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# News Release

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## ***SCAG releases Connect SoCal draft – a major milestone in meeting the mobility, land-use and sustainability needs for the 6-county region***

**Los Angeles** – The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) on Thursday released a draft of Connect SoCal, its 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, identifying \$638 billion in mobility, land-use and air-quality improvements.

The draft plan represents a significant milestone in meeting the mobility and quality-of-life needs of one of the fastest-growing population centers in the United States. According to SCAG research, the six-county region is expected to grow by nearly 3.7 million people over the next quarter century to 22.5 million – a 19% increase.

Connect SoCal was developed by SCAG’s staff as part of an extensive planning and visioning process that included the active engagement of residents and stakeholders across the region. It is built around a core vision that centers on maintaining and better managing the transportation network we have for moving people and goods, while expanding mobility choices through land-use decisions and increasing investment in transit and complete streets.

“There is no one-size-fits-all solution for our regional transportation challenges. We have to explore an integrated web of creative strategies, which is what Connect SoCal sets out to do,” said Bill Jahn, SCAG President.

As the metropolitan planning organization for six counties and 191 cities, SCAG is mandated by law to develop a long-term regional transportation and sustainability plan every four years. This year’s plan focuses on a series of key connections between land-use, transportation and innovation, and leveraging new technologies and partnerships to accelerate and meet regional planning goals. Those connections include the development of smart cities and job centers, housing supportive infrastructure, Go Zones, shared mobility and the increased electrification of our transportation fleet.

Through the integration of all of these, Connect SoCal would reduce congestion and improve air quality in a region where the average commuter currently wastes more than 100 hours per year stuck in traffic. Specifically, the plan projects:

- A 4% reduction in overall vehicle-miles traveled.
- A 22.8% reduction in daily miles driven per capita.
- A 7% increase in overall walking and bicycling trips.
- A 40% increase in daily transit boardings.
- Achieving the region’s targets for reducing greenhouses gases from autos and light-duty trucks by 19% per capita, from 2005 levels, by 2035.

Other benefits include:

- 167,100 new jobs supported by transportation investments.
- 195,500 new jobs supported by improved competitiveness.
- \$350 million saved per year in health-care spending.
- \$138 million saved per year on air pollution-related health incidences
- An overall return of \$1.54 for every \$1 spent.

“A key to building an effective regional transportation strategy is understanding local growth patterns, which allows us to focus attention on those areas experiencing significant change and increases in transportation needs,” said Kome Ajise, SCAG Executive Director. “More broadly, being able to recognize the relationship between land use and transportation management – such as supporting more mixed-use and transit-oriented development, helping to reduce travel times and costs, and improve air quality.”

Among the specific strategies included in Connect SoCal:

- Emphasize land-use patterns that facilitate multimodal access to jobs, schools and other destinations. Today, High Quality Transit Areas – priority growth areas within one-half mile of an existing or planned transit stop – represent less than 3% of the region’s acreage but are projected to comprise nearly 55% of new households between 2016 and 2045.
- Expand the use of fiber networks, virtual access and smart technologies to reduce the need for vehicle trips.
- Support local efforts to streamline and eliminate barriers to housing development, particularly in and around job centers.
- Promote low-emission technologies such as neighborhood electric vehicles, car sharing, bike sharing and scooters by providing supporting and safe infrastructure (dedicated lanes, charging and parking/drop-off spaces).
- Support cities in the establishment of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities (CRIAs) and other tax-increment or value-capture tools to finance sustainable infrastructure and development projects.
- Support local policies for renewable energy production, reduction of urban heat islands and carbon sequestration.
- Invest in the operation and maintenance of our roadway system. The plan includes \$68 billion toward preservation of the state highway system and \$20.88 billion for local roads.
- Facilitate goods movement through the development of grade separations, improved port terminals and projects that relieve auto and truck bottlenecks.

The Connect SoCal draft is now available for public review and input. A final version of the plan is expected to be presented to SCAG’s Regional Council for approval in early 2020.

For more on Connect SoCal, visit [www.connectsocial.org](http://www.connectsocial.org).

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### **About SCAG**

SCAG is the nation’s largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 18 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG’s regional efforts, please visit [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov).