

6TH CYCLE RHNA UPDATE

On Feb. 16, the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Subcommittee/Appeals Board reviewed and recommended the 6th Cycle proposed Final RHNA Allocation Plan for further recommendation to the Community, Economic, and Human Development (CEHD) Committee. On Feb. 21, the CEHD Committee reviewed the proposed Final RHNA Allocation Plan and recommended it to the Regional Council for adoption at a public hearing scheduled for March 4. The Final RHNA Allocation Plan includes a redistribution of successfully appealed units from the RHNA appeals process and must be consistent with the regional determination provided by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in October 2019.

The RHNA Subcommittee and CEHD Committee at their respective February meetings also reviewed and recommended a resolution to address various issues that were raised during the RHNA process. The resolution outlines a strategy for SCAG to explore these reforms, such as a continuation of supporting subregions and local jurisdictions through the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) program, facilitations of discussion with HCD, statewide committee participation, legislative changes, and enhanced communications with county transportation commissions, policymakers, and stakeholders. The resolution will be included in the March 4 Regional Council agenda for adoption. For more information, please visit the [RHNA webpage](#).

CALL FOR COLLABORATION GRANT APPLICATION CLOSES, AWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS ANTICIPATED IN THE COMING WEEKS

In partnership with SCAG, the California Community Foundation (CCF) released the Call for Collaboration request for proposals on Jan. 19, inviting community organizations and their government partners to apply for small grants that fund the development of community-based policies and plans that support increased housing production. SCAG and the CCF issued widespread outreach and hosted a webinar to support community groups in developing their applications. As of the Feb. 23 deadline, dozens of applications had been received from organizations across the SCAG region. A review panel of foundations, academic scholars, housing professionals, and SCAG representatives has been carefully crafted to review proposals and identify grantees. The anticipated date of grantee award announcements is March 19, with grantees beginning an 18-month performance period on April 1. For more information about the [Call for Collaboration](#), please contact Alisha James at james@scag.ca.gov.

THIRD SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM CALL FOR APPLICATIONS RELEASED

On Feb. 8, SCAG released the third Sustainable Communities Program Call for Applications, which is open through April 23 and is focused on Smart Cities & Mobility Innovations. Applicants can apply for technical assistance for project types focusing on smart cities and job centers, go zones, and shared mobility and mobility as a service. Staff will hold two webinars to support application development and highlight best practices for eligible program areas on both March 8 and April 5. Staff is also holding weekly office hours for one-on-one coaching to support application development. To learn more and sign up for the upcoming webinars and office hours, please visit the [2020-2021 Sustainable Communities Program Call for Applications webpage](#).

SCAG LEADERSHIP MEETS WITH CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES TO DISCUSS REGIONAL PRIORITIES

On Feb. 10, President Rex Richardson, First Vice-President Clint Lorimore, Second Vice-President Jan Harnik, and Immediate Past President Alan Wapner, and I conducted two virtual meetings, respectively, with Congressman Ken Calvert (R-Corona), Member of the House Appropriations Energy and Water Subcommittee, and Congressman Mike Garcia (R-Santa Clarita), Member of the House Appropriations Transportation and Housing & Urban Development Subcommittee. They were joined by Regional Council Members Juan Carrillo, Peggy Huang, David Pollock, Steve Manos, and Karen Spiegel.

The meetings provided an opportunity for leadership to advocate and discuss some of the agency's most critical federal legislative priorities. First, to support direct and flexible federal aid for all cities, regardless of population size, to help with unexpected COVID-19-

related expenses and to backfill tax revenues losses. Secondly, to support a long-term federal surface transportation reauthorization bill. The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was extended for one-year to Sept. 30, which will give Congress more time to work on a new bill. Lastly, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic that has amplified the need for reliable and affordable broadband services, local governments and the private sector must have a strong federal partner as they deploy broadband infrastructure especially in underserved communities.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

On Feb. 23, SCAG Regional Council President Rex Richardson, Executive Director Kome Ajise, and staff hosted a New Member Orientation for Regional Council members that have joined SCAG as a result of the November 2020 General Election outcomes. Staff provided an in-depth presentation that covered multiple topics such as the agency's governing structure, member benefits, and major ongoing projects. There was also an opportunity for members to ask questions on Connect SoCal, housing and economic recovery efforts, and other significant regional planning initiatives. Future New Member Orientations will be planned as needed to provide new members with an opportunity to learn more about SCAG, meet key staff, and discuss important programs and initiatives.

SCAG HOSTS TRIBAL GOVERNMENT LISTENING TOUR AND PRESENTS CONNECT SOCAL TO TRIBAL ALLIANCE OF SOVEREIGN NATIONS

In January, SCAG gave a presentation on Connect SoCal to the Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian Nations, who subsequently identified two members for GLUE Council membership. In February, President Rex Richardson and Tribal Government Regional Councilmember Andrew Masiel, Sr., hosted the Tribal Government Listening Tour, which was attended by elected officials from the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Chemehuevi Indian Tribe, Pechanga Development Corporation, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, and the Torres-Martinez Gaming Commission. Since 2006, SCAG's Bylaws have ensured that the Native American perspective is represented at the policy decision-making level by providing voting seats to tribal government representatives on the General Assembly, Regional Council, and Policy Committees.

