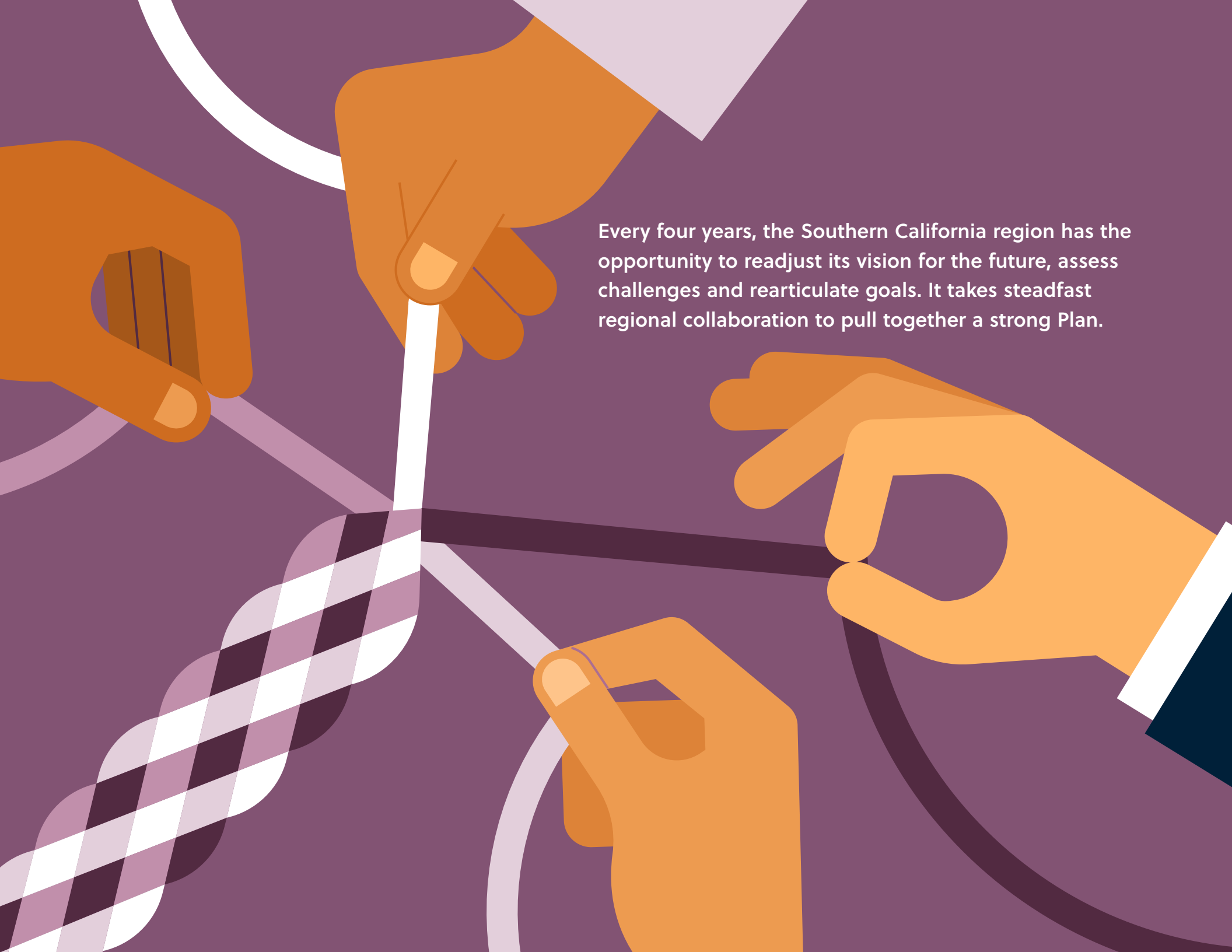


1

Executive Summary

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An illustration on a purple background showing four hands in shades of orange and brown. The hands are holding a white ribbon that forms a complex, interlocking knot. The knot is composed of several overlapping loops of the white ribbon, with some sections appearing as dark purple or black due to the shadows and the way the ribbon crosses itself. The hands are positioned around the knot, with some fingers gripping the ribbon. The overall style is flat and graphic.

Every four years, the Southern California region has the opportunity to readjust its vision for the future, assess challenges and rearticulate goals. It takes steadfast regional collaboration to pull together a strong Plan.

1.1

Connect SoCal 2024

Connect SoCal 2024 reflects a continuum of progress across each planning cycle, not just in the technical capabilities of our state-of-the-art modeling tools or advancements in data collection but in building upon local agencies progress completing projects—and through the stewardship and policy leadership of special subcommittees. While the Plan remains focused on its core responsibilities, and on the requirements of comprehensive regional transportation planning integrated with the development of a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), it also encompasses a holistic approach to programs and strategies that support success of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/SCS, such as workforce development, broadband and mobility hubs.

THE BIG PICTURE

Plan Requirements

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, SCAG is required by federal law (23 USCA Section 134 et seq.) to prepare and update a long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) every four years. The Plan must provide for the development, integrated management and operation of transportation systems and facilities that will function as an intermodal transportation network for the SCAG metropolitan planning area. The process for development of the Plan takes into account all modes of transportation, federal planning factors and goals and objectives of the California Transportation Plan (CTP 2050)—and is accomplished by a “continuing, cooperative and comprehensive” planning approach, which is also performance-driven and outcome-based. In addition, because most areas within the SCAG region have been designated as nonattainment or maintenance areas for one or more transportation-related criteria pollutants under the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. Section 7401 et seq.), the Plan must conform to the applicable State Implementation Plan (SIP). The passage of California Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) in 2008 requires that SCAG prepare and adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that sets forth a forecasted regional development pattern which, when integrated with the transportation network, measures and policies, will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from automobiles and light-duty trucks and achieve the GHG emissions reduction target for the region set by the California Air Resources Board (Govt. Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)).



READ THE SUPPLEMENT

To see a full description of the laws that guide the plan, see the Supplementals section.

Setting a Vision for 2050

Southern California is a vast region with a diversity of landscapes and communities. The six counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura are home to a population of nearly 19 million people, powering the 16th largest economy in the world. The region is a vibrant economic hub and a center for innovation, culture and entertainment. Southern California is a polycentric megaregion that operates as a single labor market, housing market and transportation shed. This means that people and destinations are more spread out, with linkages both within and across communities. This dispersed activity, combined with decades of prioritizing roadway investments, has led to increasing congestion and poor air quality. In addition, the rewards of our economic prosperity have not been equitably shared. Some communities and their residents face more adverse health consequences based on where they live—or they have less access to opportunities, including housing. The region is also vulnerable to challenges outside of anyone’s immediate control, like global economic shifts or a pandemic.

Connect SoCal is a long-term plan for the Southern California region that details investment in our transportation system and development in our communities to meet the needs of the region both today and tomorrow. The horizon year for Connect SoCal is 2050.

What kind of future are we envisioning?

Healthy: Southern California’s sustainable future hinges on a commitment to improved public health. The efforts to improve how we travel and where we develop will help us achieve environmental goals, like meeting air-quality standards and GHG emission-reduction targets, but will also contribute to better public health outcomes. Because the transportation sector is the largest contributor to statewide GHG emissions, Connect SoCal 2024 will expand alternatives to driving alone—with transit as a backbone of the regional transportation


system—and the focus on cleaner transportation. Land use planning will concentrate on reducing sprawl, preserving open spaces, increasing access to important resources and enhancing resilience to climate change impacts.

Prosperous: Connect SoCal fosters an inclusive and resilient economy. Strategic investments in infrastructure and transportation will improve access to employment centers and stimulate regional economic growth and opportunity in historically underserved areas. The region will prioritize workforce development initiatives, entrepreneurship and innovation to create diverse job opportunities across industries. Connect SoCal will advance the transition to clean-transportation technologies, such as the development of a roadmap for the infrastructure to support zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty trucks. Investment in clean technologies and the transition to a clean-energy economy will provide valuable opportunities to support economic development and recovery, resilience planning and the achievement of equity.

Accessible: Connect SoCal envisions a future where transportation is efficient, multimodal and accessible to all. Integrated transit networks, including expanded rail systems, bus rapid transit and active transportation infrastructure, will provide seamless connections throughout the region and expand mobility options connecting to previously underserved areas. The improved safety and security of the system will help more people feel comfortable taking transit or active transportation. Innovative technologies, such as zero-emission vehicles, broadband and Intelligent Transportation Systems, will play a vital role in expanding accessibility and reducing congestion and emissions.

