Connect SoCal 2024 Sustainable Communities Program
Active Transportation & Safety
Program Guidelines

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Sustainable Communities Program Overview

The Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) is a grant program that provides technical assistance to support implementation of Connect SoCal, the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The SCP strengthens partnerships with local agencies and strategic partners who are responsible for land use and transportation decisions to help the region achieve its unified goals. The SCP provides local jurisdictions with multiple opportunities to seek funding and resources to meet the needs of their communities. SCAG is committed to working in partnership with others to close the gap of racial injustice and better serve historically disinvested communities. On July 2, 2020, the SCAG Regional Council adopted Resolution 20-623-2, affirming its commitment to advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout Southern California and subsequently adopted the Racial Equity Early Action Plan in May 2021 to guide SCAG's work in advancing equity. As part of these commitments, the SCP aims to prioritize resources where there is a demonstrated need.

Program Goals

The SCP aims to:

- Provide needed resources for local jurisdictions to advance the goals outlined in Connect SoCal 2024 in the areas of mobility, communities, environment, and economy.
- Promote racial equity that is grounded in the recognition of the past and current harms of systemic racism and one that advances restorative justice.
- Integrate the region's development pattern and transportation network to improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enable more sustainable use of energy and water.
- Prioritize the most vulnerable populations and communities subject to climate hazards to help the people, places and infrastructure that are most at risk for climate change impacts. In doing so, recognize that disadvantaged communities are often overburdened.
- Increase the region's competitiveness for federal and state funds, including, but not limited to the California Active Transportation Program and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds.

2024 SCP Active Transportation & Safety Call for Applications

I.   Overview

Connect SoCal 2024 is defined by the mobility goal to build and maintain an integrated multimodal transportation network (see page 12 in Connect SoCal 2024 Chapter 1). To achieve this goal, Connect SoCal 2024 identifies mobility policies organized into eight categories: System Preservation and Resilience, Complete Streets, Transit and Multimodal Integration, Transportation System Management, Transportation Demand Management, Technology Integration, Safety, and Funding the System/User Fees (see pages 88-89 and 114-116 in Connect SoCal 2024 Chapter 3).

The Connect SoCal 2024 SCP Active Transportation & Safety (SCP-ATS) Call for Applications represents one of multiple funding Calls through the Connect SoCal 2024 SCP. The SCP-ATS funds projects that primarily help advance the Connect SoCal 2024 mobility policies under Complete Streets, Transit and Multimodal Integration, and Safety. Selected projects will improve mobility across the region, increasing rates of walking and biking, advancing traffic safety, expanding opportunities for multimodal

transportation options, and competitively positioning local jurisdictions for implementation/grant funds. The 2024 SCP-ATS Call solicits the follow project types:

- Develop a Community/Areawide Plan
- Develop and implement a Quick-Build Project

Applicants are encouraged to review Connect SoCal 2024 strategies to align project applications with regional planning priorities and concepts (see pages 124-128 in Connect SoCal 2024 Chapter 3 and Appendix 4: Connect SoCal 2024 Mobility Strategies of the Connect SoCal 2024 Mobility Technical Report). Competitive applications will advance multiple mobility goals and strategies, reflect understanding of context-based needs, utilize equity-centered planning practices, and result in planning products or programs that clearly tie community need with implementation. Collaborative public participation and engagement efforts that involve communities historically excluded from land use and transportation discussions and planning is required.

In the next four years, Southern California is expected to host several large-scale events that will impact the region's transportation system: the World Cup in 2026, the Super Bowl in 2027, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2028. These events will be impactful for the entire Southern California region and particularly for the region's transportation networks. Thousands of athletes and spectators will visit the region in compressed periods of time, needing to travel to and from a variety of venues. People from across the region may be traveling to these events themselves, either to glimpse the events as spectators or to work them, and goods will have to be delivered to the venues. Everyone else will still need to carry on with their lives while the events are occurring. A great deal of preparation will be needed.

A) 2024 SCP-ATS GOALS

The SCP-ATS aims to:
- Improve mobility across the region, especially for children and older adults, and people walking, biking, riding transit/rail, and using other forms of active transportation;
- Strategically invest in communities most harmed by traffic injuries and fatalities, which include the historically disinvested communities that comprise the majority of the Regional High Injury Network;
- Support a more resilient transportation network, especially in anticipation of the large-scale events hosted by the region; and
- Support local efforts to increase competitiveness for state and federal funding.

B) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INTEGRATION

SCAG's active transportation safety and engagement program, provides a suite of community engagement resources, tools, and strategies. Planning and quick-build projects are expected to incorporate one or both of the following elements to facilitate meaningful community engagement. The *Go Human* elements are available at no cost; any costs would come from project-specific needs, such as local event/traffic permits or publicity/advertisements.

GO HUMAN KIT OF PARTS – The *Go Human* Kit of Parts (Kit) is a community engagement resource loaned at no cost to local partners that creates opportunities for community members, jurisdiction staff and consultant teams to experience improved traffic safety designs directly on the street. The Kit includes a set of durable, lightweight materials that, once assembled, demonstrate complete streets infrastructure components. The Kit also includes signage and evaluation tools that allow the applicant or their

consultant to facilitate community feedback as part of an inclusive planning process. The applicant or its consultant will be responsible for coordinating transportation of materials and preparation of a site and installation plan, subject to approval by SCAG. The applicant or its consultant will also be responsible for the set-up, break-down, and oversight of the *Go Human* Kit of Parts as part of the demonstration. SCAG staff will be available to provide feedback and guidance on planning for a successful demonstration or event and direction on appropriate utilization of the Kit of Parts.

TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN – Co-branded *Go Human* print and digital advertisements are available at no cost to cities or other local government agencies to implement a traffic safety awareness campaign, alongside project or plan outreach, in an effort to improve traffic safety for people walking and biking. Available designs include, but are not limited to, lawn signs, banners, postcards, billboard ads, bus shelter or bench ads, and social media graphics. SCAG provides select print materials, such as lawn signs and banners, to local partners at no cost.

II.   Eligible Applicants

The following entities, within the six-county SCAG region, are eligible to apply for SCP-ATS funds:

- **Local or Regional Agency**: Examples include cities, counties, councils of governments, Regional Transportation Planning Agencies and County Public Health Departments.
- **Caltrans:** Caltrans must submit documentation that local communities are supportive of and have provided feedback on the proposed Caltrans project. Caltrans must submit documentation to support the need to address the project with ATP funds, rather than other available funding sources, such as the State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP).
- **Transit Agencies**: Any agency responsible for public transportation that is eligible for funds under the Federal Transit Administration.
- **Natural Resources or Public Land Agencies**: Federal, Tribal, State, or local agency responsible for natural resources or public land administration.
- **Public schools or school districts**
- **Tribal Governments**: Federally recognized Native American Tribes.
- **Private nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations that are responsible for the management of public lands**: These organizations may only apply for projects eligible for Recreational Trails Program funds. Eligible project types include recreational trails and trailheads, park projects that facilitate trail linkages or connectivity to nonmotorized corridors, and conversion of abandoned railroad corridors to trails. Projects must benefit the general public, not only a private entity.

III.   SCP-ATS Eligible Project Types

As described above, the 2024 SCP-ATS solicits two project types: community/area wide plans and quick-build projects. Applicants may apply for more than one project type and may submit multiple applications (and shall indicate priority of applications). SCAG staff is available to assist applicants in determining the most appropriate project type for their needs and goals.

A) PROJECT TYPE: COMMUNITY/AREAWIDE PLANS

The 2024 SCP-ATS will fund community/areawide planning projects that benefit disadvantaged communities. Eligible planning projects must meet one of the following conditions:
- Community plans must encompass, be located in, or overlap with a disadvantaged community.

- Areawide plans must encompass at least one disadvantaged community.

Connect SoCal 2024 defines a disadvantaged community as a Priority Equity Community (PEC): census tracts in the SCAG region that have a greater concentration of populations that have been historically marginalized and are susceptible to inequitable outcomes based on a combination of the socioeconomic factors listed below. See the Connect SoCal 2024 Equity Analysis Technical Report and a map of PECs in the SCAG region for additional details and to identify PECs. Factors include:

- People of color
- Low-income households
- Limited vehicle and transit access
- Vulnerable ages
- Single parent households
- People without a high school diploma
- People with disabilities
- Housing cost burdened households
- People with limited English proficiency

In addition to the PEC definition, the following criteria are eligible definitions for disadvantaged communities. See Attachment A, the ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines (Section 17.A, pages 11-12), for details about each of the disadvantaged community definitions.

- Median Household Income
- CalEnviroScreen
- National School Lunch Program
- Healthy Places Index
- Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool
- USDOT Equitable Transportation Community Explorer
- Native American Tribal Lands

The maximum award for Community/Areawide Plan projects is $500,000. There is no required minimum funding request, and applicants may submit multiple applications. Awards for Community/Areawide Plans shall take the form of technical assistance, with a SCAG-procured consultant leading the project development and seeking reimbursement directly from SCAG. See Section IV.B (Funding Allocation for Award Recipients) for more information. Applicants are encouraged to include a letter of support from their county transportation commission in their application.

PROJECT EXAMPLES
Examples of eligible community/areawide plans include, but are not limited to:
- Active Transportation Plan
- Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Master Plan
- First/Last Mile Plan (focused on active transportation)
- Safe Routes Plan (e.g., to school, for seniors, etc.)
- Transportation Safety-Focused Plan (e.g., Local Road Safety Plan or Safe System Plan with a focus on active transportation)

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED PLAN COMPONENTS

The final deliverable for all plans must include, but not be limited to, the required components identified in Appendix A of the ATP Cycle 7 State Guidelines (see Attachment A) or explain why the component is not applicable. Examples of required components include mode share, existing bicyclist and pedestrian facilities, collision analysis, funding considerations, and an implementation plan. , The following components are strongly encouraged:

- Framework to systematically analyze, identify, and prioritize traffic safety issues and corresponding recommendations, including proven roadway safety countermeasures. The framework should also identify roadway safety risks to support a jurisdiction's ability to proactively address crash risks.
- Multi-faceted community engagement, such as:
  - Walk or bike audits
  - Media/Advertisement campaigns (e.g., Go Human Co-Branded Awareness Campaign)
  - Temporary demonstration projects (e.g., Kit of Parts)

B) PROJECT TYPE: QUICK-BUILD PROJECTS

A quick-build is an interim capital improvement project that requires minor construction activity (e.g., does not require excavation) and uses durable, low- to medium-cost materials to pilot and iterate through project designs with community feedback. Quick-build projects are identified through community engagement and/or an existing plan and provide the opportunity to immediately respond to a community safety need. Quick-build projects are typically installed for one to five years, depending on how quickly a design is modified or how long materials last, with evaluation occurring one to three years post-implementation.

Quick-build projects are not required to be located in a disadvantaged community. The 2024 SCP-ATS will evaluate and fund quick-build projects using an equity-centered prioritization framework to prioritize the repair of historic and current inequities. The framework will consider project readiness (e.g. informed by community engagement and preliminarily assessed for feasibility), alignment with communities most harmed by traffic injuries and fatalities, and opportunities for mutually beneficial partnerships with local community organizations. These quick-build projects will provide an opportunity to pilot projects that not only enhance or expand the active transportation network but also contribute to a more resilient transportation network given the increased demand expected with large-scale events to be hosted by the region.

The maximum award for quick-build projects is $900,000, which includes planning, design, and implementation. There is no required minimum funding request, and applicants may submit multiple applications. Awards for Quick-Builds shall take the form of technical assistance, with a SCAG-procured consultant leading project development and seeking reimbursement directly from SCAG, and pass-through funds to applicants for implementation. An applicant may use pass-through funds to procure a contractor or assign agency staff to implement the quick-build project. See Section IV.B (Funding Allocation for Award Recipients) for more information.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Examples of quick-build elements and materials include, but are not limited to:

- Curb extensions: paint and plastic posts, plastic bollards, or planters
- Pedestrian safety enhancements: rectangular rapid flashing beacons, leading pedestrian intervals at signalized intersections, raised crosswalks, and/or high-visibility crosswalks

- Modular transit stops: temporary transit platform to safely transition bike lanes through transit areas
- Pedestrian plaza/corridors: concrete barriers, barricades, planters, and/or signage
- Protected bike lanes: striping and plastic posts, plastic bollards, planters, or parking
- Traffic calming treatments: temporary speed cushions, curb extensions (described above), and/or chicanes (i.e. curb extensions in a parking lane)
- Traffic circles: striping, rubber curbs, plastic posts, and signage

REQUIRED QUICK-BUILD COMPONENTS

Quick-build projects must include the following components:

- Ongoing community engagement to inform final project design and evaluation.
- Data collection to establish existing conditions and to complete before/after evaluation of project implementation.
- Final (100%) project design reviewed, approved, and stamped by a licensed Professional Engineer and project cost estimates.
- Quick-build installed for a minimum of six (6) months before conducting evaluation.
- Final report summarizing work completed and recommendation of next steps.

See Appendix D of the ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines (Attachment A) and ATP Quick-Build Supplemental Guidance (Attachment B) for additional guidance on quick-build materials, designs, and project requirements.

IV. Funding

A) FUNDING SOURCES

Funding for the 2024 SCP-ATS is provided through a combination of state and federal sources, including the state Cycle 7 Active Transportation Program (ATP), which programs funds from FY25/26 to FY28/29 and a federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant, and which is anticipated to allocate funding in 2025 and expend funding within five years from allocation.

- Community/Areawide Plan projects shall be funded by ATP funds.
- Quick-Build projects shall be funded with ATP funds, SS4A funds, or a combination of ATP and SS4A funds.

Recipients of 2024 SCP-ATS awards are required to comply with all applicable federal laws and state regulations including, but not limited to, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR part 200); California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.); and Build America, Buy America Act (BIL, div. G §§ 70901-27).

Hosting a Call for Applications to award funds from multiple funding streams is intended to simplify the application process and achieve efficiencies in program administration. The program anticipates awarding approximately $10.4 million, with up to $2.4 million available for planning projects benefiting disadvantaged communities and a minimum of $7.5 million set aside for quick-build projects. SCAG will allocate funding for selected projects based on the eligibility of each funding source and the applicant's readiness.

B) FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

Awards and projects shall be primarily managed by SCAG and implemented through its consultants, except the Quick-Build implementation that will be managed by grantees in coordination with SCAG. SCAG shall manage the administrative activities associated with requesting funding allocation from the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for ATP funding and from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for SS4A funding, procuring a consultant team, passing through fundings for quick-build implementation, and providing all necessary reporting and documentation required by CTC, Caltrans, and FHWA.

Recipients of 2024 SCP-ATS awards are expected to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SCAG for technical assistance, which shall identify funding sources for the award and memorialize roles and responsibilities for each party, including but not limited to identifying a project manager for each party, providing guidance, cooperation and approvals as necessary, and assuming responsibility for a timely use of funds. MOUs for quick-build projects will also serve to pass through funds for quick-build implementation.

Recipients shall be the implementing agency for environmental approval(s) and responsible for documentation of environmental clearance or categorical exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for federally funded projects. Funding shall be contingent on recipients securing environmental clearance.

Community/Areawide Plan projects shall only be eligible for technical assistance. Quick-Build Projects shall be eligible for technical assistance and pass through funds; pass through funds shall only be used for construction.

C) ELIGIBLE COSTS

SCAG uses cost principles outlined in 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E and the ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines (Attachment A) to determine reasonable, allocable, and allowable costs. Award recipients are required to adhere to these requirements. Eligible costs include staff salaries, fringe, indirect costs (for ATP funding, the fringe and indirect cost rates require Caltrans approval and for SS4A, approved rates by a federal cognizant agency may be required), consultant/contractual services, and other direct costs. These costs and others not listed here are subject to review and approval by SCAG staff.

Recipients of the 2024 SCP-ATS awards claiming reimbursement for indirect costs and/or fringe benefits cost must have the current rates approved in the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with its federal cognizant agency. In absence of the NICRA, recipients may elect the applicable de minimis indirect cost rate that is applicable at the time of award and must annually complete a certification form provided by the SCAG Project Manager to confirm the eligibility and compliance with Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations Part 200 (2 CFR 200) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, And Audit Requirements For Federal Awards. The eligibility of the indirect cost and/or fringe benefits cost is subject to review and applicable funding guidelines and requirements. For the ATP funding, Caltrans prior approval is required for the fringe benefits and indirect cost rates; see "Local Government Agency Indirect Cost Review" on the Caltrans Internal Audits Office webpage. For SS4A, please see the 2 CFR 200.

D) MATCH REQUIREMENTS

There are no match requirements for projects proposed through the SCP-ATS. Applicants, especially those with projects that exceed the respective project type funding caps, are encouraged to provide matching funds.

V.   Application Process

As noted above, applicants may apply for more than one project type and may submit multiple applications, which are available on the SCAG SCP-ATS website. Applicants do not need a board resolution in order to apply, but applicants will be required to submit a supporting resolution from the elected body or a letter of intent in support of the project from the appropriate executive officer prior to receiving funding. Please contact SCAG staff (see section VI) if the project includes multiple components or if any other support is needed in identifying the proper application to use for a project application.

A) APPLICATIONS

Applications will be accepted via an online form. Application workshops will be scheduled for summer 2024, to review project types, the application process, and address any questions. For more information and registration/details for the workshops, please see the SCAG SCP-ATS website. **Applications must be submitted online in fall 2024.**

AUTOMATIC CONSIDERATION OF NON-SELECTED STATEWIDE ATP APPLICATIONS

Community/Areawide Plans and Quick-Build projects from the SCAG region submitted to the statewide ATP Call for Applications but not selected for funding will also be considered in the 2024 SCP-ATS selection process. These applications will be automatically considered, and applicants do not need to indicate they want to be considered for the SCP-ATS. These applications will not be re-scored and the initial score given in the statewide ATP competition will be used in ranking the projects against projects submitted through the SCP-ATS call for applications. Please see the state ATP website for more information about the application process and deadlines. Interested applicants are welcome to contact SCAG staff (see section VI) to discuss statewide ATP applications as well.

B) SCORING RUBRIC & CRITERIA

Each project type is evaluated by six scoring criteria: Mobility, Safety Benefit, Public Health, Disadvantaged Communities, Public Participation, and Cost Effectiveness. Application questions vary by project type. The potential points to be awarded for responses to each question, by project type, are noted in each application.

Scoring Criteria	Points
Mobility	25
Safety Benefit	35
Public Health	10
Disadvantaged Communities	10
Public Participation	15
Cost Effectiveness	5
Total	**100 Points**

C) EVALUATION PROCESS

A minimum of six evaluation teams, one per county, will be established to review, score and rank applications submitted to the 2024 SCP-ATS; counties receiving a large volume of applications may require multiple evaluation teams. Projects will compete and be ranked against other projects within their respective county. Final awards will be based on application score, geographic distribution across the region, and funding eligibility. Following grant award announcements, unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to meet with SCAG staff to obtain feedback on opportunities to improve their applications for future grant cycles. Quick-build applications not selected for award may be placed on a contingency list in the event that future rounds of funding are made available.

D) RISK ASSESSMENT

Prior to entering into an MOU to receive funding from SCAG, each selected applicant will be subject to a risk assessment as required by 2 CFR 200.206 in accordance with SCAG's Subrecipient Monitoring Policies and Procedures. SCAG may evaluate the risks to the program imposed by each applicant to assess the applicant's ability to manage award funds pursuant to the requirements prescribed in the applicable funding guidelines. In some circumstances, special grant conditions may be imposed to mitigate anticipated risks. Each applicant may be required to provide documentation to SCAG for this evaluation.

VI.   Schedule

The following schedule outlines key dates for the 2024 SCP-ATS. These dates are subject to change; the Sustainable Communities Program webpage will have the latest dates.

2024 SCP-ATS Key Dates

2024 SCP-ATS Milestone	Date
SCP-ATS Call for Applications Opens	Summer 2024
SCP-ATS Application Workshops	Summer 2024
SCP-ATS Call for Applications Deadline	Fall 2024
SCAG Regional Council Approval of the 2024 SCP–ATS Application Projects*	April 3, 2025
Final 2024 SCP-ATS Award Announcements*	June 2025

*Projects selected to receive ATP funding are subject to approval by the SCAG Regional Council and California Transportation Commission (CTC) as part of the adoption of the complete 2025 Regional ATP. In addition, projects receiving ATP funding will be subject to the programming and allocation process, requirements, and schedule of the CTC. SCAG Regional Council consideration is anticipated on April 3, 2025 followed by CTC action in June 2025.

A) TIMELY USE OF FUNDS/TIME EXTENSIONS

A project initiation schedule and expectations regarding the period of performance will be determined within three months of project award announcements, and will be based on project complexity, funding source, and SCAG staff capacity. In certain cases, projects may receive a notice to proceed two to three years after the project award announcements, such as if ATP funds are allocated in the latter part of the

Cycle 7 ATP funding cycle (FY25/26 to FY28/29). Once the project schedule has been established, extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Extensions and scope changes must be requested in letter format. All requests must include an explanation of the issues and actions the agency has taken to correct the issues. All extensions will be contingent on funding availability and the program requirements of the funding source assigned to the project when awarded. SCAG intends all selected projects to be completed in a timely manner and requires that applicants coordinate internal resources to ensure timely completion of the projects.

VII.   Contact Information

Questions regarding the SCP-ATS project types, applications, or application process should be directed to:

Rachel Om
Senior Regional Planner
Telephone: (213) 630-1550
Email: om@scag.ca.gov

Attachment A: ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines

Please see: 2025 Active Transportation Program Cycle 7 Guidelines.

Attachment B: ATP Quick-Build Supplemental Guidance

Please see: Active Transportation Program Quick-Build Supplemental Guidance

Attachment C: Allowable Direct Costs

SCAG uses cost principles outlined in 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E and the ATP Cycle 7 Guidelines (Attachment A) to determine reasonable, allocable, and allowable costs. The procurement of goods and services are subject to 2 CFR Part 200 and applicable funding guidelines.

- **Advertisement costs.** Including the purchase of advertising media to support program outreach.
- **Compensation—personnel services.** Including wages and salaries.
- **Compensation—fringe benefits.** Including, but not limited to, costs of leave, employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans.
- **Professional service costs.** Including costs of professional and consultant services.
- **Publication and printing costs.** Including costs for distribution and general handling of electronic and print media.
- **Transportation costs.** Including costs for delivery of items and/or equipment
- **Contractual Services.** Including professional services necessary to complete the proposed project.
- **Travel.** Including transportation, food and lodging that meet the Travel Reimbursement policies established by CalHR.
- **Supplies or services.** Including printed material, translation and interpretation, supplies or services cost, excluding equipment

Please note: allowable indirect costs include an approved negotiated rate by a federal cognizant agency or a de minimis rate in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.

These costs and others not listed here are subject to review and approval by SCAG staff.