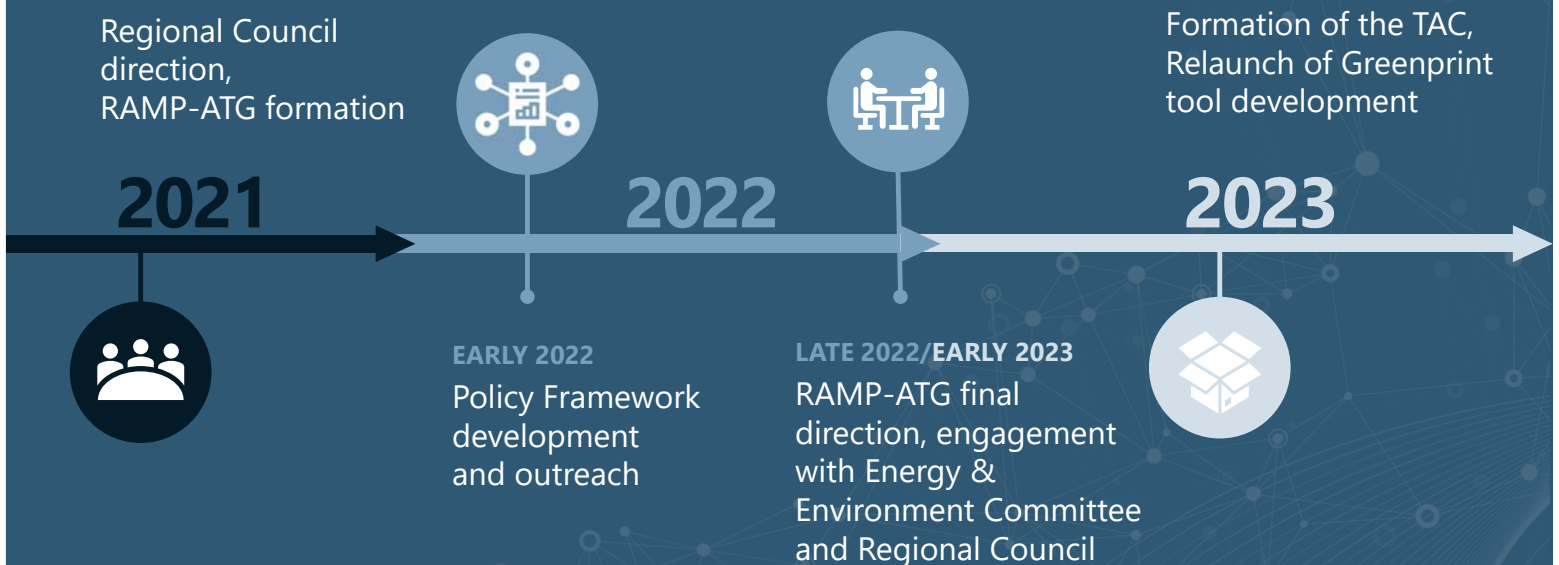# Proposed Final Draft
Regional Advance Mitigation Program Policy Framework

November 16, 2022

SCAG

WWW.SCAG.CA.GOV

Timeline of this Effort

Regional Council direction, RAMP-ATG formation

Formation of the TAC, Relaunch of Greenprint tool development

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

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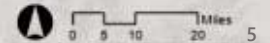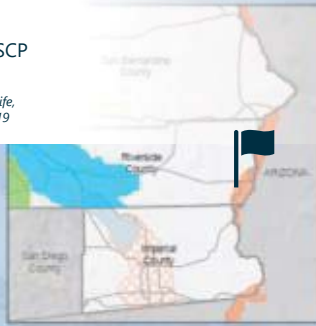
This can help **avoid costs and delays** associated with environmental mitigations **and more effectively avoid environmental harm**.

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.

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 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.

• These are programmatic measures for SCAG to develop and implement; they do not mitigate any specific local project.