Connected: The Southern California region will be characterized by connected and vibrant communities. New compact and mixed-use development patterns will prioritize walkability and create livable neighborhoods with ample green spaces, public amenities and affordable housing options. Transit-oriented development will foster thriving urban centers, reducing dependency on single-occupancy-vehicle travel and the need for long commutes.

Achieving this vision will require the collaboration of each community as well as leadership at the local, regional and state levels to take bold actions that address the injustices of the past, face the challenges of today and make investments for the future. SCAG is committed to ensuring that Connect SoCal remains a living document that is rooted in strong analysis and evolves alongside changes in the economy, technologies and demographics. SCAG adopted its first Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy in 2012. At that time, the region faced uncertainty as to how recovery from the Great Recession would impact the region over the long term. There were not yet e-scooters on our sidewalks, and there were less than 10,000 electric vehicles on our roads. Navigating this shifting context requires continued collaboration with local and state government agencies and other stakeholders.



In 2050, Southern California will be a healthy, prosperous, accessible and connected region for a more resilient and equitable future.

Addressing Regional Challenges

Over the past several decades, the Southern California region has faced a number of challenges, many of which continue to evolve today. The prominent issues outlined below contextualize solutions proposed in Chapter 3.


Mobility

Our historic prioritization of roadway-system expansion and dispersed land use patterns has led to severe congestion on our roadways, long commute times and declining transit ridership. The SCAG region has invested billions of dollars over the last few decades to improve accessibility and reduce congestion by providing alternatives to driving alone. These alternatives include regional commuter rail, light rail and the bus network. However, more work is needed to better manage both the viability and reliability of the transportation system and consumer demand for it.

A considerable challenge is securing adequate funding for transportation—not just for new infrastructure but also for investment in system preservation, operations support for transit and passenger rail, and increasing resiliency needs. Although the passage of Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) (2017) provided much-needed funding for system preservation, we have only managed to maintain the condition of local streets and roads to match their condition from four years ago—which is below a state of good repair. As we shift to a zero-emission transportation system, there will be an increased decline of transportation revenue sources dependent on fuel taxes, further deteriorating pavement conditions. SCAG will collaborate with federal, state and local partners to leverage existing revenue sources, explore innovative funding and financing mechanisms and advocate for increased investment in the region's transportation needs.

Communities

The region's communities are often fragmented, lacking connectivity and having unequal access to housing and essential services such as education, healthcare and employment. This fragmentation hinders the overall quality of life for residents and results in higher costs for both housing and transportation. In addition, Southern California's housing crisis has been decades in the making. The quantitative impacts of the housing crisis, such as overcrowding, cost-burden and home-ownership rates, disproportionately burden communities of color. The 6th cycle RHNA identified a need of over 1.3 million units in the SCAG region to address this crisis. Building consensus and garnering public support for transformative change is essential. SCAG will engage diverse stakeholders, including community organizations, advocacy groups and residents to ensure their voices are heard and incorporated into decision-making processes.




While the region boasts a resilient economy, diverse natural resources and a robust transportation system, it faces challenges in providing equitable opportunities. Disparities in access to education and training, affordable housing and transportation contribute to regional inequities.

Environment

Southern California experiences significant air pollution that impacts public health and contributes to climate change. Climate change-related hazards are becoming more intense, with widespread regional impacts that include wildfires, drought, extreme weather and rising sea levels that negatively impact public health, welfare and the economy. The impacts of climate change also exacerbate underlying health risks in vulnerable and historically marginalized communities. In addition, urbanization continues to consume farmlands and open spaces, which contributes to the loss of groundwater supply and habitat areas that play a critical role in strengthening the region's resilience. SCAG will collaborate with federal, state and local partners to ensure that the implementation of the Plan helps address existing air-quality challenges, preserve natural lands and reduce GHG emissions.

