

## **REAP 2021 Outreach Plan**

### **Background**

REAP 2021 was established through AB 140 (July 2021) as part of the mid-year budget revise for the State's FY 21-22 budget. Approximately \$600 million is available statewide to support transformative and innovative projects that implement a region's Sustainable Communities Strategy and help achieve goals of more housing and transportation options that reduce reliance on cars. With funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the State will allocate \$246 million to SCAG, of which an initial allocation of 10 percent of funds are available now, pending approval of SCAG's early application. SCAG will develop programs to disperse these funds throughout the region in support of transformative planning that promotes the core program objectives of REAP 2.0: (1) implementation of the Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS) portion of Connect SoCal; (2) housing development that realizes 6<sup>th</sup> cycle housing element goals; (3) reduction of Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT); and (4) Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). Note that while the program continues with the REAP name, REAP 2021 has a broader focus of eligible programs and activities than REAP 2019. The REAP 2021 funds have a broader set of objectives and can be spent on both planning and capital projects. SCAG also refers to REAP 2019 as REAP 1.0 and REAP 2021 as REAP 2.0. REAP 2021 funds must be obligated by June 2024 and expended by June 2026.

HCD has stated that draft program guidelines will be released by February 2022 and final program guidelines will be available by Spring 2022. Throughout 2022 SCAG will be conducting outreach to a broad array of stakeholders to identify programs and partners and develop the complete REAP 2021 application, due to the State by December 2022.

While the program guidelines for REAP 2021 have not yet been released, SCAG has developed a draft framework to guide its program development activities and stakeholder engagement.

### **Goals and Objectives**

SCAG will develop and implement the REAP 2.0 program through a comprehensive outreach program that will support both program development and continue through implementation. Feedback from stakeholders will be incorporated in the final REAP program application, will help identify partnership opportunities and will establish priorities for transformative planning and implementation activities that reflect a balance of regional needs and geographical equity. The outreach program will employ a variety of methods to reach a wide range of SCAG stakeholders and ensure that SCAG includes disadvantaged and underserved communities. SCAG will work in concert with other MPOs, public agencies, subregional COGs and community-based partners to consider the potential for joint activities and coordination.

All of this work will be developed in line with SCAG's May 2021 adopted Racial Equity Action Plan, with strategies to ensure that our efforts, materials and programs reference and actualize our commitment to equity and equitable participation. SCAG is committed to ensuring that we have broad representation in our various efforts to solicit information and feedback, particularly from communities that are harder to reach, may be under-resourced and/or represent SCAG's Communities of Concern, EJ and disadvantaged communities, and tribal communities. The outreach will also follow SCAG's adopted [Public Participation Plan](#), which outlines in depth SCAG's various strategies and engagement tools.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

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SCAG's Planning and Government and Public Affairs (GPA) Divisions will work in concert to maximize stakeholder outreach and incorporate feedback into the final REAP 2.0 application and program implementation. SCAG has identified two Community Engagement Specialists to lead the outreach and engagement activities at the program-wide level, as well as support department staff in the program-specific level engagement and program development. The Community Engagement Specialists will serve as the point of contact to the public and will manage all consultant contracts with REAP 2.0 outreach related scopes of work. The Community Engagement Specialists will regularly communicate with regional partners and stakeholders on the outreach programs progress and manage the activities identified in this plan.

### **Target Stakeholders**

The community engagement efforts will both inform and engage a range of constituents and stakeholders throughout the six-county region, as identified in SCAG's Public Participation Plan.

SCAG seeks to ensure that diverse populations are involved in the regional planning process. Equity will serve as a guiding principle; we will ensure that members of disadvantaged and underserved communities are reached by employing traditional and innovative outreach methods. To ensure effective and meaningful communication, the outreach team will need to develop an understanding of the target audience's commonly spoken languages, cultural sensitivities, access to technology, and preferred communications.

Target stakeholders for the REAP 2021 program include:

- Advocacy groups (environmental, housing & transportation)
- City managers
- Community development representatives
- Community-based organizations
- Educational community and institutions
- Elected officials
- Financial sector representatives
- General public
- Governmental and public agencies
- Health and wellness representatives
- Housing trust funds
- Housing developers (non-profit and for-profit)
- Land use experts
- Minority and low-income populations
- Neighborhood and community groups
- Non-profit organizations
- Organizations serving rural area residents
- Philanthropy
- Planners
- Public and private transportation operators

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- Subregional organizations
- Technology vendors
- Transportation planning agencies
- Tribal Governments
- Utility providers

### **Applying Past Outreach to Program Development**

In recent years, SCAG has completed several projects related to the core program objectives of REAP 2.0. SCAG will build on past work by pairing the past program outreach outcomes with new and innovative outreach activities outlined throughout this plan. SCAG will apply outreach from the following programs to our REAP 2.0 program development: SCS/RTP development and implementation strategy (adopted 2020), Housing Production Study (completed in 2021), Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy (adopted in 2021), the Racial Equity Action Plan (Adopted in 2021) and the REAP 1.0 program (developed 2020-21, ongoing implementation). These programs have allowed for feedback on how SCAG engages with the public, identification of priority projects, and identification of existing efforts across the region.

### **Outreach Materials & Website**

Visual and written content that convey key information about the REAP 2.0 program and SCAG's approach to development of the program will be developed for online engagement, newsletters, social media, and websites. These materials may include fact sheets, FAQs, PowerPoint presentations, comment cards, maps, charts, infographics, timelines, surveys and other related resources. To build relationships and trust, the complexity of the information and materials presented to the community should be presented in language that is easy to understand. Materials will be translated upon request.

A dedicated website will be developed for the REAP 2.0 program. The above-referenced program materials will be included on the website, along with links to Staff Reports and other policy committee materials.

Ongoing program updates will also be issued by regular email blasts. SCAG will ensure that all interested parties receive these updates.

### **Early-Stage Framework Development Outreach**

Based on the REAP 2021 Trailer Bill language, SCAG staff drafted a program framework as a starting place to guide conversations with stakeholders and overall program development. Early outreach to targeted stakeholders on the draft framework took place from October 2021 through February 2022. During this time SCAG coordinated with internal staff and regional partners to solicit feedback and update the framework as new REAP 2.0 program information was released from the State. Some notable outreach activities and accomplishments during this time include:

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- SCAG issued a survey to Subregional COGs and hosted two listening sessions to learn more about Subregional COG priorities and begin identifying potential opportunities for partnership. Based on feedback, SCAG is requesting funding in its advance application to support outreach and engagement partnership opportunities for the Subregional COGs and will schedule one-on-one meetings to further discuss staffing support, as appropriate.
- SCAG staff presented the draft programmatic areas to SCAG Policy Committees in October 2021 and incorporated feedback in the draft framework.
- SCAG conducted informal meetings with utility providers and other trade associations to identify Housing Supportive Infrastructure Program initiatives and partnership opportunities. These meetings helped SCAG identify the concept of an Industry Forum and soliciting a Request for Information (RFI) as the best approach to program development.
- SCAG staff presented a program overview and outreach update to the Regional Housing Working Group.
- SCAG staff conducted several informal meetings with each of the region's county transportation commissions (CTCs), assessing potential projects in the pipeline as well as new developments that could be fostered with new REAP 2.0 funding. Further discussions were held during formally scheduled CTC planning director meetings to better gauge potential project types and associated costs.
- SCAG staff conducted numerous informal industry briefings to better understand the technology landscape specific to the potential for development and implementation of various transformative transportation strategies. More formally, SCAG issued an RFI in August of 2021 to solicit information about technology requirements to support a Mobility Wallet Pilot Program. SCAG staff will be using the responses to help formulate the initial groundwork necessary to support REAP 2021 funded pilot initiatives.

### **Program Development Outreach Plan**

Using the draft framework as a starting place for discussion, throughout April - June 2022, SCAG will plan and host REAP 2.0 program wide outreach to capture stakeholder feedback and further refine the program specific areas that will drive the full program application.

#### *Virtual Information Sessions*

SCAG will host two virtual information sessions in early April for SCAG staff to present a PowerPoint presentation of the draft framework and host a question-and-answer segment. During the virtual sessions, participants will be encouraged to submit a comment card, which will be made available during the session, through the project website, and by email. Through the comment cards we hope to gather stakeholder input on priority program areas, suggested changes and framework aspects that they would like to remain the same.

#### *Framework Workshop*

SCAG will post the draft framework to the program website in late March. There will be an open-comment period at the time the framework is posted and throughout late April.

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The comments received during the public comment period will be compiled, summarized and made available on the program website. SCAG will host a workshop to share what we heard from the comments and how they will be incorporated. This workshop will also include an opportunity for stakeholders to participate in an open discussion on the projects within the program areas and how to prioritize these projects.

### *SCAG Policy Committee Engagement*

SCAG staff will bring the final framework and the public comment period summary to SCAG's policy committees. Before moving forward to program area specific outreach, SCAG staff will recommend that the policy committees adopt the framework.

### *COG One-On-One Meetings*

SCAG will conduct one-on-one meetings with Subregional COGs in March and April 2022 to identify COG needs, partnership opportunities and the level of participation desired by each COG for development of the REAP 2021 program. These meetings build upon surveys and listening sessions with the COGs issued early in the year.

### *Tribal Engagement*

SCAG will facilitate informal one-on-one meetings and up to two virtual convenings to provide early-on engagement with tribal leaders to gather input and facilitate the determination of an ongoing tribal engagement program. These meetings and convenings will serve to share the draft framework and get feedback on tribal program methods of engagement, format of engagement and topic areas.

## **Framework Core Objectives & Program Development**

Following SCAG's Policy Committees' adoption of the REAP 2021 Program framework, from June to October 2022, SCAG will conduct various program-wide and program-area specific outreach and engagement activities to get stakeholder feedback on program development. These engagement activities include presentations, surveys, virtual convenings, focus groups, and listening sessions.

### *SCAG Policy Committee Engagement*

SCAG staff will engage SCAG's Policy Committee's on the core objectives and projects that will be included in the proposed final application. SCAG will share feedback received during stakeholder engagement and will seek their approval on the work program to include in the final REAP 2021 application.

### *Presentations and Special Events*

SCAG will provide presentations and feedback at regularly scheduled meetings and special events of stakeholders. This may include providing presentations, hosting roundtables, providing event speakers and participating in panels. Thus far, SCAG has committed to hosting a roundtable to share proposed REAP 2.0 programs and seek feedback from attendees at ULI-LA's annual Urban Marketplace entitled "Advancing Equity Through Infrastructure". This is a unique event where attendees can meet with industry and civic leaders to learn about the latest housing and real estate trends, and opportunities essential to successful development projects.

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### *Public Opinion Survey*

SCAG will advise and facilitate activities to assess public opinions on SCAG's REAP 2021 projects, initiatives, and messages. This could be done via surveys, polling, focus groups or other methods. This research would allow SCAG to get feedback from the public on a range of REAP 2021 related issues and to monitor change in attitudes and public confidence in political and civic leadership over time, and importantly to ensure support for the transformative planning and implementation activities funded by the REAP 2021 program.

### *Tribal Engagement – Leadership Summit*

Based on the tribal feedback provided during the early one-on-one meetings and virtual convenings, SCAG will host a tribal leadership summit to learn about ongoing efforts across the region and identify priorities and areas where SCAG can provide technical assistance and, where applicable, direct programmatic support. Based on the feedback provided during the outreach process, SCAG will develop a Regional Tribal Action Plan that outlines an ongoing tribal engagement program, with a summary and recommendations to help prioritize SCAG's work program and identify transformative planning and implementation activities related to tribal needs, to include in the final REAP 2.0 application. Activities will also follow SCAG's Tribal Engagement Consultation Policy.

### *Program Specific Outreach*

In addition to the program wide outreach, staff will pursue additional engagement to develop the programs within the specific program areas identified in the REAP 2.0 Program Framework.

### *Housing Supportive Infrastructure Program – Targeted Outreach*

#### Virtual Focus Groups

SCAG will host fully interactive virtual focus groups of stakeholders to share information on the REAP 2.0 program and seek feedback on core programmatic concepts driving the development of the housing supportive infrastructure program. These focus groups will be organized to seek feedback from targeted cohorts that reflect a particular stakeholder group, with effort to ensure broad participation and representation from organizations that represent disadvantaged communities. The focus groups can also identify opportunities for coordination and collaboration. The focus group sessions will include short presentations from SCAG providing an overview of the program and will allow participants to provide feedback structured by discussion questions.

Potential Stakeholder Groups:

- Cities and Counties
- Community Based Organizations (with an emphasis on organizations working in DACs)
- Developers (Housing – both non-profit and for-profit)

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- Housing Financing Sector (including traditional lending/equity as well as CDFIs and other intermediaries)
- Utility providers
- Land Use Experts
- Housing Trust Funds
- Philanthropy

### City/County Listening Sessions

SCAG will host a series of listening sessions open to staff of SCAG's member cities and counties, with a focus on those working on land use planning, housing and related departments such as public works. This will be an opportunity for planning staff to learn more about the REAP 2021 program and provide feedback on core objectives and prioritization of projects. The listening sessions will be organized geographically and will allow for open dialogue. SCAG will make extended efforts to ensure that staff from cities and counties with a larger proportion of Disadvantaged Communities participate.

### One on One Meetings

As part of developing the housing supportive infrastructure program core objectives, SCAG will conduct limited one-on-one meetings with utility providers, subregional COGs and housing trust funds. The focus of these meetings is to understand efforts across the region that fall within key identified program areas and to figure out how to align program guidelines to facilitate and expand these efforts. To prepare for these meetings, SCAG staff will generate summaries of the targeted sectors. For example, SCAG will develop an inventory of utility providers in the area along with a summary of any existing programs or investments that support housing development. SCAG will also generate a list of housing trust funds in the region and their current status.

### Industry Forum and Request for Information and Proposals

To support development of the utility infrastructure program, SCAG will hold an Industry Forum and follow it with a Request for Information (RFI) or a Request for Information and Proposals (RFIP) to solicit concepts, partnerships and potentially proposals for transformative projects that address sustainable utility infrastructure, infill housing development and reduction of VMT. Based on the responses to the RFI/RFIP, SCAG will either craft program guidelines for a second phase solicitation or enter negotiations to fund proposals that were solicited.

### Housing Forum (Convening 2 Leadership Academy)

Under the REAP 2019 contract with consultant, LeSar Development, SCAG is offering 8 cohorts of Housing Policy Leadership Academy trainings across the SCAG region. As a part of this program, SCAG and LeSar are holding four convenings, in the form of Housing Forums. The first forum focused on new

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legislation at the State and Federal level. The second Forum will focus on new funding sources for housing. SCAG will organize at least one panel and/or breakout session to focus on the proposed REAP 2.0 framework and offer opportunities for feedback on priorities and programs that are most effective at transformative planning and accelerating housing production.

### Regional/County Transportation Commission (CTC) Partnership Program – Targeted Outreach

In addition to the program wide outreach, additional activities to develop regional initiatives and the CTC Partnership Program will include the following.

#### Working Group

SCAG will continue to engage each of the CTCs in the development of the CTC Partnership Program, including convening a formal CTC Partnership Working Group, anticipated to launch in late March. Upon HCD's release of state program guidelines for REAP 2.0, the Working Group will focus on development of regional program guidelines and establish a formal process for executing the CTC Partnership program, including soliciting, screening, and selection of projects that advance key Connect SoCal policies and strategies.

#### Market Sounding and Request for Information and Qualifications/Proposals (RFIQ/RFIP)

Supplemental industry engagement efforts and/or RFI or RFIQ/RFIP may be issued to solicit new concepts or to build upon some existing program development efforts specific to transformative transportation strategies. Responses to the RFI/RFIP are anticipated to support SCAG's efforts to develop broader regional transportation strategies to augment CTC partnership initiatives.

#### Market Research Groundwork Studies

SCAG will also facilitate studies and surveys to monitor travel of targeted populations, including but not limited to public opinion surveys, stated preference surveys, and focus groups. Work to date, in collaboration with UC Davis, has focused on a longitudinal survey of travel behavior, particularly examining COVID-19 related impacts throughout the SCAG region. Recognizing the challenges associated with capturing travel behavioral changes and trends of disadvantaged populations in broader survey work, SCAG plans to focus further research work on disadvantaged populations, exploring alternative recruitment strategies. Findings from continued research will support the development of SCAG's work program, including the prioritization of transformative initiatives.

