

REGIONAL COUNCIL VOTES TO ADOPT CONNECT SOCAL

On Sept. 3, the Regional Council approved and fully adopted Connect SoCal (the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy). The approved plan outlines more than \$638 billion in regional investments and will support more than 4,000 projects and the creation of hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars of economic activity. In addition, the Regional Council also adopted an addendum to the Connect SoCal Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) to address comments relating to the environmental setting, environmental impacts, and consideration of other mitigation measures.

The meeting concluded more than three years of development and extensive coordination with SCAG's local jurisdictions, the county transportation commissions, partner agencies, as well as significant public outreach. Following the Regional Council action in May to delay approval of the plan, SCAG staff conducted outreach to jurisdictions to seek input on the impacts of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the plan and its implementation and identify and to confirm general plan and entitlement information. SCAG has benefited greatly from listening to the many needs and concerns of stakeholders and partners over the course of this process and will continue to address emerging regional issues and build greater consensus on the region's vision for a brighter future.

The plan has already been approved by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration and fully achieves conformity with the federal Clean Air Act. The adoption of Connect SoCal in its entirety allows SCAG to submit the plan to the California Air Resources Board and to begin distribution of the draft Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocations to local jurisdictions. Approval of Connect SoCal also enables staff to proceed with implementing activities designed to support pandemic recovery efforts as further outlined in the Connect SoCal Implementation Strategy.

For more updates on Connect SoCal, please visit ConnectSoCal.org.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM'S ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY CALL FOR APPLICATIONS RELEASED

In early September, SCAG released the first Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) Call for Applications, which is focused on active transportation and safety (AT&S) related projects. Applicants can apply for any of the three project types within the AT&S program area, including Community-wide or Area Plans, Quick Build, and Network Visioning and Implementation. Applicants can learn more about the SCP AT&S Call for Applications at one of the upcoming Application Webinars:

- Wednesday, Oct. 7, from 1 to 3 p.m.
- Wednesday, Oct. 21, from 10 a.m. to noon

Eligible applicants can RSVP for the upcoming webinars on the SCAG [SCP Website](#), which has more details about the AT&S project types and the overall program, as well as links to the online applications, program guidelines, fact sheet, a toolkit for local champions, and other resources for applicants.

GO HUMAN ACTIVE ACROSS THE REGION – AND STATE

September Advertising Campaign and Regional Survey Outcomes

SCAG launched *Go Human's* paid regional advertising campaign in August 2020, with updated stakeholder-tested messaging, in anticipation of the time of year with the highest rate of collisions due to reduced daylight hours. The media purchases targeted drivers with a "point of engagement" strategy, utilizing billboards, gas pump toppers, convenience store sheets, bus shelters, and digital and social media ads, among others, with messaging reminding drivers to slow down and watch for pedestrians. The campaign achieved over 300 million

impressions (each time someone views the advertisement). To date, *Go Human* has achieved over 1.25 billion impressions related to traffic safety messaging across the region. Additionally, SCAG completed an evaluation of the campaign effectiveness and found that over 80 percent of drivers found the ads motivating.

Co-Branding and Leveraging Strategies

To extend the reach of the paid advertising campaign, *Go Human* implemented a local co-branding strategy with partners. Through *Go Human*, SCAG developed 17 partnerships and developed 2,861 materials. Campaign branding was even utilized outside of the SCAG region, including in Placer County in support of their Active Transportation Program-funded project, complementing infrastructure strategies with safety messaging. Other strategies leveraged the advertisement campaign to advance a message of safety. The SCAG [Safety Pledge](#) called on local governments to commit to improving safety by adopting a Vision Zero plan, hosting a pop-up safety demonstration, implementing a safety outreach campaign, among other actions. The pledge was signed by 44 signatories representing 30 jurisdictions. The [Safe Driver Pledge](#) encouraged drivers to keep everyone on the road safe and was signed by 122 residents of the SCAG region. SCAG's highly successful *Go Human* Twitter Chat further engaged stakeholders in virtual safety conversations, reaching over 80,000 unique viewers and building over 430,000 impressions.

September Mini-Grant Outcomes

In conjunction with the advertising campaign, *Go Human* launched the Local Community Engagement and Safety Mini-Grants program in July, awarding more than \$210,000 to 28 projects across the region. Developed as a funding program to improve safety for people walking and biking, the program expanded the concept of traffic safety in response to the pandemic and efforts to reduce the transmission. Awarded projects spanned a wide range of creative engagement activities that prioritized the mobility and transportation needs of those most impacted by COVID-19. Projects included storytelling radio series focusing on transit, virtual workshops for youth, free bike match and repair for essential workers and families, and co-creation of community resilience and safety resources, among many other creative and impactful projects. The implementation period of the Mini-Grant closed in September. Awardees reached an additional 76,500 people to support safety and street-level resiliency planning.

SCAG PARTICIPATES IN 2020 CALIFORNIA AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION VIRTUAL CONFERENCE PANEL

At the 2020 California American Planning Association (APA) Virtual Conference held from Sept. 14-16, SCAG staff, alongside representatives from St. Joseph's Hospital, Helpline Youth Counseling, and City of Perris, participated in a panel called, "Implementing the Disadvantaged Communities Planning Tool to Secure Active Transportation Funding." The Disadvantaged Communities Planning Initiative is focused on delivering active transportation plans for historically disinvested communities. Panelists shared lessons learned on topics ranging from inclusive and effective engagement, the challenges of developing community stakeholder groups, utilizing temporary demonstration projects, and helping prepare jurisdictions for successful active transportation grant applications.

TOOLBOX TUESDAY TRAINING FOCUSES ON HYDROGEN

On Sept. 22, SCAG hosted a Toolbox Tuesday webinar, "Up to Code: Hydrogen Station Permitting, Market Trends and Zero-Emission Fleets." Featuring speakers from the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), SunLine Transit Agency, and the California Fuel Cell Partnership, this event provided an overview of the technology, available vehicles, incentives, and safety for hydrogen stations that are powering nearly 10,000 hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles on California's roads today. Highlights from the event include GO-Biz's newly updated [Hydrogen Station Permitting Guidebook](#), including market trends and lessons learned since the first edition was released in 2015, as well as SunLine Transit Agency's experience developing and supporting its zero-emission bus fleet in Southern California. A recording of the webinar and downloads of the presentation are available on the [SCAG Sustainability webpage](#).

SCAG JOINS OPR ADAPTATION PLANNING GUIDE WORKSHOPS TO HIGHLIGHT THE CLIMATE ADAPTATION FRAMEWORK

SCAG joined the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program Inland South and Los Angeles virtual Adaptation Planning Guide workshops that were held from Sept. 24-25 and geared towards local governments and stakeholders to provide information on recent adaptation planning resources. During the two workshops, SCAG presented on the Southern California Regional Climate Adaptation Framework, which is a collection of planning tools and resources, land use scenario analyses, and messaging strategies to help local jurisdictions across the SCAG region address their local climate hazards and develop effective adaptation plans. The framework, and associated tools and resources, is anticipated to fully launch by the end of December 2020. The Outreach Toolkit that is currently [available on the SCAG website](#) contains a collection of community capacity building templates on climate messaging.

SCAG HONORED WITH THE 2020 WTS-LA EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

SCAG was recently honored by the WTS Los Angeles (WTS-LA) Chapter Board of Directors as the 2020 Employer of the Year. WTS-LA recognized SCAG's commitment to excellence, outstanding record of diversity in hiring and promotion, support of continuing education and professional development, commitment to parental leave and social justice, and the agency's continued leadership in the transportation sector. WTS-LA is one of the largest chapters of WTS International, a 6,500-strong international organization dedicated to the advancement of women in transportation.

SCAG HONORED WITH TWO EXCELLENCE AWARDS FROM THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

The APA California Chapter has honored SCAG with two awards of excellence for the agency's work in establishing an active transportation database and its climate adaptation communications strategies. SCAG was honored with the Excellence Award in the category of Best Practices for its active transportation data collection tools. Launched in March 2019, the [Active Transportation Database](#) was developed to streamline and simplify data collection, make it easier to count pedestrians and bicyclists, and measure how frequently people in a certain area bike or walk. SCAG earned its other Excellence Award in the category of Public Outreach for its climate adaptation communications strategies. Working with the 191 cities and six counties it represents, SCAG led a regionwide effort to [support regional climate adaptation planning](#). The project is helping to connect local and regional land use and transportation planning with state policy goals and includes an extensive cross-sector public engagement process.

AIR QUALITY PLANS FOR COACHELLA VALLEY AND SOUTH COAST RECEIVED FEDERAL APPROVAL

On July 2, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published in the Federal Register a proposed rule to approve the latest fine particulate (PM_{2.5}) state implementation plan (SIP) for the South Coast region to address the federal 2012 annual PM_{2.5} ambient air quality standards. On Sept. 16, the EPA also published a final rule to approve the latest ozone SIP for Coachella Valley to address the federal 2008 8-hour ozone standards. SCAG staff had previously worked with the staff of the South Coast Air Quality Management District and the California Air Resources Board in developing these air plans including the associated new transportation conformity budgets. If the former proposed rule is finalized as anticipated, South Coast would fulfill all air quality planning requirements except for one element under conditional approval for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} standards. Once the latter final rule becomes effective on Oct. 16, Coachella Valley would fulfill all air quality planning requirements except for one element under deferred action for the 2008 ozone standards. Failure to meet the required federal air quality planning requirement could lead to serious consequences that impact the regional transportation plan, program, and projects. In addition, once effective, the new PM_{2.5} and ozone transportation conformity budgets in the respective air quality plans will apply to Connect SoCal, the Federal Transportation Improvement Program, and their respective amendments. For additional information, please visit the Federal Register Notices for the [South Coast proposed rule](#) and the [Coachella Valley final rule](#).