Economy

While the region boasts a resilient economy, it faces challenges in providing equitable economic opportunities. Disparities in access to education and training opportunities, affordable housing and transportation options hinder inclusive growth and contribute to inequities. The goods-movement sector supports a diversity of jobs but faces instability with global supply chains, exponential increases in freight activity and volatility, congestion and bottlenecks that threaten the loss of market share, and the challenge of mitigating community and environmental impacts. SCAG will collaborate with public and private stakeholders to ensure the benefits of a robust economy are shared by providing access to infrastructure like broadband, supporting workforce development opportunities—particularly around the deployment of clean technologies—and conducting comprehensive, systems-level planning for goods movement.



As the largest metropolitan planning organization in the country, SCAG has worked collaboratively with transportation agencies across Southern California for 50 years to align and connect transportation investments across the six-county region through the adoption of Regional Transportation Plans. With the more recent passage of SB 375, SCAG has broadened this collaboration over the last 15 years to integrate local land use and transportation planning through the development of a Sustainable Communities Strategy.

1.2

Planning for a Better Tomorrow



Connect SoCal 2024 reflects a continuation of the shift toward more efficient resource management. This refers to our transportation infrastructure, land resources and environmental resources.

Historically, the region has been able to build outward to accommodate population growth and then augment the transportation network to support that growth. Going forward, plans and programs will leverage our existing assets and infrastructure through an increased focus on system management, revitalization and reuse. This could include infill development and repurposing underutilized properties. This will look different for each community, as there are no one-size-fits-all solutions in such a diverse region.

By working collaboratively, we can be better stewards of our land and our public investments.

ALL ABOUT THE PLAN

Plan Development

Connect SoCal was developed through a four-year planning process that involved rigorous technical analysis, extensive stakeholder engagement, consultation with state and federal governments (such as land management agencies), and robust policy discussions with local elected leaders who make up SCAG’s policy committees and Regional Council. This process also included formal input processes for our Project List from County Transportation Commissions and land use and growth data from local jurisdictions. In spring 2023, SCAG engaged with thousands of people across the region to gain a clear understanding of the issues and policy choices for the region.

Plan Goals

The goals for Connect SoCal are designed to help us achieve our vision. They fall into four core categories: mobility, communities, environment and economy. These goals are not mutually exclusive—they are mutually reinforcing. For example, the decisions and actions taken to achieve mobility goals can also help to achieve and support environmental goals. The top-line goals are highlighted below, and the supportive subgoals are further detailed in Chapter 3.

Mobility: Build and maintain a robust transportation network

Communities: Develop, connect and sustain communities that are livable and thriving

Environment: Create a healthy region for the people of today and tomorrow

Economy: Support a sustainable, efficient and productive regional economic environment that provides opportunities for all residents

Focusing on Objectives

By 2050, the population of the region is projected to increase by two million people, or 11 percent, with an increase of 1.6 million housing units, or 26 percent, and 1.3 million jobs, or 14.2 percent.

This Plan invests \$750.1 billion in our transportation system, primarily in operations and maintenance, to ensure the continued performance of our current network. Implementation of Connect SoCal 2024 will add 181,200 new miles of transit revenue service, 4,000 new miles of bike lanes and 869 new miles to the Regional Express Lane Network. More importantly, the Plan includes investments and strategies to better manage these and past investments, including an Intelligent Transportation System and policies for Transportation Demand Management.

Sixty-seven percent of new households and 55 percent of new jobs between 2019–2050 will be located in Priority Development Areas, either near transit or in walkable communities.

This will create a region with:

- Transit as a backbone of the transportation system
- More Complete Streets where people and safety are prioritized
- Policies that encourage emerging technologies and mobility innovations that support rather than hamper regional goals
- More housing, jobs and mobility options closer together in Priority Development Areas to preserve natural lands and open spaces
- More housing to address the “existing housing need” as defined by the Regional Housing Needs Assessment
- Safe and fluid movement of goods, with a commitment to the broad deployment of zero- and near-zero emission technologies

For more details on the policies and projects included in Connect SoCal, see Chapter 3.

Altogether, the Plan's investments will create over 275,000 jobs and increase transportation efficiency and regional output to provide benefits of two dollars per dollar invested.

In addition to meeting our GHG reduction target, Connect SoCal will deliver significant benefits to the region with respect to mobility, safety, health outcomes, travel-time reliability, air quality, economic productivity, environmental justice and transportation asset condition. For more details on the benefits and results of Connect SoCal, see Chapter 5.

Achieving the Vision

Connect SoCal embodies a collective vision for the region's future through the horizon year of 2050. It is developed with input from a wide range of constituents and stakeholders from all six of the SCAG region counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura, including public agencies, community organizations, elected officials, tribal governments, the business community and the general public.

This document outlines the challenges facing our region, our shared goals and policies, and the transportation investments and land use strategies needed to chart a path toward a brighter future. However, SCAG is just one part of a large body of governments and public agencies that collectively plan, construct, operate and maintain the region's transportation system, plan for housing and regulate land use. SCAG's work helps facilitate implementation, but the agency does not directly implement or construct projects or have land use authority.

Connect SoCal allows public agencies who implement transportation projects to do so in a coordinated manner while supporting economic growth, achieving environmental goals, promoting public health, quality of life, and social equity, and ensuring continued access to federal and state transportation funding. The Plan includes robust financial analysis that considers operation and maintenance costs to ensure our existing transportation system's reliability, longevity, resilience and cost-

effectiveness. The Plan outlines a forecasted development pattern that demonstrates how the region can sustainably accommodate needed housing. In addition, Connect SoCal is supported by a combination of transportation and land use strategies that outline how the region can achieve California's GHG-emission-reduction goals and federal Clean Air Act requirements. These are articulated in a set of Regional Strategic Investments, Regional Planning Policies and Implementation Strategies. Within those elements, the Plan also strives to achieve broader regional objectives, such as increased housing production, improved equity and resilience, the preservation of natural lands, improvement of public health, increased transportation safety, support for the region's vital goods movement industries and more efficient use of resources.

Connect SoCal embodies a collective vision for the region's future through 2050. It is developed with input from a wide range of constituents and stakeholders from all six counties in the SCAG region including public agencies, community organizations, elected officials, tribal governments, the business community and general public.

HOW IT WORKS

Connect SoCal Performance-Based Planning

VISION AND GOALS

SCAG leads the region by defining where we want to go and outlining strategies to get us there.

Leadership

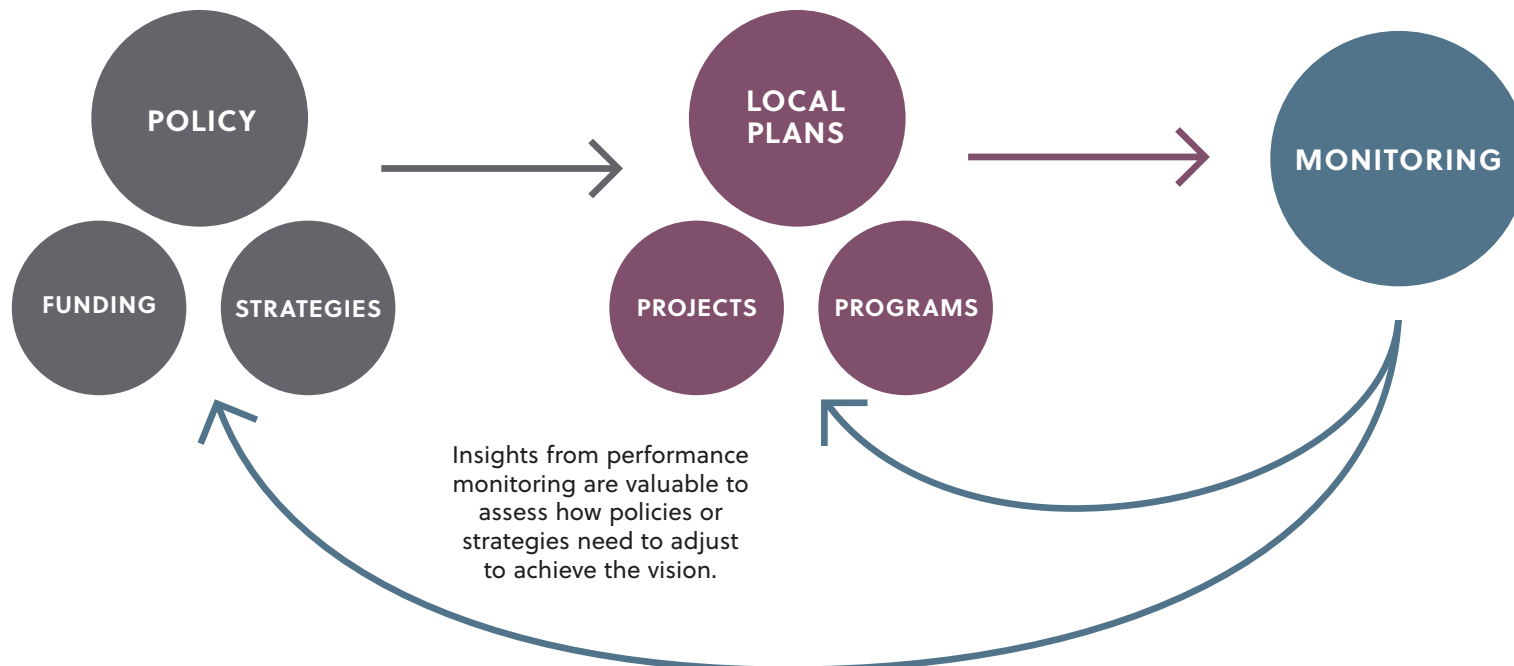
SCAG works with local jurisdictions, transportation commissions, state and federal agencies and various stakeholder groups to identify how we will work together to achieve the regional vision.

Implementation

Jurisdictions take action at the local level to implement work that moves toward achieving this regional vision.

Evaluation

Measurement of implementation work and outcomes acts as a benchmark on progress toward achieving the vision.



1.3

SCAG Leadership



Connect SoCal development is led by SCAG's 86-member governing board, known as the Regional Council, which represents 67 districts. Membership in SCAG's Regional Council also includes representation from each county Board of Supervisors and one representative from the Southern California Native American Tribal Governments.

SCAG's decision-making process is also guided by its Executive/Administration Committee, Legislative/Communications and Membership Committees and three Policy Committees. Much of the discussion occurs in the Policy Committees. All issues considered by the Regional Council must originate through one or more of the committees.

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1.4

Data and Details

Connect SoCal is rooted in deep research, data collection and policy development. This book, the Connect SoCal “main book”, presents a summary of that work. Further detail on Plan elements and analysis can be found in the Plan’s accompanying Technical Reports.



TECHNICAL REPORT	SUMMARY
Aviation and Airport Ground Access	Discussion of the regional airport and aviation system, including the regulatory, operational and planning framework; airports in the SCAG region; passenger and cargo trends; surface transportation modal choices; passenger forecasts; and highlights of airport ground-access improvement projects
Congestion Management	Details the state and federal congestion management regulatory framework, discusses congestion performance measures, and describes strategies to reduce congestion
Transportation Finance	Describes Plan financial elements, including projected revenues and expenditures
Transportation Conformity Analysis	Discussion of latest planning assumptions, regional emissions analysis, financial constraint analysis, timely implementation of transportation control measures (TCMs), interagency consultation and public involvement, and conformity findings
Goods Movement	Discussion of regional goods movement systems, including seaports, rail, air cargo and trucking—and their relationships to industrial and retail facilities; global and national supply chains; local and national consumption; regulatory frameworks; technology transitions and community impacts
Equity Analysis	Equity analysis to evaluate the potential impacts of the implementation of the Plan on communities of color, low-income populations and other underserved communities
Performance Monitoring	Plan performance assessment metrics and results, and ongoing regional performance monitoring over time
Project List	List of constrained and unconstrained projects

TECHNICAL REPORT	SUMMARY
Public Participation and Consultation	Documentation of consultation, outreach and engagement activities
Mobility	Focuses on overarching and intersectional issues across all transportation modes. Subsequent modal-specific chapters: Transit/Rail, Active Transportation, and Streets and Highways. Each includes a discussion on our existing conditions, challenges and key strategies
Economic Impact Analysis	Discussion of the Plan's regional economic impacts
Demographics and Growth Forecast	Analysis of the region's current demographics and anticipated future population, household and employment growth patterns
Land Use and Communities	Discussion of the Plan's Forecasted Regional Development Pattern and strategies for sustainable and resilient land use
Housing	Discussion of the regional housing supply and strategies to increase access to housing
Travel and Tourism	Discussion of travel and tourism in the region, including key destinations, the transportation system, programs serving travel and tourism in the region, and the local, county and state agencies, and nonprofit organizations working on enhancing tourism in the region