### Early Program Initiatives – Targeted Outreach

SCAG will expand some existing programs in the Connect SoCal Implementation Strategy to support cities in implementing Connect SoCal. Early Program Initiatives will seek to provide immediate benefit to the region through developing transformative planning activities that can be implemented quickly to advance the Core Vision or Key Connections in Connect SoCal 2020 and refinement of these strategies in the 2024 plan update. Many of these initiatives were developed with extensive stakeholder engagement, but further development and/expansion of these programs will include additional stakeholder engagement.



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### *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. Per Government Code section 65302, local general plans must include the following mandatory elements: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. SCAG's Regional Data Platform (RDP) provides data, 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 will host two information sessions to get input from local jurisdictions on SCAG's RDP successes and identify ways to make the tool a more valuable resource to support local planning. These sessions will allow SCAG to gain insight on how stakeholders can engage with the tool for a more participatory planning process. SCAG will explore new features and identify needs for additional training or technical support.

Through the Local Information Services Team (LIST), SCAG will continue to engage with subregional COGs, local jurisdictions, and key stakeholders to provide personalized one-on-one technical assistance to familiarize them with the tools and resources in the RDP. This service intends to build consensus, deliver useful information, and obtain feedback from local jurisdictions on SCAG's products like the Housing Element Parcel (HELPR) Tool and the Local Data Exchange (LDX) system.

### *SCP Call #4 Civic Engagement, Equity & Environmental Justice*

SCAG's Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) provides resources to local agencies for local planning and is a key implementation tool of Connect SoCal. The SCP strengthens partnerships to promote healthy, connected, and equitable communities. This Call for Applications is focused on Civic Engagement, Equity & Environmental Justice and prioritizes funding in communities of concern (COCs) and SB 535 disadvantaged communities (DACs) in priority counties.

To support program development, SCAG held two listening sessions in July 2021 with over 53 attendees. Partners were invited to share feedback on the program and provide input on the Call development. Following the listening sessions, SCAG conducted targeted one-to-one meetings with CBOs and other partners in priority areas to further engage partners. SCAG is continuing engagement with various efforts planned for spring and summer 2022, including two listening sessions planned for June, additional one-to-one meetings with partners in priority areas, and a robust communications plan to promote the feedback opportunities. SCAG also plans to present at various Regional Planning Working Groups to promote the Call and receive further input from partners. SCAG will apply the findings to develop program guidelines and identify eligible projects. Stakeholder feedback may also help identify a new call for projects that support infill housing development, reduction of VMT and support multi-mobility goals.

### *Go Human: Active Transportation, Safety Planning & Community Engagement Expansion*

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SCAG continues to expand its strategic community engagement strategies through its award-winning Go Human program. Initially launched in 2015, Go Human aims to reduce VMT by encouraging more people to walk and bike in Southern California and directly addresses the high rates of collisions involving people walking and biking, by promoting a regional approach to community-driven pedestrian and bicyclist safety efforts. The original program was developed with extensive stakeholder engagement and through a co-creative process and every strategy continues to be informed by public feedback.

New outreach will be conducted in Spring and Summer of 2022 to explore expansion of Go Human to leverage the program's current strengths of supporting equity, tactical on-the-ground projects, inclusive & participatory engagement, community-based partnerships, and creative strategies to support broader local planning and community engagement strategies. The results of the outreach will drive the final recommended program expansion and will be reflected in full REAP 2.0 application.

### *Other Programs and Initiatives*

SCAG may seek to develop new programs and initiatives, and would use REAP 2.0 advance funding to conduct planning studies, support the identification of transformative planning activities and test concepts for further implementation. SCAG will facilitate such studies, foundational data collection, and pilot programs, with a goal of incorporating findings into the final REAP program application. Each study or initiative will include targeted stakeholder engagement to ensure that core issues are

### **Reporting and Program Implementation**

The feedback from stakeholders will be incorporated in the final REAP program application; feedback will help identify partnership opportunities, establish priorities for transformative planning and implementation activities that reflect a balance of regional needs and geographical equity. SCAG will ensure all outreach and engagement efforts are incorporated in a final report to be shared publicly. Metrics for success will include the number of stakeholders we reached, the number of comments received and potentially through findings of related public opinion polls. The success of the outreach will be evaluated to determine what worked well and additional outreach activities for program implementation. Post-program-development activities will be determined and implemented later.