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

Draft RAMP Policy Framework Regional Goals

1. **Facilitate infrastructure development** and associated co-benefits, such as job creation, maximizing taxpayer funds, supporting 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 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 meaningful, regional-scale conservation outcomes**, with benefits such as landscape and community resilience, ~~emissions reduction,~~ 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** this policy **on the transportation sector and** related infrastructure, and consider future policy opportunities to expedite and streamline mitigation needs for other sectors including housing, energy and utilities;

3. **Identify ways to support implementing agencies** to establish or supplement regional conservation and mitigation banks and other approaches to more effectively address impacts of projects that support reduction of per-capita vehicle miles traveled;

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

4. **Support implementing agencies with** data sharing, information and other resources helpful to their **long-term management and stewardship** of conserved properties;

5. Initiate **studies to assess gaps where programs do not exist, and ascertain best ways to collaborate** with partner agencies and permitting entities to address those gaps, including by supporting implementation agencies in developing new or partnership efforts;

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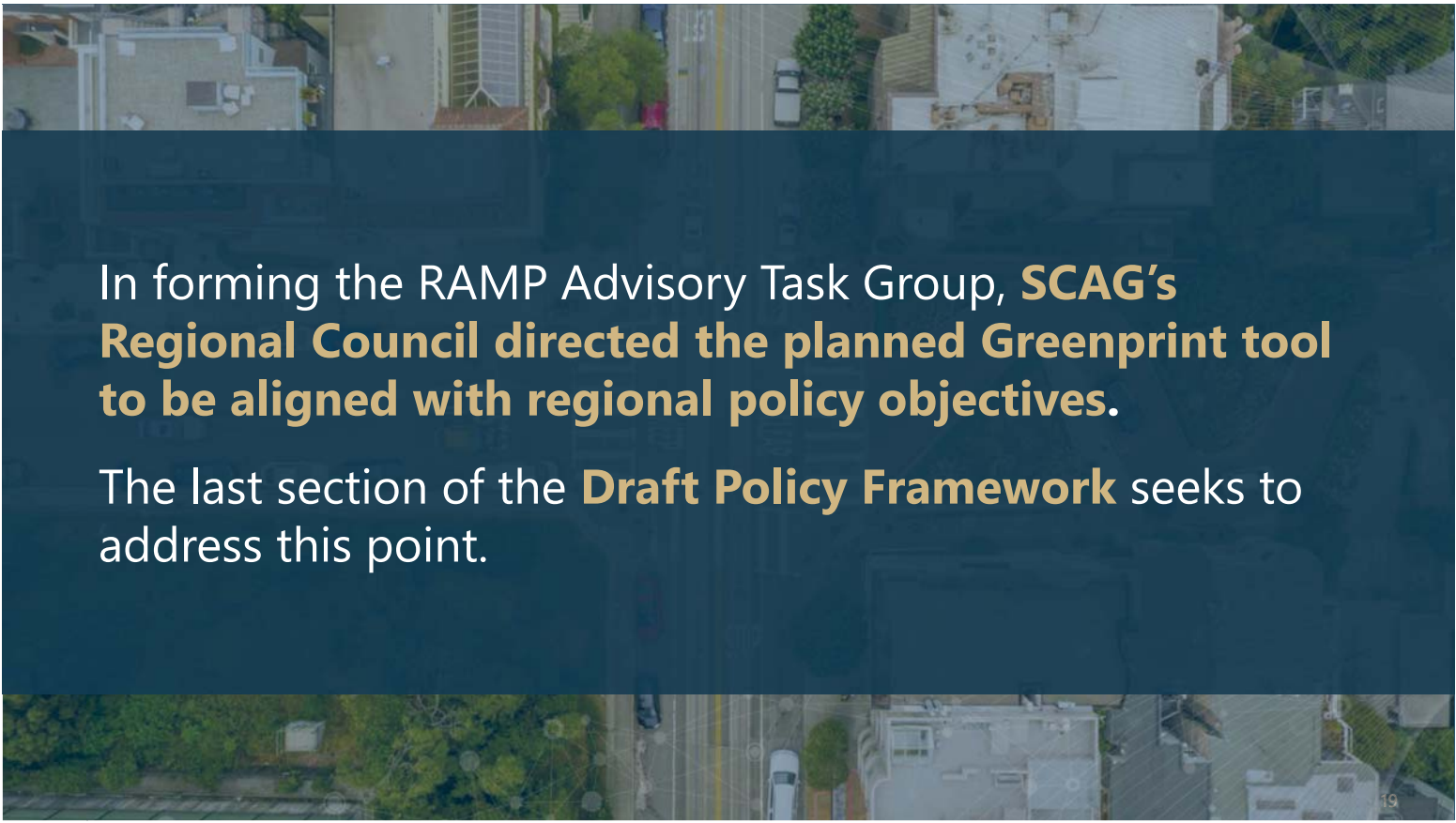
SCAG's Role in Supporting RAMPs *(continued)*

