parks (FHBP), 2019

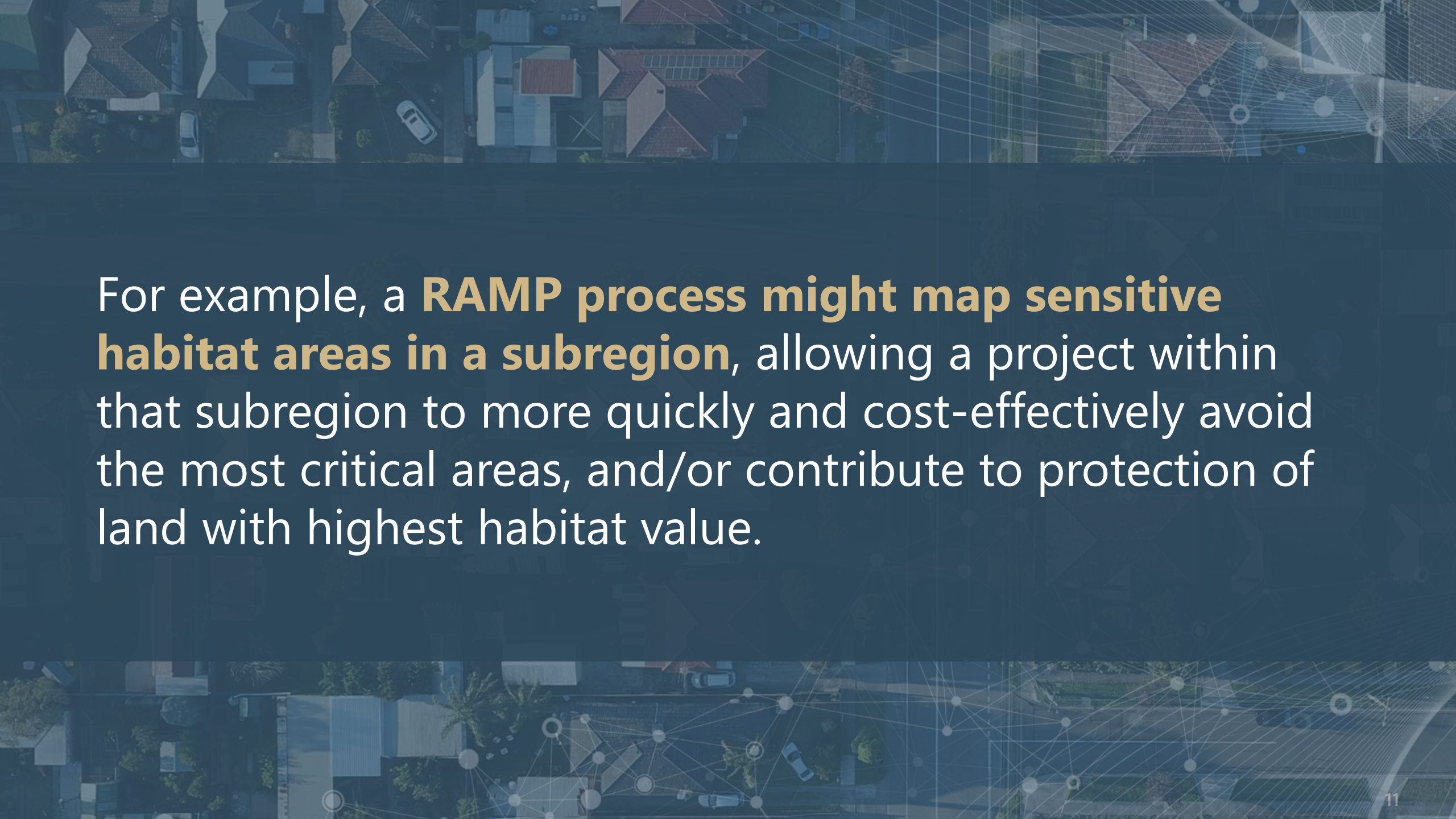This can help **avoid costs and delays** associated with environmental mitigations **and more effectively avoid environmental harm**.

Traditional mitigation is usually identified late in the environmental review process and has tools limited to the specific project site.

RAMP can be pursued in a variety ways to mitigate environmental impacts within an environmentally significant geography.

For example, a **RAMP process might map sensitive habitat areas in a subregion**, allowing a project within that subregion to more quickly and cost-effectively avoid the most critical areas, and/or contribute to protection of land with highest habitat value.

Questions?

Opportunity for discussion and thoughts.

SCAG's Draft RAMP Policy Framework

SCAG's Connect SoCal plan identifies **the need for billions of dollars of investment** in transportation, housing, energy and water projects **to support the region's communities and economy**.

California law requires most infrastructure projects, including those that become eligible for funding under Connect SoCal, to **identify environmental impacts and ways to reduce them**. However, this mitigation can be expensive and delay projects.

Mitigation requirements also apply to SCAG's plan. Connect SoCal's Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) requires the following mitigation measures related to RAMP:

- The planned SoCal Greenprint tool.

- SCAG will collaborate with stakeholders to establish a RAMP initiative to preserve habitat. The initiative would help establish or supplement regional conservation and mitigation banks, and other approaches to offset impacts of transportation and development projects.

A jurisdiction's **participation in a RAMP initiative** established by Connect SoCal and its PEIR **is voluntary**.

Local agencies keep authority for decisions on future development and have no obligation to change land use policies or infrastructure priorities to be consistent with a future RAMP or consider the data included in a future Greenprint web tool. Project leads can opt for a project-by-project environmental review process to determine individual mitigation measures and a plan for complying with them, as appropriate.

SCAG's Draft RAMP Policy Framework

- **Regional Goals**
- **SCAG's Role**
- **Data Policy**
- **Discussion**

Draft RAMP Policy Framework Regional Goals

1. **Facilitate infrastructure development** and its benefits, such as job creation, maximizing taxpayer funds, increasing housing production;

2. **Expedite project delivery**;

3. **Improve predictability** for project funding;

4. **Examine potential environmental impacts** at the early stages of project development, utilizing the future SoCal Greenprint tool, to help expedite the CEQA process;

Draft RAMP Policy Framework Regional Goals *(continued)*

5. **Reduce costs, risks and permitting time** for responsible development;

6. **Improve and reinforce** regulatory agency partnerships;

7. **Balance future growth and economic development** with conservation and resilience; and

8. **Achieve regional conservation outcomes**, with benefits such as landscape and community resilience, reduced emissions, improved water and air quality, wildlife corridors and connectivity, and recreation opportunities.

SCAG's Role in Supporting RAMPs

1. **Be a resource for local partners** to consider actions in a regional context;

2. **Focus on the transportation sector**, and consider opportunities to expedite and streamline mitigation needs for other sectors including housing, energy and utilities;

3. **Identify ways to support lead agencies** to use regional conservation and mitigation banks and other approaches to effectively address impacts for projects supporting reduction of per-capita VMT;

SCAG's Role in Supporting RAMPs *(continued)*

4. **Support lead agencies in long-term management and stewardship** of conserved properties;

5. **Initiate studies to assess gaps and collaborate with partner and permitting entities** to address them, including by supporting new or partnership efforts;

6. **Pursue collaboration with state agencies and other MPOs** to leverage funding and align efforts beyond SCAG's jurisdictional boundaries;
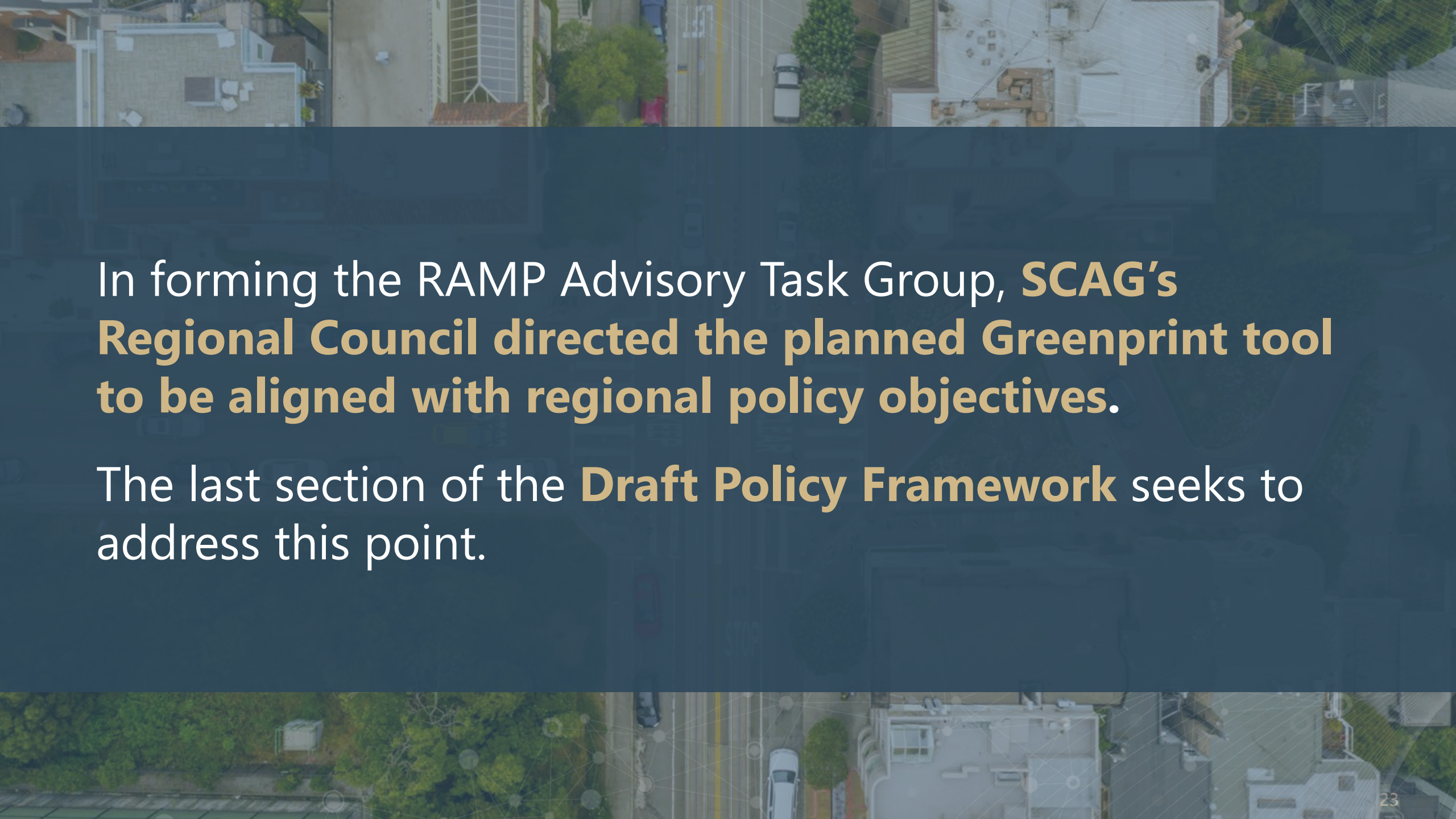
SCAG's Role in Supporting RAMPs *(continued)*

7. **Be a data resource** with widely accessible data tools to assist in defining RAMPs that can provide the best available scientific data to help municipalities and transportation agencies make better land use and transportation infrastructure decisions and conserve natural and farm lands;

8. **Identify potential partnerships** to foster the long-term maintenance of the future SoCal Greenprint tool;

9. **Use a science-based methodology** to support implementing agencies' development of RAMP initiatives across the region; and

10. **Develop a process for monitoring and measuring outcomes** from RAMP efforts

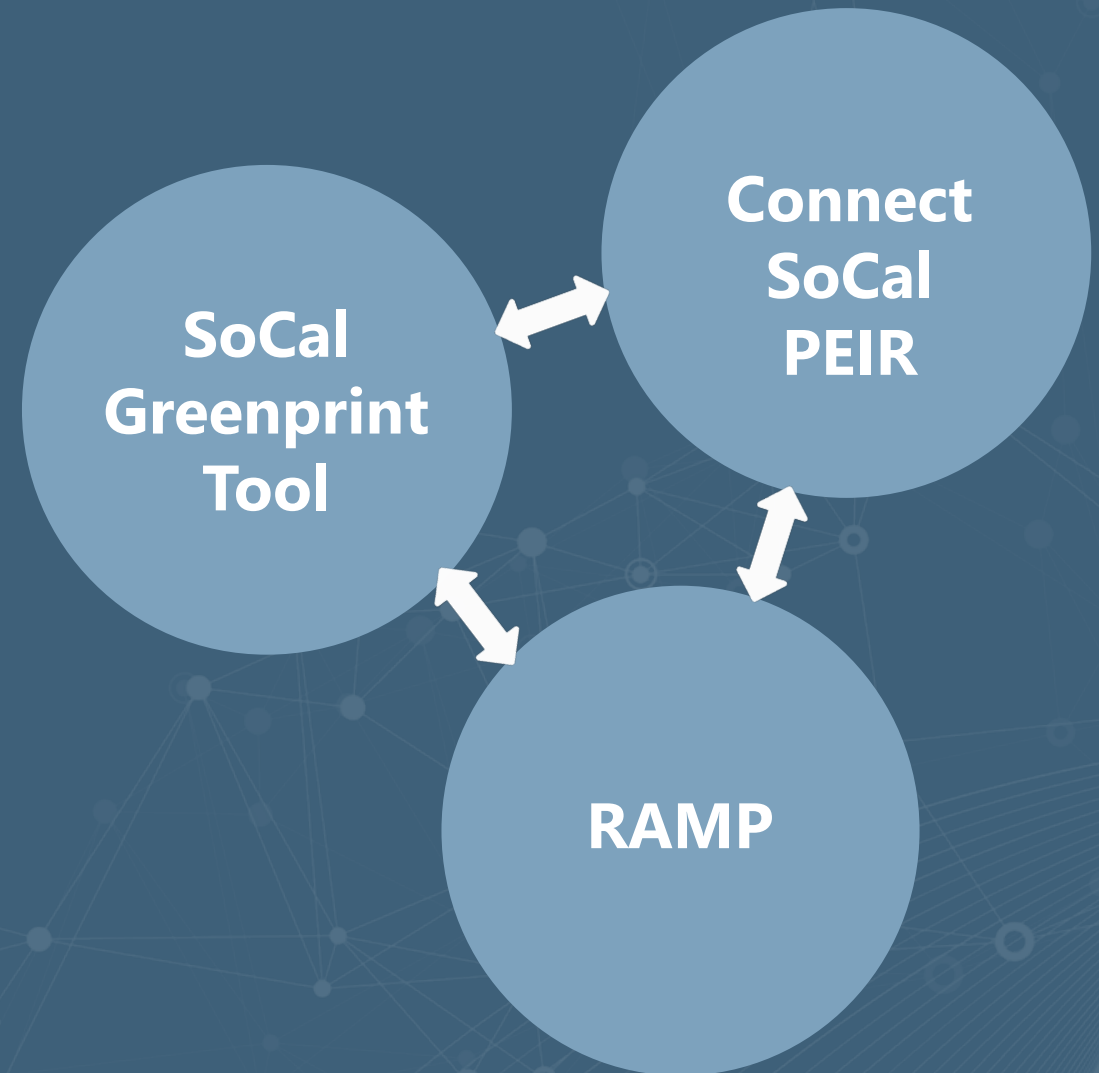# Questions?

Opportunity for discussion and thoughts.

In forming the RAMP Advisory Task Group, **SCAG's Regional Council directed the planned Greenprint tool to be aligned with regional policy objectives**.

The last section of the **Draft Policy Framework** seeks to address this point.

How are the SoCal Greenprint and RAMP related?

The SoCal Greenprint is a planned web-based tool, which will complement SCAG's RAMP Policy Framework, with data and scenario visualizations, **primarily intended to support project lead agencies** in pursuing RAMP or other environmental mitigations.

SoCal Greenprint Tool

Connect SoCal PEIR

RAMP

Establishment of a Technical Advisory Committee

Following approval of the RAMP Policy Framework by the Regional Council, SCAG will establish a Technical Advisory Committee to advise on:

User Guidelines

SoCal Greenprint Tool's Data Governance Standards
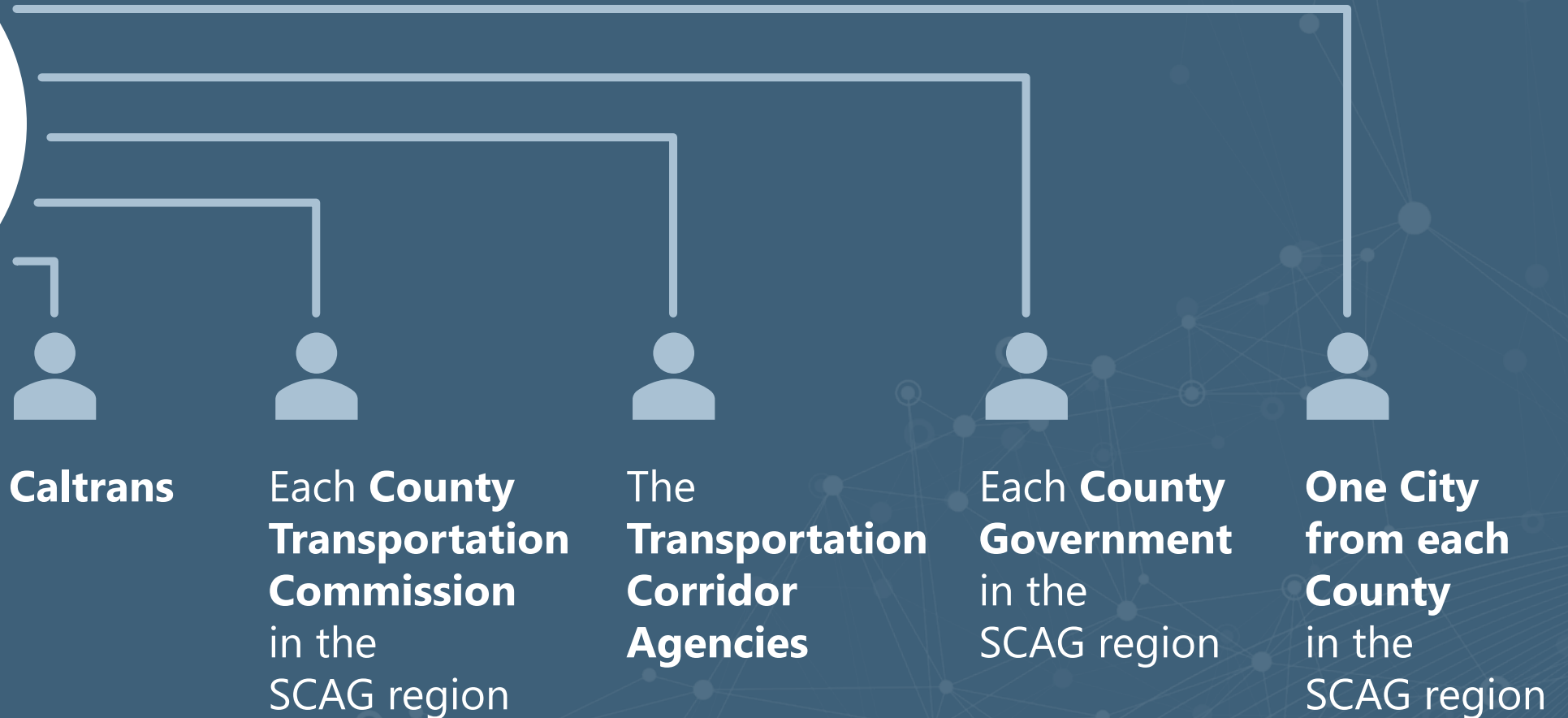
Data Selection Criteria

Process to Resolve Potential Divergent Perspectives on SoCal Greenprint Tool Data

Data Parameters

Proposed Structure of the Technical Advisory Committee

TAC
ONE STAFF REPRESENTATIVE from each of the following:

Caltrans

Each **County Transportation Commission** in the SCAG region

The **Transportation Corridor Agencies**

Each **County Government** in the SCAG region

One City from each County in the SCAG region

Key Draft Data Policies for RAMP & SoCal Greenprint

- Data **must be publicly available**

- Data **must be created, funded, used and/or developed in partnership with a government agency**

- Data **will not be shown as constraints on future development or growth**

- Data **will not be endorsed or adopted by the Regional Council as official policy of the agency**

- Data elements **will be regionally comprehensive**

We Want to Hear From You

- **What should be the role of the TAC?**
- **Who should serve on the TAC?**
- **What are data needs for a RAMP initiative?**

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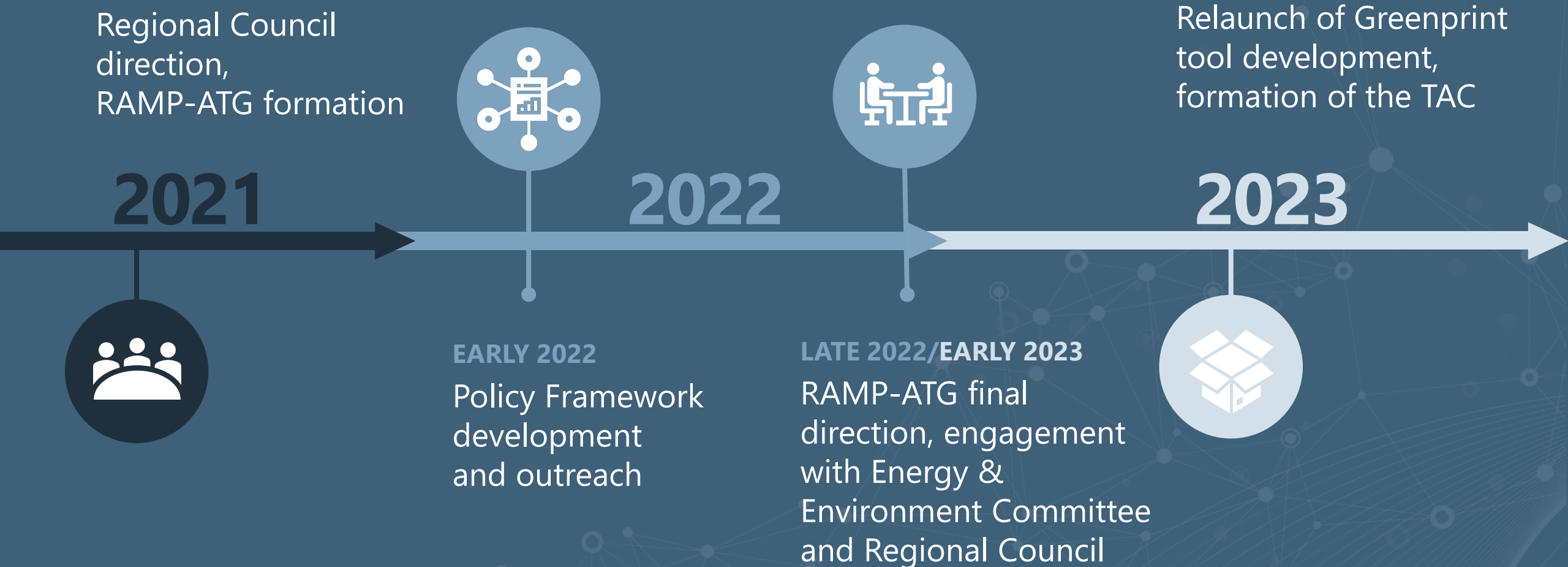- What are data needs for a RAMP initiative?

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Recap & Next Steps

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THANK YOU!

For more information, please visit:

www.scag.ca.gov/greenprint

www.scag.ca.gov/ramp-atg