
News Release

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Contact: Steve Lambert, The 20/20 Network
(909) 841-7527/ steve@the2020network.com



SCAG approves Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy to bridge equity gaps, fortify region’s role as an economic driver

The nation’s largest metropolitan planning organization has unveiled an inclusive recovery strategy – more than a year in the making – to fortify Southern California’s role as a global economic powerhouse while bridging equity gaps and creating new opportunities across the region’s broad demographic spectrum.

The plan, overwhelmingly approved Thursday (July 1) by the Regional Council of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), establishes a roadmap for long-term, sustainable and inclusive economic growth across the six-county region. It includes specific recommendations in four focus areas – housing, transportation, growth sectors and human capital – and identifies opportunities to promote equity-oriented industry growth, job creation, entrepreneurship and small business success.

“Southern California is in a particularly strong position to help lead the nation’s post-pandemic recovery. This plan leverages our strengths as a region, and identifies ways we can build on existing best practices, collaborate even better than we currently do, maximize state funding that might be available and create a stronger, more resilient economy than ever,” said Clint Lorimore, SCAG President and an Eastvale City Councilmember.

The Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy is the centerpiece of SCAG’s more than yearlong effort to promote diversity, equity and inclusion after declaring racism a public health crisis in June 2020. Collaborating with stakeholders throughout the region, SCAG staff developed the strategy to foster greater opportunity for all and to narrow the economic disparities that exist locally and regionally.

“The equity gap is real, and especially for our communities of color, the barriers to economic opportunity were daunting long before COVID-19. This plan will allow us to address those challenges – in a very real and strategic way – in the months and years to come,” said Kome Ajise, SCAG Executive Director.

Among the key recommendations included in the Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy:

Housing Production and Preservation

- Invest in subregional efforts to streamline the approval process, expand local capacity and increase housing production
- Support efforts to create regional financing strategies and funding sources for affordable housing for low- and moderate-income renters, and advocate for additional state and federal funding.
- Launch a communications initiative that conveys the value and importance of sustainable, equitable housing.

Transportation and Infrastructure

- Develop a Broadband Action Plan to lead and support regional efforts in bridging the digital divide.
- Develop a regional blueprint for zero-emissions medium- and heavy-duty truck charging infrastructure.
- Identify priority transportation and infrastructure projects across the region that will invest in and directly benefit low-income and communities of color.

Sector-Based Strategies

- Boost local efforts to foster industry clusters by offering support on funding applications and advocating for supportive policies and funding.
- Lift up examples of industry leaders who have implemented effective diversity-equity-inclusion business practices.
- Identify top regulatory reform recommendations for the state and work with partners to seek legislative solutions.

Human Capital

- Join the state in advocating for a federal jobs guarantee.
- Bring greater awareness of workforce development resources for employers.
- Work with transit agencies to facilitate the adoption of the U.S. Employment Plan to create local jobs through future equipment and supply procurement.

“Building a strong and diversified high road regional economy requires that everyone has the opportunity to participate. This is especially true coming out of the pandemic,” said Egon Terplan, Senior Advisor for Economic Development and Transportation at the California Strategic Growth Council. “By taking the broad view and focusing on areas such as housing and infrastructure, this plan represents a major step forward in building equity and inclusion at this critical juncture for our economy.”

Copies of SCAG’s Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy are available online at:
https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/iers_report_final.pdf

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About SCAG

SCAG is the nation’s largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 19 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.