

12TH ANNUAL SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ECONOMIC SUMMIT

On Dec. 2, 2021, SCAG virtually hosted its 12th Annual Regional Economic Summit. Over 300 people participated in this year's event. SCAG honored Senator Susan Rubio (D-Baldwin Park) by naming her the Legislative Champion of Economic Empowerment. Earlier this year, Senator Rubio was instrumental in SCAG receiving a \$3.5 million grant from the State to implement the agency's Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy recommendations.

Dr. Wallace Walrod, SCAG's Chief Economic Advisor, reported his outlook on the regional economy, expressing a positive – but cautious – outlook for the region, noting that the regional economy is fundamentally strong and resilient in the face of our recent challenges. The region's most immediate challenge is COVID-19 and its aftermath, including ongoing supply chain issues, labor supply disruptions, and inflation. In addition, Dr. Walrod reiterated that the greatest challenge to the region's long-term growth is unaffordable housing.

Essential to a resilient economy is inclusive and equitable economic growth. Dr. Karthick Ramakrishnan, from the University of California, Riverside's Center for Social Innovation, discussed the economic benefits of equitable and inclusive growth. He outlined ways SCAG can better incorporate and communicate measures of equity and inclusion in its long-term planning.

An energetic and informative panel discussion followed the economic briefing. Dr. Micah Weinberg, Chief Executive Officer and President of California Forward, moderated the panel, which included Dr. Daryl Fairweather, Chief Economist at Redfin; Estelle Reyes, Senior Vice President, Enhancing Community at LA Cleantech Incubator; Dee Dee Myers, Director of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GoBiz) and Senior Advisor to the Governor of California; and David Hickey, Vice President West Business Markets at Verizon. The panelists highlighted the region's ingenuity and diversity as a source of opportunity. Still, they also noted the challenges the region faces, echoing concerns about the economic burden of the region's housing shortage.

The event culminated with a keynote address Rana Foroohar, a Global Business Columnist at The Financial Times and Global Economic Analyst at CNN, who spoke about the pandemic supercharging preexisting economic issues, including economic inequality. Her address laid out a vision for a truly sustainable recovery and an economic future that relies less on the global and more on the local.

Materials (including SCAG's regional economic outlook and related research in the Regional Briefing Book), presentations, and videos from the event are available on SCAG's website at scag.ca.gov/economicssummit.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

SCAG hosted a meet-and-greets with two freshmen members of the Southern California Congressional Delegation. Representatives Jay Obernolte (R-Hesperia) and Young Kim (R-Fullerton) both assumed office in January 2021.

On Nov. 16, 2021, SCAG President Clint Lorimore, Legislative/Communications and Membership Committee (LCMC) Chair Alan Wapner, and LCMC Vice Chair Peggy Huang were joined by Regional Councilmembers Randall Putz and Larry McCallon to meet with Congressman Obernolte, who expressed his long-standing support for core infrastructure, such as roads, highways, and bridges, and even expressed support for member-directed spending.

On Nov. 22, 2021, President Lorimore, First Vice President Jan Harnik, Second Vice President Carmen Ramirez, and LCMC Vice Chair Huang were joined by Regional Councilmembers Marty Simonoff, Art Brown, Tim Shaw, and Ray Marquez in a meeting with Congresswoman Kim that included a discussion on ongoing issues in the goods movement sector and brief for our members on the Ocean Shipping Reform Act (H.R. 4996), which Congresswoman Kim co-sponsored. The bill would

make various changes to improve ocean shipping and port operations. The bill recently passed the House and has moved to the U.S. Senate for consideration.

As a follow-up to the State Assembly's Housing Roundtable meetings, SCAG met with Assemblymembers Robert Rivas (D-Salinas), Timothy Grayson (D-Concord), and Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland), the newly appointed Chair of the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee.

On Dec. 16, 2021, President Lorimore, LCMC Chair Wapner, and LCMC Vice Chair Huang met with Assemblymember Rivas, who expressed his support for more local tools to address the housing affordability gap given the wide range of housing production challenges, including tax increment financing and revisiting redevelopment agencies. He also indicated that the Assembly would focus its attention on housing production and the projected budget surplus in 2022.