INCLUSION, EQUITY, DIVERSITY & AWARENESS WEBPAGE, BASELINE CONDITIONS REPORT & PUBLIC SURVEY RELEASED

At its July 2020 meeting, SCAG's Regional Council adopted [Resolution 20-623-2](#), declaring systemic racism a human rights and public health crisis. The resolution affirms SCAG's commitment to work in partnership with others to close the gap of racial injustice and meaningfully advance inclusion, diversity, equity, and awareness. The [Special Committee on Equity & Social Justice](#) was formed to advise SCAG's Regional Council on policies and practices to: 1) End racial and social disparities internal to the agency; 2) Strengthen the way it engages and convenes to protect and expand community voice and power; and 3) Work in partnership with others to close the gap of racial injustice and better serve communities of color, and in so doing, serve all the people of the region. To bring together the agency's work regarding inclusion, equity, diversity and awareness, SCAG has published a [webpage](#) that provides a working definition of Racial Equity and covers the various work items currently underway, released the [Racial Equity: Baseline Conditions Report](#), and launched a [public survey](#) to gather input on the development of the Racial Equity Early Action Plan. For updates, please visit the [Inclusion, Equity, Diversity & Awareness page on the SCAG website](#).

SCAG'S INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC RECOVERY STRATEGY UPDATE

As part of SCAG President Rex Richardson's [2020-2021 Work Plan](#), SCAG is developing an Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy that aims to support an equitable and inclusive economic recovery for the SCAG region. SCAG will be hosting 25–30 small focus groups from late February to early April for various industries to gather feedback and insights into what an inclusive economy would look like in their respective sectors and how SCAG can provide support. SCAG has kicked off the first seven convenings, meeting with community-based organizations, labor unions, incubators and accelerators, financial sector representatives, and commercial developers. In these first set of focus groups, we received invaluable input on the needs of each sector and SCAG's potential role in addressing these needs and narrowing racial disparities in accessing opportunities to economic mobility. SCAG will take the feedback from the convenings, combined with baseline data, to recommend strategies, policies, and programs for increasing our regional competitiveness and accelerating the creation of family supporting jobs.

SAVE THE DATE: 32ND ANNUAL DEMOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP

SCAG and the University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public Policy will jointly host the 32nd Annual Demographic Workshop as a virtual two-day event on June 8 and June 15 from 1:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. The theme for this year's program is "The Post-Pandemic City." Over the last year, Southern Californian residents, and the nation as a whole, have experienced extraordinary changes in all aspects of their lives such as those related to family formation and childcare, healthcare, employment, commuting, and housing accommodations. A demographic check-up panel covers the latest trends in migration, fertility, and vaccination, as well as the new 2020 Census counts due for release. Additional panels will focus on myths and realities of California's mass exodus and declining mobility, and the new trends in workplace, travel, and residential locations. The program will also include a keynote address and a series of expert-led roundtable discussions to build skills about topics discussed. Online registration will be available soon. For more information, please contact John Cho at choj@scag.ca.gov.

GLUE COUNCIL RECONVENES IN 2021

On Feb. 8, SCAG reconvened the Global Land Use & Economic (GLUE) Council, bringing together existing members and new members that reflect diverse industries from across the region. Staff provided presentations including updates on Connect SoCal, RHNA, SCAG's housing program, and legislative bills related to housing and land use policy. SCAG will continuously share its legislative agenda to keep GLUE Council members informed and receive industry-specific feedback. The framework of the Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy (IERS), part of the President's Work Plan, was also shared by staff. As part of the work plan, SCAG will host a dedicated focus group for the GLUE Council to learn more about how they see local and regional governments supporting efforts to promote an economic recovery that is centered on racial and gender equity. Members suggested many potential topics for future meetings, including adjustments to the models used for Connect SoCal on population growth, utility companies contributing to permitting process evaluation in smart cities initiatives, regionally responding to the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure process, the complexity of the state's new vehicle miles traveled (VMT) goals, and the region's overall economic picture.

TOOLBOX TUESDAY TRAINING FOCUSES ON PRESENTING DATA AND MAPS

On Feb. 23, SCAG hosted "StoryMapping: Transforming Data into Interactive Stories," a Toolbox Tuesday webinar that included an overview of ArcGIS StoryMaps and how it can be used to create immersive web-based stories or presentations by combining data, text, interactive maps, and other multimedia content. The webinar introduced participants to various types of StoryMaps, featured professionals using the tool, showcased regional StoryMaps from local jurisdictions and students, and closed with a tutorial on developing StoryMaps. The [2021 SCAG Student Showcase](#) was also briefly discussed as it is a StoryMap competition available to qualified students in the SCAG region. Please visit the [Toolbox Tuesday Online Training Materials page](#) for a recording of the webinar and other downloads of this training, as well as to access prior trainings and materials.

SCAG NATURAL & FARM LANDS CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP MEETS

On Feb. 25, SCAG hosted the Natural & Farm Lands Conservation Working Group. Meeting since 2014, the purpose of the working group is to provide a forum for stakeholders to share best practices and develop recommendations for natural and agricultural land conservation throughout the region and has been instrumental in the formation and implementation of Connect SoCal's conservation policies and strategies. The most recent meeting featured several presentations, many of which focused on agriculture and grazing lands conservation. An update on the SoCal Greenprint was provided, after which feedback was sought from the group on agricultural-related data and how the tool will convey that information. An additional presentation was given on agricultural conservation efforts around California and engaged the group on how SCAG can implement agricultural conservation strategies based on goals in Connect SoCal. For more information about the group and to attend future meetings, please contact India Brookover at brookover@scag.ca.gov.