

Draft - REAP 2021 Program Development Framework

Overview & Purpose

The REAP 2021 Program Development Framework, or “Framework,” outlines the core objectives, guiding principles, programmatic areas, major milestones and schedule for allocating funds available to SCAG through the Regional Early Action planning Grant Program for 2021 (REAP 2021) or REAP 2.0. Approximately \$600 million is available statewide to support transformative and innovative projects that implement a region’s Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) and help achieve goals of more housing and transportation options that reduce reliance on cars. The SCAG region’s formula share is estimated to be \$246 million, of which an initial allocation of 10 percent (10%) of funds are available for outreach to support program development and the full program funding application. REAP 2.0 draft program guidelines are anticipated from HCD in March 2022, with full program guidelines and the application released in Spring 2022. With the full program guidelines and after an extensive engagement effort, SCAG will develop a comprehensive REAP 2.0 Program Application in the latter part of 2022.

The Framework provides the policy direction to support the stakeholder engagement process and resultant development of the full REAP 2.0 Program application, to ensure SCAG’s REAP 2 program aligns with agency goals and policies. It is based on several guiding and adopted policies, including:

- State plans and directives
 - AB140 Trailer Bill Language (July 2021)
 - REAP 2.0 Draft Framework Paper (Nov 2021)
- SCAG adopted plans
 - Connect SoCal Implementation Strategy (2020)
 - Executive Administration Committee Strategic Action Plan (2021)
 - Racial Equity Early Action Plan (2021)
 - Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy (2021)
- SCAG 2021 Housing Production Study

Early versions of SCAG’s Framework were presented to the SCAG Policy Committees, Executive Administration Committee (EAC) and the Regional Council. SCAG also got feedback on the Framework from the subregional COG directors and presented the draft to the Regional Housing Working Group and County Transportation Commission (CTC) Planning Directors. This Framework reflects early feedback from these stakeholders and is a draft to guide a more extensive stakeholder engagement process. The Framework may be amended based on feedback and will be presented to the SCAG Regional Council for approval in Summer 2022.

SCAG will apply its advanced funding to implement a comprehensive outreach and engagement strategy in support of development its REAP 2.0 program and the full program application. If allowed by the State ahead of the full program application, SCAG will apply for some its advanced funding to support the Early Action Initiatives further described below and that are part of SCAG’s adopted SCS Implementation Strategy.

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Core Program Objectives

- Support transformative planning and implementation activities that realize Connect SoCal objectives
- Leverage and augment the Connect SoCal Implementation Strategy to support activities that can be implemented quickly and in line with community-driven, pandemic recovery priorities
- Build regional capacity to deliver housing that realizes 6th cycle RHNA goals
- Represent best practices in vehicle miles traveled reduction
- Demonstrate consistency with Equity Early Action Plan
- Promote infill development in Connect SoCal identified Priority Growth Areas

Guiding Principles

In developing a program to address these core objectives, SCAG work shall be directed by the following guiding principles:

- Funding shall be allocated to three programmatic areas focused on Early Action to implement Connect SoCal 2020, Housing Supportive Infrastructure and a County Transportation Commission Partnership Program.
- Funding opportunities within each program area will balance formula allocations with competitive programs to ensure funding supports critical planning and implementation activities across the region while also prioritizing the most regional impactful projects.
- Early Action Initiatives shall seek to provide immediate benefit to the region through support for transformative *planning* activities that can be implemented quickly to advance strategies in Connect SoCal 2020 and inform the 2024 plan update. Early Action Initiatives shall comprise no more than 10% of the full program budget.
- The Housing Supportive Infrastructure Program and the County Transportation Commission Partnership Program shall serve as the primary vehicle for awarding REAP 2.0 funds and be focused on Connect SoCal 2020 implementation either through the deployment of pilot projects or support for the creation and/or expansion of new funding programs that directly support housing and mobility solutions. The Programs shall include regional initiatives and technical assistance led by SCAG to advance regionally coordinated and significant solutions as well as county-specific or geographically targeted programs that advance best practices reflecting the unique opportunities in the region.
- The Housing Supportive Infrastructure Program and the County Transportation Commission Partnership Program shall include SCAG-led projects as well as the sub-allocation of resources to implementing agencies.
- Funding guidelines will be developed specific to the Housing Supportive Infrastructure Program and County Transportation Commission Partnership Program or for any sub-programs for which SCAG would competitively award resources to a partner agency and will seek approval by the SCAG Regional Council. Funds available to each program shall be specified in the program guidelines for approval by the Regional Council.
- At least 80% of the REAP 2.0 funding in the full application will be directed to suballocated or partner-led projects, both formula-based and competitive, across all three programmatic areas to ensure efficient and effective delivery of REAP 2.0 and limit administrative costs to SCAG.

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- SCAG will work to balance funding allocation according to a number of equity considerations; ensuring that under-resourced jurisdictions are not left out due to lack of capacity and that geographic balance is a consideration in the suballocation of funding.
- No resources beyond those approved to support outreach and program development shall be expended until the Program Development Framework has been approved (after stakeholder engagement) and funding eligibility has been confirmed through the release of REAP 2 Program Guidelines by HCD.

Program Areas:

The Framework proposes that SCAG's REAP 2.0 funds will be administered across three (3) programmatic areas. Further development of programs and guidelines within each program area would occur once the State has provided complete program guidelines (anticipated Spring 2022) and through the stakeholder engagement process:

1. **Early Action Initiatives:** SCAG will expand some existing programs in the Connect SoCal Implementation Strategy to support cities in implementing Connect SoCal.
 - **Sustainable Communities Program (SCP):** The Call for Projects provides resources to local jurisdictions to conduct GHG/VMT reducing planning activities and demonstration projects throughout the SCAG region. SCAG is seeking to implement Call #4, the Call for Equity, Civic Engagement and Environmental Justice focused on under-resourced communities.
 - **Go Human:** SCAG is seeking to expand local resources and toolkits to help cities, counties and communities-based organizations promote safe walking and biking
 - **Regional Data Platform:** Local general plans provide the legal underpinning for land use decisions and set the vision about how a community will grow, reflecting community priorities and values while shaping the future. SCAG's RDP provides data and planning templates and tools to help local jurisdictions update and align various elements of their general plans to advance sustainable planning at the local and regional level. SCAG seeks to partner with subregional agencies and other partners to expand support and training for local jurisdictions to use the RDP as well as provide additional features and functions to help further align local efforts with regional goals through performance dashboarding features.
 - **Sub-regional plans or studies:** Support a number of partnerships and studies centered on core SCS implementation strategies.
2. **Housing Supportive Infrastructure Program** - The Housing Supportive Infrastructure program builds on the concepts put forward in the *Key Connections* in Connect SoCal 2020, as well as current work funded through the REAP 1 program, as well as LEAP and SB2. This program would have 4 main priority areas:
 - **Utilities to support housing development:** Identify transformative programs to invest in the utilities (sewer, gas, electric, broadband) needed to environmentally clear, entitle and ultimately build the housing needed to meet the region's 6th cycle RHNA goals, and in the Priority Growth areas identified in Connect SoCal.

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- **Housing Trust Funds:** Invest in subregional housing trust funds to leverage efforts to deliver affordable housing
 - **Preservation of expiring covenants and naturally occurring affordable housing:** Target existing affordable housing with expiring covenants and/or housing that is naturally affordable without covenants and develop programs to extend covenants and preserve these units as affordable.
 - **Technical Assistance:** Through the outreach process, SCAG will identify additional technical assistance needs for cities, counties and other partners. These may include programs to:
 - i. Help public agencies use their surplus land for affordable housing development
 - ii. Continue land use planning efforts that will support implementation of 6th cycle Housing Elements
 - iii. Ensure that the region can secure grant funding in support of affordable housing development.
- 3. County Transportation Commission (CTC) Partnership Program:** SCAG will develop a new partnership program with the region's six County Transportation Commissions, to fund the development of plans, programs, pilot projects, and even some signature GHG/VMT reducing capital projects. Regional guidelines will be developed upon the release of the State's guidelines in February of 2022 with the intent to align with Key Connection strategies included in Connect SoCal and advance new concepts for reducing VMT. Key Connections focus on advancing expanded mobility ecosystems and management strategies using innovative policy and/or technology to realize regional planning goals, and account for 30% of the GHG reduction needed to meet SCAG's SB 375 requirements. Examples include shared mobility, congestion pricing studies and pilots, universal basic mobility pilots, transit recovery and integration pilot projects, dedicated lanes and other tactical transit solutions to improve transit travel time and reliability, micro-transit and other mobility-on-demand services providing first/last mile connections, or VMT Mitigation Bank. Staff has initiated some early outreach with CTC staff to gauge opportunities for partnerships and anticipates continued dialogue in developing a regional program. Some early concepts identified to date by CTC staff include extending or expanding student transit pass programs, deployment of mobility hubs, electric carshare programs, seed funding to support VMT mitigation banking and credit programs, etc.

Major Milestones and Schedule:

Based on the latest information from the State, the table below shows the REAP 2021 program development process and associated schedule:

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	2021			2022											
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Grant Program Deadlines and Milestones		Framework Document from State Released		Advance Application Released		Draft Guidelines to be Released by State	State Review of SCAG's Advance Application	State Approval of Advance Application/Full Guidelines to be Released by State							Full Application Deadline: 12/31/22
Outreach & Engagement	COG Listening Sessions, Subregional Surveys, Development of Advance Application					Outreach & Engagement work: Consultant and staff						Full Application Developed Using Outreach Results			
Program Development	Staff Present Draft Framework to Policy Committees					Advance Application to be Submitted to State	Revised Draft Framework Provided to EAC/RC	Framework Developed Further and Refined Based on Stakeholder Feedback Engagement Process	Final Framework to be Presented to EAC/RC for Approval and Adoption Updates to be Provided to Policy Committees				Staff reports on Outcome of Outreach and Engagement and presents recommendations to Policy Committees and RC		Full Application to be Submitted to State
CTC Partnership Program						CTC Partnership Working Group Formed: Draft Guidelines, Establish Formal Process for Execution of CTC Program			Final Guideline Approval, Issue Call for Projects and Select CTC Partnership Projects. TC/RC Approvals						
Housing Supportive Infrastructure Program							Housing Policy Forum	One-on-One Sessions with Housing Trust Funds Open City/County Listening Sessions Focus Groups	Report on preliminary findings, potential calls for projects (CEHD/RC)	Utilities Industry Forum + issue RFI Call for Projects Based on Listening Sessions	Staff to Report Findings from Industry Forum (CEHD/RC)		Initial Program Guidelines (CEHD/RC)		