On Dec. 20, 2021, President Lorimore, First Vice President Harnik, Second Vice President Ramirez, LCMC Chair Wapner, and LCMC Vice Chair Huang met with Assemblymember Grayson and Chair Wicks. Assemblymember Grayson expressed his support for regional solutions to the housing crisis instead of one-size-fits-all policies. As the former Chair of the City of Concord's Redevelopment Agency, Assemblymember Grayson appreciated SCAG's continued support for tax increment financing to fund housing development and the infrastructure to support it. Chair Wicks said she recognized that the state's diverse regions face different challenges to address the housing crisis and that the Housing Roundtables helped to convey that. She expressed the need for ongoing funding to incentivize the creation of affordable housing and expressed support for housing for the "missing middle." While her ultimate goal is to focus on housing production, she stated that there will be an ongoing conversation surrounding balancing local control and meeting the state's housing production goals.

SCAG leadership will continue to meet with other Assemblymembers who attended the Housing Roundtables and continue to convey the Regional Council's housing legislative priorities to them.

SCAG TOURS THE CITY OF ANAHEIM

SCAG President Clint Lorimore and I joined Regional Councilmember Trevor O'Neil and senior city officials for an informative presentation and tour of some of the exciting happenings in the City of Anaheim. Topics covered included the city's housing element and recent affordable housing developments, Smart Center City Anaheim parking guidance and mobile application (which received SCAG grant funding), and the income-qualified electric vehicle (EV) rideshare program developed by Anaheim's municipal public utility. Participants also learned about the proposed pedestrian-friendly ocV!be project that will bring many benefits for Anaheim residents and visitors. The City of Anaheim was an early leader in mixed-use development and also allows for by-right housing development when certain conditions are met. Many recent projects in the city have placed a strong emphasis on walkability and overall quality of life.

2022 SCAG SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

SCAG is now accepting nominations for the 2022 SCAG Sustainability Awards. Each year, the Sustainability Awards celebrate plans and projects that use innovative planning to promote a healthier, happier, and resilient Southern California. Now through Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022, nominations will be accepted for the following award categories:

- Active, Healthy and Safe Communities
- Clean Cities: Alternative Fuels & Infrastructure
- Efficient & Sustainable Land Use
- Equity
- Green Region Initiative: Resource Conservation & Climate Action
- Housing Innovation

For questions regarding the 2022 Sustainability Awards, please contact Lyle Janicek at janicek@scag.ca.gov. For more information on the SCAG Sustainability Awards including the award criteria or to view past award winners visit scag.ca.gov/sustainabilityawards.

REAP: SCAG PARTNERS WITH USC SOL PRICE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY TO DEVELOP AN OTHER-TO-RESIDENTIAL TOOLKIT

SCAG staff is working hard on implementation of the \$47 million Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grant program. A collaboration team consisting of SCAG staff, staff and students at the University of Southern California's (USC) Sol Price School of Public Policy, and a consultant team are looking at ways to expand opportunities for students to engage with real-world examples. Through their work, the Other-to-Resident project was developed, which considers the potential conversion of underutilized non-residential sites to much-needed residential use in the SCAG region. The final deliverable will be an Other-to-Residential Toolkit that will showcase best practices and case studies that highlight common barriers faced by jurisdictions and the development community in the conversion of non-residential land uses, as well as offer measures to overcome them. The toolkit will be accompanied by a Design "Look Book" driven by the student work. Last month SCAG staff participated in a workshop review of the student case studies that will be developed into the final Look Book. The final Other-to-Residential Toolkit and Design Look Book will be completed and delivered to SCAG in Spring 2022.

SCAG KICKS OFF THE REGIONAL ADVANCE MITIGATION PLANNING ADVISORY TASK GROUP

On Dec. 10, 2021, SCAG held the kickoff meeting for the Regional Advance Mitigation Planning – Advisory Task Group (RAMP-ATG). As charged by the Regional Council in October 2021 (please see the [original staff report](#) and [supplemental staff report](#)), staff will work with the RAMP-ATG on establishing a policy framework for advance mitigation in the SCAG region to ensure the [SoCal Greenprint](#) tool is aligned with policy objectives. As part of developing the policy framework, the RAMP-ATG will also provide feedback on a white paper on Regional Advance Mitigation Planning (RAMP) and can provide input on how existing publicly available data can support RAMP in Southern California. Feedback from the RAMP-ATG, along with feedback from all stakeholders as required by the Regional Council's directive, will help SCAG staff complete the white paper and identify the final data layers to be included in the SoCal Greenprint tool.