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, consistent with Connect SoCal's PEIR Mitigation Measure SMM AG-2 and SMM BIO-2;

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

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

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

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

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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.
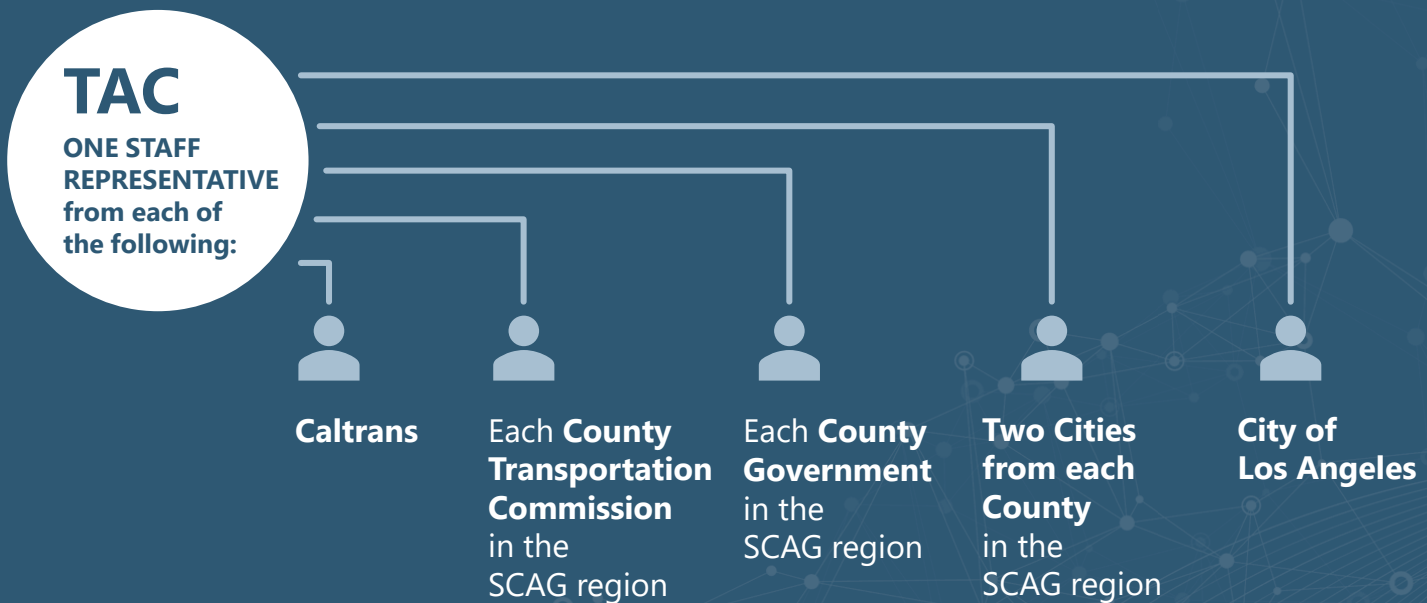
SoCal Greenprint Tool

Connect SoCal PEIR
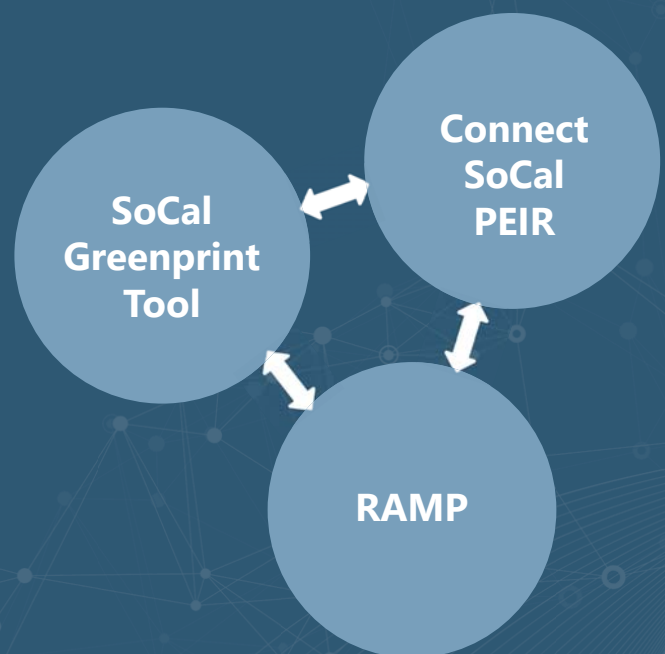
RAMP

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:

- Data Policies & 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
- Each **County Government** in the SCAG region
- **Two Cities from each County** in the SCAG region
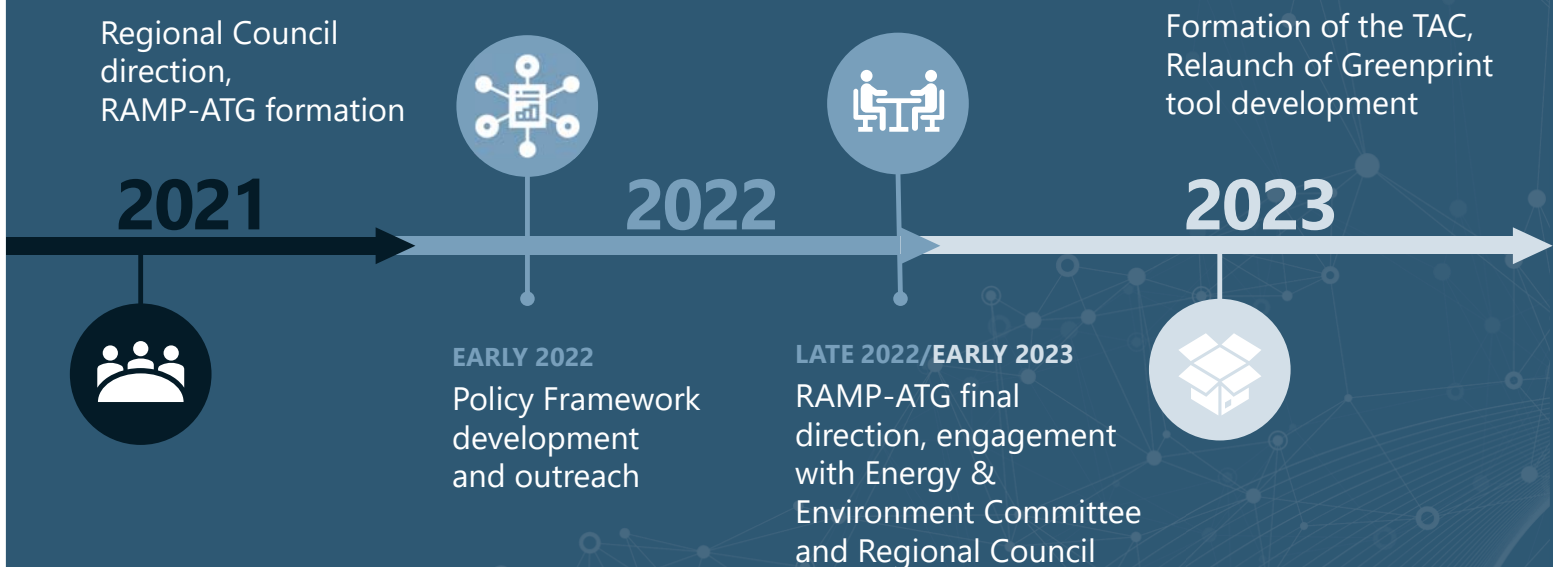- **City of Los Angeles**

Draft Data Policies for TAC Consideration

- 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**

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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Stakeholder engagement since previous RAMP-ATG meeting on 4/26/2022

Business and Development Stakeholders

Meetings and Written Feedback

- Remove references to SoCal Greenprint
- Remove references to "best available scientific data."
- Technical Advisory Committee to evaluate data
- Limit to lands planned for conservation
- Remove language regarding Connect SoCal's goal to support reduction of per capita vehicle miles travelled.
- Remove AVRCIS data or include clarifying letter from CDFW

Environmental Stakeholders Feedback

8/17/2022 Workshop

- Include data on lands not currently conserved
- Include equity and environmental justice data
- Need accurate data to fulfill 30x30 Executive Order
- Use 500-year floodplain data instead of 100-year flood data, and metric for impervious surface cover reduction
- More engagement with tribal communities, AQMD, Coastal Commission, Municipal Water District and Caltrans.

Public Sector Stakeholder Feedback

10/12/2022 Workshop

- Show best practices and lessons learned from other RAMPS
- TAC should equitably represent the region
- Keep datasets updated and see if some should be replaced
- Evaluate datasets for redundancy or conflict with each other
- Evaluate if datasets are duplicative with state data

THANK YOU!

For more information, please visit:

www.scag.ca.gov/greenprint
www.scag.ca.gov/ramp-atg