During the kickoff meeting, RAMP-ATG members Sean Ashton, Curt Hagman, Peggy Huang, and David Pollock elected SCAG President Clint Lorimore to be the Chair of the RAMP-ATG. The meeting included a brief overview presentation from SCAG staff on RAMP, including its benefits for regional growth and examples of established initiatives across the SCAG region. A recording of the meeting can be found on SCAG's website at scag.ca.gov.

The RAMP-ATG will meet at least three more times before disbanding upon reporting to both the Regional Council and Energy & Environment Committee, which is anticipated in April 2022. The next meeting is planned for Jan. 28, 2022, from 3 – 5 p.m. All meetings are open to the public and stakeholders are encouraged to submit public comments. Upcoming meetings will include presentations on existing regional advance mitigation programs, a review of feedback from interviews with the county transportation commissions, a presentation of the RAMP white paper outline and final draft, and the finalization of recommendations on a policy framework for advanced mitigation, including guidance for aligning the SoCal Greenprint and its data layers with related policy objectives.

The work of the RAMP-ATG is taking place during a pause on implementation of the SoCal Greenprint tool. There are several concurrent steps underway during this pause as directed by the Regional Council, which will include:

- Developing the SoCal Greenprint tool with focus on maximizing benefits to cities, counties, and transportation agencies.
- Reviewing and revising proposed data layers with feedback from project advisors and other stakeholders.

- Prospective user testing to ensure the tool is working and functional as developed with targeted audiences.
- Developing a disclosure statement and user acknowledgement to convey tool limitations and foster its proper use.

Please visit scag.ca.gov/ramp-atg for more information.

GO HUMAN – 2021 IN REVIEW

As 2021 comes to a close, SCAG's *Go Human* campaign hopes to continue to provide helpful resources during these challenging times. With the goal of supporting communities during the ongoing pandemic, SCAG partnered with community members, nonprofit organizations, agencies, and elected officials throughout the region to create safer and healthier places through education, advocacy, resource sharing and projects throughout 2021. We invite you to review the *Go Human 2021 Year in Review blog post*, highlighting strategies, successes, partnerships and more, including spotlights on:

- 31 Community Streets Mini Grant Projects
- 48 Community Safety Ambassadors and Safety Activations & New Program Toolkit
- 14 Temporary Safety Demonstrations Utilizing the Kit of Parts
- 4 Demonstration Projects Were Moved Forward
- 12 Traffic Safety Peer Exchanges
- 16+ Million Impressions Through Advertising Campaigns and 7,000 Safety Ads to 30+ Partners
- New Safety Pledge and Map with over 50 New Signatories

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD – RECOGNIZING SCAG'S SAFETY MODELS

SCAG's work on transportation safety crash prediction models will be highlighted at the [Transportation Research Board's Annual meeting](#), which is being held this year from Jan. 9-13, 2022, in Washington, D.C. The work was completed in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration and resulted in a series of predictive models for safety planning and target setting that will support SCAG's annual efforts to forecast safety outcomes such as fatalities and serious injuries. The models consider traffic, socioeconomic, and other trends. SCAG anticipates building on this work by developing an interactive tool for community modeling in the coming year. To learn more, please contact aguirre@scag.ca.gov.

LOCAL INFORMATION SERVICE TEAM UPDATE

Responding to jurisdictions' requests for further technical assistance, SCAG created the Local Information Services Team (LIST), which is a team of technical staff prepared to provide one-on-one technical and information services. Currently, the LIST members are focusing on assisting local jurisdictions with Safety Element updates, specifically the component under Senate Bill (SB) 379 that requires cities and counties to include climate adaptation and resilience strategies into their next Safety Element update. LIST members are providing technical assistance services on SCAG's available climate adaptation data and tools, such as toolkits from the Regional Climate Adaptation Framework, environmentally-sensitive layers within [HELPR 2.0](#), and the recently published "[SB 379 Compliance Curriculum for Local Jurisdictions](#)." To date, SCAG has conducted four SB 379 training sessions, with the most recent training held on Dec. 14, 2021, with the City of Camarillo. To learn more or request technical assistance, please contact list@scag.ca.gov.

WTS-OC AWARDS CEREMONY

On Dec. 2, 2021, I had the opportunity to join with other transportation leaders to congratulate industry and scholarship award recipients during the Women's Transportation Seminar, Orange County Chapter (WTS-OC) virtual awards program. SCAG has co-sponsored a graduate student scholarship for several years, and I was able to personally congratulate this year's winner of that award, Ms. Karen Phan, a second-year master's student in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles.